

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)**

Twenty-eighth session
Tunis, 15-18 September 2014

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

2014

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14-00109

I. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

The twenty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will be held in Tunis, from 15 to 18 September 2014. The venue of the session is Regency Tunis Hotel.

Representatives of ESCWA member States will participate in the session. The session will also be attended by representatives invited as observers from Member States of the United Nations, relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, interested regional and intergovernmental organizations, organizations and entities in permanent observer status with the General Assembly, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Participants shall bear the cost of their travel and accommodation throughout the duration of the session.

The secretariat hopes that member States will be represented at the ministerial level and that their delegations will include experts in the fields of economy, trade and social development, as the session will consider related policy issues, in particular “Social justice in the policies of Arab States”, which is the main theme of the session.

Credentials

In accordance with the rules of procedures of the Commission, **official credentials duly signed** by the appropriate authorities in member States, agencies or organizations **should be submitted** to Mr. Karim Khalil, Secretary of the Commission (khalil31@un.org; fax +961-1-981510/1), **one week before the opening of the session**, if possible, or to the ESCWA registration desk at Regency Tunis Hotel, at the time of registration.

Arrival in and departure from Tunisia

The composition of delegations and expected dates and times of arrival should be communicated to the Secretary of the Commission at khalil31@un.org. All participants will have the right of entry into and exit from Tunisia, and no impediment will be imposed on their transit to and from the session areas. They will be granted facilities for speedy travel. Participants in the session should apply for a visa at the Embassy of Tunisia in their respective countries.

II. CONFERENCE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Regency Tunis Hotel will provide, for as long as is required, including during the preparatory meetings and the period following session meetings, the needed premises, including the conference room, meeting rooms, delegates’ and interpreters’ lounges, suitable office space with communication facilities, storage areas and related amenities.

The conference room will have facilities for sound recording and will be equipped for simultaneous interpretation between the Arabic and English languages.

Staff members of the ESCWA Conference Services Section will be responsible for registering delegates and preparing a provisional list of participants. They will also provide information on, and support with regard to, meeting services, including documents distribution, agenda and interpretation, as well as the editing, translation, reproduction and distribution of the final report of the twenty-eighth session.

General inquiries regarding meeting services may be made to Mr. Issa Toubbeh at toubbeh@un.org.

Registration and identification

Participants can register online through the following link: <http://participant.escwa.org.lb/MeetingsReg.aspx?M=qCikhH8uvdc=&N=N&O=N>.

The ESCWA Security and Safety Section will be responsible for issuing the necessary ground passes/identity badges for all participants and delegates, who will be requested to wear those badges at all times. To that end, delegates are kindly requested to **provide a passport type photo, which they can post while registering online or send by e-mail to Mr. Javier Sola Asensio at solaj@un.org no later than two weeks prior to the opening of the session.**

Session documentation

During the session, documents will be available in limited quantities at the documents distribution desk in the conference area. Participants are thus requested to bring with them the complete set of documents sent by ESCWA to their Governments or organizations. All session documents may be downloaded from the relevant page on the ESCWA website, available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/about/gov/sessions/main.asp?lang=e&ID=173>.

Delegates wishing to submit documents for circulation should present them to Mr. Karim Khalil, Secretary of the Commission (khali131@un.org; fax +961-1-981510/1) for clearance prior to distribution by ESCWA meeting assistants. It should be noted that a minimum of 100 copies is required to ensure distribution to all delegations. In accordance with the United Nations rules and regulations for the control and limitation of documentation, the ESCWA secretariat cannot undertake to translate or reproduce documents or statements submitted by individual delegations unless they are approved by the Commission.

Only United Nations documents or documents cleared by the Secretary of the Commission may be distributed during the session. Session documents will be distributed in the conference room by a documents officer. Other ESCWA publications will be available outside the conference room.

III. FACILITIES AND SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS AT REGENCY TUNIS HOTEL

The meetings of the twenty-eighth session will be held in the main conference room at Regency Tunis Hotel which is situated in Gammarth, on the coast of Carthage. Computers, printers and copy machines will be provided.

Travel services

Participants are requested to communicate the expected date and time of their arrival in Tunis and their flight numbers to ESCWA through Ms. Shadia Abdallah (abdallah6@un.org). It is advisable to confirm return travel arrangements well in advance.

Food

The Government of Tunisia will offer lunch for all participants throughout the duration of the session in the main dining room at Regency Tunis Hotel. The menu comprises a variety of main courses, deserts and drinks.

Information services and media coverage

The public meetings of the session will be open to representatives of the press and of other information media invited by the United Nations. Such representatives will be provided with the required passes and needed facilities. The ESCWA Communication and Information Unit (ECIU) provides the media, government officials, non-governmental organizations and other entities with information on the United Nations activities, documents, press releases and other information materials. ECIU also produces press releases, collaborates with local radio and television broadcasters and organizations, and participates in arranging media events to promote the activities of ESCWA and other United Nations entities.

The ESCWA website <http://www.escwa.un.org> provides up-to-date information on the structure and activities of the secretariat, as well as access to the library and other resources.

