Proposal by the President of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on the organization of work for the seventh meeting of the Working Groups on Smuggling of Migrants (8 and 9 September 2020) and the tenth meeting of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons (10 and 11 September 2020) in view of COVID-19 restrictions as approved by the Extended Bureau via the silence procedure with the deadline of Wednesday, 19 August 2020.

I. Hybrid Meetings

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, both intergovernmental meetings scheduled in September cannot be held in their usual total in-person format. For indoor meetings, health and safety measures, such as a minimum distancing between participants, continue to be required. As the conference rooms in the C Building of the VIC are not large enough to comply with these requirements and no other rooms in the VIC are available, the only option to accommodate a limited number of delegate to be physically present in the meeting is the one outlined below.

**Hybrid/in-person format:**

This format enables the participation of one delegate per delegation, to be physically present, on a voluntary basis, in the conference room. In addition, the Chair (if feasible), Secretary and Secretariat staff would be present in the Conference room. The interpreters and technicians would also be in the VIC. All other participants are connected remotely using the Interprefy platform.

As the available conference room, Board room D, will only allow the physical participation of approx. 80 persons due to the minimum distancing requirements, a second meeting room in the C-Building of the Vienna International Center would be made available should more than 80 delegates register to attend. Delegates in both rooms would be able to participate equally. This option seeks to accommodate the request that all Member States should be granted the opportunity to access and fully participate in all meetings organized by UNODC on an equal basis. Kindly note that a larger conference room is not available.

**Meeting times:** Each morning and afternoon meeting would need to be reduced from 3 to 2 hours. The morning meeting would be held from 11:00 to 13:00 hrs. and the afternoon meeting from 15:00 to 17:00 hrs., local time Vienna. A revised proposed schedule/organization of work based on these meeting times will be made available on the websites of the working groups and communicated upon discussion with the Chairs.

**Interpretation:** In accordance with rules 34 and 35 of the Rules of Procedure, interpretation into the six official and working languages of the Conference would be provided. The United Nations Secretariat entered into a contract with an online interpretation platform, Interprefy, which can facilitate translation into all six official United Nations languages.

**Speakers:** The Interprefy platform only allows a maximum number of 300 links/connections with speaking functions. This concerns the participants which will join remotely. Additional links/connections are possible but only have a listening function. The speaking and listening links/connections are linked to the individual emails of the registered participants.

Thus, two speaking links/connections will be available to each delegation and one speaking link/connection for each observer delegation. This calculation is based on the number of registered delegations at the last meetings. The delegations are requested to clearly inform the secretariat
which members of its delegation will have the speaking link/connection when registering the delegation through a Note Verbale. Delegations which include a panelist need to ensure that the panelist is given one of the speaking links/connections.

If delegations do not take the full allocation of speaking links/connections available to them or if there is a balance available (which is likely), those speaking links/connections would either be distributed equally so that all delegations receive an additional speaking link/connection or, if the balance is not large enough to allow an even distribution of one additional link/connection per delegation, the leftover would be distributed to the panellists.

If on the contrary, the number of delegations registering for the meetings is so high to result in a total of more than 300 speaking links/connections, the number of speaking links/connections per delegation would be reduced to one for all. The remaining members of each delegation would be granted listening links/connections (without the possibility to use this connection to speak).

Further instructions on the use of Interprefy would be sent to the registered participants shortly before the meeting and also made available on the website of the meeting.

Registration of participants: All relevant information of delegates (full name, title and up-to-date personal email address) would need to be submitted to the Secretariat in due time, indicating the distribution of speakers and listeners links/connections as outlined above.

Meeting documentation: Pre-session documents of the meetings will be issued electronically. In-session documentation (i.e. the parts of the report for adoption) will also be made available electronically through ODS. A link to the documents will be shared in the meeting chat on Interprefy. The revised organizational arrangements and schedule of work of the meetings will be reflected in the final reports of the meetings.

Statements: Participants are encouraged to send their general statements in written format, which will be made available on the public website of the meeting. No general statements should be made during the meeting due to the time constraints. Statements will have a maximum duration of 3 minutes. Panellist presentations will have a maximum duration that will be communicated by the respective Secretariats directly to the panellists.

Proposed organization of work and adoption of the report:
As the hybrid/in-person meeting format enables the physical presence of one participant per delegation next to connecting other delegates via Interprefy, every effort will be made for the recommendations to be agreed upon by the two working groups during the meeting, as per usual practice.

The summary of deliberations would be a summary of the Chair. This should free up time to enable the Working Group to discuss and negotiate the recommendations which would become a part of the report to be adopted.

The recommendations will be drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair and presented by the Chair as soon as possible after the discussion on the agenda item was completed.

Panellists and all speakers are requested to very clearly and explicitly state that they are making a recommendation for inclusion in the report when doing so. Recommendations should be concise, and consideration should be given to limiting the overall number of recommendations, where feasible. If possible, the panellists should include their recommendations in their presentations,
which will be submitted in advance and published on the website of the relevant meeting, unless instructed otherwise.

The report (including the Chair’s summary) will be submitted to the COP as part of the official documentation.

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