



Industrial Development Board

Resumed thirty-fourth session

Vienna, 2 September 2008

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Date and place of the thirteenth session of the General Conference

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Report by the Director-General

In compliance with decision IDB.34/Dec.5, reports on the results of the consultations with the Federal Government of Nigeria with regard to holding the thirteenth session of the General Conference in Abuja, including the financial implications.

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Introduction

1. At its twelfth session the General Conference adopted decision GC.12/Dec.19 on the date and place of its thirteenth session. The Conference acknowledged the tentative interest of some Member States to host the thirteenth session and requested the Director-General to undertake the necessary consultations with interested Member States. Furthermore, the Conference delegated to the Industrial Development Board, in accordance with Article 8 (2) (b) and Article 8 (4) of the Constitution of UNIDO, the authority to consider and determine at its thirty-fourth session the venue and date of the thirteenth session of the General Conference.

2. At the thirty-fourth session of the Board in May 2008, the Federal Government of Nigeria presented its offer to host the thirteenth session of the General Conference in Abuja from 7 to 11 December 2009. The Board took note of the kind offer with appreciation and requested the Director-General to undertake the necessary consultations with the Federal Government of Nigeria with particular regard to the financial implications deriving from holding the thirteenth session of the Conference in Abuja (decision IDB.34/Dec.5). The Board also requested the Director-General to submit a report on the results of his consultations in this regard to the resumed thirty-fourth session of the Board on 2 September 2008 for decision.

3. Subsequently two meetings were convened with the Permanent Representative of Nigeria and the UNIDO Secretariat (28 May and 2 July 2008) to discuss requirements for holding a General Conference away from Headquarters. In particular, the Secretariat provided the Permanent Representative with the text of a model host country agreement, a tentative cost estimate and a requirements paper annexed. The meetings underlined that the basis for determining the financial arrangements for holding a session away from Vienna was rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which states that “the actual costs directly or indirectly involved in holding a session away from the seat of the Organization shall be borne by the host Government”. As with the past two sessions held away from Vienna, namely the second session held in Bangkok, Thailand (1987) and the fifth session held in Yaoundé, Cameroon (1993), a host country agreement would need to be concluded, setting out the financial obligations of the Government, as well as its contributions in kind, such as conference and other facilities, office space, transportation, police protection and local staff.

4. Following these meetings and upon the invitation of the Federal Government of Nigeria, a mission composed of UNIDO staff and representatives of the UNOV Conference Management Service and the United Nations Security and Safety Service was dispatched to Abuja from 27 to 31 July 2008 to undertake the consultations requested in decision IDB.34/Dec.5. A comprehensive programme was organized for the UNIDO/UNOV delegation by the Special Adviser for Policy and Strategy of the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, supported by its UNIDO desk officer. The programme provided the delegation with the opportunity to discuss all relevant aspects with key stakeholders in the Federal Government, Senate, House of Representatives and Federal Police. In particular, meetings were arranged with His Excellency the Minister of Commerce and Industry, His Excellency the Minister of Culture and Tourism, the National Security Adviser, the Director General of State Security Services (SSS), the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, the Inspector General of the Police and the Chairmen of the

Committees on Commerce and Industry of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The delegation was informed that, in the interest of smooth coordination, a Presidential Committee and Steering Committee, supported by seven subcommittees (technical, protocol, finance, publicity, transport, accommodation and security) would be established. The present document reports on all aspects covered during the mission, such as conference facilities, security, local infrastructure and financial arrangements.

I. Conference facilities

5. The UNIDO/UNOV delegation visited the conference facilities in Abuja at the International Conference Centre (ICC) and the two major hotels, the Transcorp Hilton Hotel and the Sheraton Hotel. It was realized that the ICC could not host the General Conference as it did not have sufficient conference rooms at its disposal to accommodate, in addition to the Plenary, the Main Committee, the General Committee, the Credentials Committee, the meetings of regional groups and the side events. Furthermore, it was noted that the ICC would not be able to provide the number of offices needed for the UNIDO Secretariat and UNOV Conference Management Service support staff nor any reproduction facilities. Major refurbishment, upgrading of interpretation and technical facilities as well as the construction of mobile office units would be required. The conference facilities of the Sheraton Hotel were also found inadequate in terms of technical facilities and space offered. Even with considerable upgrading and refurbishment the lack of office space could not be solved. Thus, for technical and logistical reasons, the Secretariat strongly recommends to use neither the ICC nor Sheraton conference facilities but instead to consider taking advantage of the modern and recently refurbished conference facilities available at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel.

6. The Transcorp Hilton Hotel has been the venue of several high-level conferences and meetings, such as those of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Union and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). It looks back on 21 years of experience in servicing the national and international business and diplomatic community even before Abuja became the capital of Nigeria in 1991. Requirements for facilities, services and equipment were discussed with the hotel management. All available conference rooms and offices at the hotel as well as at its newly renovated Congress Centre were visited.