All enquiries related to media coverage and public information should be directed to ECIU by e-mail at any of the following addresses: dargham@un.org; sleiman2@un.org; and abi-zaki@un.org.

Medical services

The Government of Tunisia will provide medical services as needed. For serious emergencies, it will ensure immediate transportation by ambulance and admission to a hospital with first class facilities at the patient's expenses.

Internet access

Wireless Internet is available in all areas of Regency Tunis Hotel.

ESCWA officials participating in the session

Office of the Executive Secretary

Name	Position
Ms. Rima Khalaf	Executive Secretary
Mr. Nadim Khouri	Deputy Executive Secretary
Mr. Karim Khalil	Secretary of the Commission

Administrative Services Division (ASD)

Name	Position
Mr. David Iyamah	Director, Administrative Services Division
Mr. Johannes Kratzheller	Chief, Human Resources Management Section
Mr. Criostoir Leaney	Chief, Security and Safety Section
Ms. Ahed Sboul	Chief, Conference Services Section
Mr. Halim Nader	Acting Chief, General Services Section
Mr. Carlo Reitano	Chief, Budget and Finance Section

Strategic Directions and Partnerships Section (SDPS)

Name	Position
Ms. Ramla Khalidi	Chief, Strategic Directions and Partnerships Section

Strategic Planning and Monitoring Section (SPMS)

Name	Position
Mr. Tarcisio Alvarez-Rivero	Chief, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Section

Chiefs of substantive divisions

Name	Position
Ms. Rola Majdalani	Director, Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD)
Mr. Haidar Fraihat	Director, Technology for Development Division (TDD)
Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari	Director, Economic Development and Globalization Division (EDGD)
Mr. Frederico Neto	Director, Social Development Division (SDD)
Mr. Juraj Riecan	Director, Statistics Division (SD)
Mr. Tarik Alami	Director, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division (ECRI)
Ms. Samira Atallah	Director, ESCWA Centre for Women (ECW)

ESCWA Communication and Information Unit (ECIU)

Name	Position
Mr. Nabil Abu Dargham	Communication and Information Officer

IV. FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN TUNIS

Accommodation

The following table contains information on hotels in Tunis which offer reduced rates to participants in the session.

Hotel (bed & breakfast)	Single room/ per night/ per person (Tunisian dinar)	Double room/ per night (Tunisian dinar)	Suite/ per night (Tunisian dinar)	Contact details	Website
Regency Tunis Hotel	240			Phone: +216 71 910 900 Fax: +216 71 912 020 E-mail: reservations@regencytunis.com.tn	www.regencytunis.com
Movenpick Hotel Gammarth Tunis	350		900	Phone: +216 71 741 444 E-mail: Hotel.gammarth.sales@moevenpick.com	www.moevenpick-hotels.com
Golden Tulip Carthage Tunis – Hotel & Residence	245		950	Phone: +216 71 913 000 E-mail: Sales.center_mgr@goldentulipcarthage.com	www.goldentulip.com
Hotel Ramada Plaza Gammarth	210	240		Phone: + 216 71 911 100 E-mail: commercial.ramadaplazatunis@planet.tn , sales2.ramadaplazatunis@planet.tn	www.ramadaplaza-tunis.com
Hotel Carthage Thalasso Gammarth	220	250		Phone: +216 71 910 111 E-mail: commercial.corporate@carthagethalassoresort.com	www.carthagethalassoresort.com

Weather

Weather in Tunisia is generally moderate and is characterized by four seasons: spring, summer, fall and winter. Average temperatures in Tunis range between 20°C and 33° C in the period from July to September. During the session, the expected temperature range is 17°C to 29°C.

Banking, currency and exchange rates

The unit of currency is the Tunisian dinar. The exchange rate is 1.58 Tunisian dinar for one United States dollar.

Money or traveler checks can be exchanged at banks, private money exchange shops and major hotels. Major credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Club etc.) are accepted at most stores, restaurants and hotels throughout the country. Automatic teller machines (ATMs) are also widely available in main cities throughout the country.

Transportation

Many travel agencies in Tunis have modern buses available for sightseeing and tourist trips to various areas in Tunisia. In addition, there are numerous car rental and taxi offices.

Restaurants

There are many Tunisian, European, Middle Eastern and seafood restaurants in and around Tunis, as well as a number of fast food restaurants. More information can be obtained from any hotel in Tunis.

Sightseeing

Main cities, historical landmarks

The major historical landmarks in Tunisia include the cities of Carthage, Al-Qayrawan, Sfaqs, Sidi Bou Said, Qasr el-Jem, Kelibia and others. Natural sites include Djerba Island, Sousa, Douz and others.

More information on those sites and cities can be obtained from <http://visittunisia.org>.

Government office hours

Working hours in government offices are from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., except on Sundays and official holidays. The weekend is on Saturday and Sunday. No official holidays coincide with the session.

Internet

High-speed Internet is available in many hotels for free or for a small fee.

Language

While Arabic is Tunisia's official language, French is widely spoken. Many establishments provide signs, menus and information in French and Arabic.

Time

Tunisian time coincides with G.M.T.

Electrical current

The electrical current is 220 AC country-wide.