

Oral Statement by the Secretariat in connection with draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.44, entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa"

1. This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly.

2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would:

"Decide to include in the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2012-2013 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium" and request the Secretary General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of parties and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013;"

3. The sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (hereafter referred as the Convention) and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium 2012-2013 have been included in the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 2012 and 2013, in document A/66/32, Annex II, as follows:

(i) Item 314 in the calendar of the conferences and meetings in 2013 for conference services to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, eleventh session, and meetings of subsidiary bodies, at dates to be determined; and

(ii) Item 337 in calendar of the conferences and meetings in 2012 for conference services to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, eleventh session, 8 days at dates to be determined.

4. It is recalled that a statement of programme budget implications was submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/58/31 on a former draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the seventh ordinary session of the Conference and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. The General Assembly formally adopted the draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1 on 23 December 2003 as resolution 58/242 and

thus approved the resources required for the biennium 2004-2005. Thereafter, in the following biennia 2006-2007, 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 resources required for the conference services for the sessions of the Conference of Parties and its subsidiary bodies have been considered as recurrent activities and were included under the proposed programme budgets for the respective biennium accordingly. These requirements have also been included again under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and conference management and Section 29E, Administration, Geneva in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

5. Given that the Headquarters of the Convention is in Bonn, Germany, the resources requested in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 include estimated travel costs to Bonn. For cases when the meetings are held outside of Bonn, the substantive secretariat shall cover the incremental travel costs, if any. Furthermore, any additional meetings that are not included in the 2012-2013 calendar would be funded through extra-budgetary resources. The above arrangements have been in place since the adoption of resolution 58/242.

6. Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.44 would not entail any additional requirements to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 on the understanding that the substantive secretariat shall cover the incremental travel costs if the meetings are held outside of Bonn, and any additional meetings that are not included in the 2012-2013 calendar would be funded through extra-budgetary resources.