7. The Congress Centre, a two-storey building attached to the hotel by a walkway, consists of a large Congress Hall with a gallery offering a total capacity of up to 1,000 people in theatre style, of whom 350 would be located on the gallery. It was determined that the Congress Hall did not offer the same space as the Austria Center Vienna (ACV). Thus, some adjustment and compromise would have to be made in terms of the seating arrangements traditionally chosen for sessions of the General Conference. Certain technical adjustments would also be necessary, including the installation of additional ISO-standard interpretation booths for the Plenary, Main Committee, General Committee and Credentials Committee, microphones, headsets, and sound and recording equipment. Future preparatory missions would need to investigate the possibility of setting up an air-conditioned tent on the premises of the Transcorp Hilton, as an option for accommodating either

the Plenary or Main Committee. The UNIDO/UNOV delegation furthermore concluded that all multi-purpose meeting rooms at the hotel premises, including two small boardrooms, would have to be made available for regional group meetings, side events and office space with the required technical facilities. As regards office space, it was thought that flexible partitions could be set up in some meeting rooms and a certain number of hotel rooms converted into offices, if need be. It was also established that the space available would limit the number of side events to a maximum of two.

8. Based on this first inspection of the Hilton Hotel, adjustments were made to the preliminary cost estimate and requirements paper for holding the thirteenth session of the General Conference in Abuja. In view of the fact that the venue would be spread over two adjacent buildings on the Hilton premises, more conference servicing staff would have to be sent from Vienna to Abuja than originally envisaged. Shipment costs were also recalculated, taking into consideration the recommendation of UNOV Conference Management Service to produce all pre-session documentation in Vienna and subsequently ship it to Abuja.

9. In terms of infrastructure for delegates, the Hilton Hotel offers 24-hour business centre services, including faxing, photocopying and Internet. High-speed wireless Internet access is also available in all public areas of the hotel. In addition, the hotel offers a highly efficient generator system and can therefore guarantee uninterrupted power supply. Furthermore, the hotel services include three restaurants, cash dispensers, travel agencies and desks of major international airlines, as well as a medical clinic and dental services. Although there would be certain limitations in terms of space, if it is decided to hold the General Conference in Abuja, the Secretariat would recommend that arrangements be made to use the Transcorp Hilton.

II. Security

10. As regards the question of safety and security, it is to be noted that Abuja is located in an area of the country that is currently designated by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) as a "Phase 2" area, which entails a high level of alert and imposes major restrictions on the movement of all United Nations system staff members.

11. The UNIDO/UNOV delegation had various meetings regarding the issue of security at the General Conference. The delegation met with the National Security Adviser, the Deputy Director General of the State Security Services and the Inspector General of the Police. All instances assured the team that total support would be given to UNIDO to ensure the security and safety of the Conference. Assurances were also given that the security forces of Nigeria would provide all necessary security services for the Conference. The United Nations Security and Safety Services (UNSSS) in Vienna would be involved with the security planning and follow security operations provided by the Government to ensure that protection measures, access control and screening procedures comply with United Nations standards. UNSSS would furthermore draft a memorandum of understanding to be signed between the security forces of Nigeria and the United Nations, which would outline their respective responsibilities.

12. The UNOV/UNIDO delegation noted that the Transcorp Hilton Hotel appeared capable of providing a sufficient level of safety and security within the confines of its premises, including a comprehensive fire safety system, closed-circuit television security cameras on all floors, and a proprietary guard force of 160 officers who conduct screening and patrol operations around the clock.

III. Local infrastructure

13. There is an international airport in Abuja, which is 40 km west of the city centre and the Transcorp Hilton Hotel. There are several connections with international commercial airlines servicing the capital. Flights between Abuja and Lagos depart almost hourly.

14. There are several hotels in Abuja in various categories that would meet the needs of the Conference. The hotels visited were willing to offer United Nations rates, which were significantly lower than their normal room rates. The Minister of Culture and Tourism offered his kind support with regard to securing accommodation at hotels during the period of the General Conference.

IV. Financial arrangements

15. In accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, the actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved in holding a session away from Headquarters shall be borne by the host Government. During the UNIDO/UNOV mission, the financial implications of holding the Conference in Abuja were explained to officials of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and a copy of the model host country agreement, preliminary cost estimate and requirements paper were handed over to the authorities concerned. The requirements specified cover inter alia such facilities as conference rooms; offices for the officers of the Conference, the substantive Secretariat and conference services; and other facilities, including facilities and equipment for six-language interpretation, service areas, local transportation, a documents reproduction centre, local short-term support staff, and equipment, including personal computers, printers, telephones, fax machines and photocopiers.

16. As indicated in paragraph 8 above, after the inspection of the available conference facilities at the Transcorp Hilton, the Secretariat has reviewed its conference requirements and the preliminary cost estimate for holding the General Conference in Abuja. The revised cost estimate specifying cash requirements (annex refers) covers expenses relating to preparatory missions, staff travel, shipment of documents, security and registration equipment, replacement of conference service staff, supplementary support staff, and a provision for contingencies.

17. The UNIDO/UNOV delegation was informed by the Minister of Commerce and Industry that the costs for hosting the General Conference in Abuja would be included in the Ministry's budget for 2009. During the meetings held with the Secretary to the Government of the Federation and the Chairmen of the Senate and House of Representatives' Committees on Commerce and Industry, all counterparts expressed their readiness to do their utmost to support the budget bill that would make the financing for the General Conference available. It should furthermore be

noted that the sum representing the total estimated costs of holding the Conference in Abuja would need to be deposited in euros with UNIDO no later than 1 June 2009. In addition, the costs of the preparatory missions of the Secretariat to Abuja and other initial expenses, as estimated, would need to be advanced no later than 1 November 2008.

V. Conference agreement

18. If it is decided to hold the thirteenth session of the General Conference in Abuja, rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference requires the Director-General to conclude a Conference agreement with Nigeria specifying the arrangements to be made and the obligations to be undertaken by the host State and the Secretariat in connection with the session. As indicated in paragraphs 3 and 16 above, the Secretariat has furnished the text of a model host country or Conference agreement to the Nigerian Government for its preliminary consideration. In light of its consultations with the Government of Nigeria, the Secretariat would recommend that the Conference agreement be negotiated and concluded in 2008 in order to provide an appropriate basis for further planning of the Conference by UNIDO and the Government.

VI. Date of the session

19. The UNIDO/UNOV delegation received confirmation during its meetings with the Government of Nigeria and the Transcorp Hilton that the dates originally envisaged for the thirteenth session of the General Conference (7 to 11 December 2009) would be suitable should the session be held at Abuja.

VII. Action required of the Board

20. The Board is invited to take note of the information contained in the present document; to decide on the date and place of the thirteenth session of the General Conference; and, should it decide to hold the session in Abuja, to request the Director-General to negotiate and conclude an appropriate Conference agreement with the Government of Nigeria by 31 December 2008.

Annex

Estimated costs

Based on the Secretariat's recommendation to use the Congress Centre of the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja

	Estimated cost (In euros)
<u>I. Cash contribution to be borne by the host Government</u>	
Preparatory missions^a (4 missions composed of 5 staff members each, prefinancing required)	101,500
Staff travel - 184 staff at various levels (UNIDO: approximately 81; UNOV approximately 103, including Conference Services, ^b Interpretation, Documents Control, Documents Distribution, IT support ^c and Security and Safety Services ^d)	1,115,700
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on entitlement Vienna-Abuja-Vienna as of August 2008 (includes 1 travel day each direction) - Staggered, function-related arrival dates 	
Shipment (10,000 kg air freight based on August 2008 rates)	60,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Includes conference documents and files, conference and reference material, security/registration and exhibition material (assuming local availability of sufficient ICT equipment and relevant office supplies) 	
Remote translation	5,000
Replacement staff (personnel costs for 10 replacement staff to cover Headquarters meetings during UNOV staff absence from Vienna)	9,000
Supplementary staff for Policymaking Organs Secretariat (consultancy fee for 1 Professional to support preparation and liaison with host Government for a period of 6 months, including travel to Abuja ^e)	52,000
Contingencies (10 per cent for inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, etc.)	134,320
Total	€1,477,520

^a Based on the assumption that the Host Government undertakes at least two missions to Vienna in order to discuss legal and financial issues with a view to finalizing the host country agreement before the end of 2008.

^b At the time of the preparation of the cost estimate, the Transcorp Hilton Hotel could not provide any detailed floor plans. Estimates in terms of the number of conference service officers might therefore have to be adjusted.

^c The next preparatory mission will seek to define a precise number of IT staff required.

^d The actual number of UN security officers can only be determined once the exact location of the area to be protected is defined, office areas are assigned and floor plans are provided.

^e Prefinancing of 1 Professional might be required in case duties need to be taken up during the first quarter of 2009.

II. Contribution in kind to be borne by the host Government

Conference premises and facilities at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, equipped and furnished as per specifications in requirements paper (PCs/printers, wireless connection, reproduction and technical equipment, interpretation facilities, telecommunication equipment and costs, etc.) Undetermined

Local support staff (approximately 100) Undetermined

Other local facilities (bank, first aid/medical assistance, post office, travel agency, etc.) Undetermined

Local transportation from other hotels to Congress Centre of the Transcorp Hilton Hotel and between airport and hotels (buses, minibuses and cars for VIPs) Undetermined

Police protection as required under the host country agreement Undetermined
