



INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Aide Memoire

To: Delegates to the Standing Committee, Coordinating Agencies, Members of the PSAP, CSITC, IFCP and SEEP

From: Executive Director

Subject: Preparations for the 67th Plenary Meeting

Date: January 30, 2008

Advance preparations for the 67th Plenary Meeting to be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso during 17-21 November 2008 are on schedule, and arrangements for the meeting promise to be excellent.

Mr. Célestin T. Tiendrebeogo, Directeur General, Société Burkinabè des Fibres Textiles (SOFITEX), will serve as the chair of the Organizing Committee for the 67th Plenary Meeting. Mr. Tiendrebeogo has been involved in the cotton industry for more than a decade and he is a former cabinet minister. Other members of the Organizing Committee include representatives of cotton companies in Burkina Faso, a representative of the textile sector, and representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I was honored to be able to meet on 22 January 2008 in Ouagadougou with H.E. Tertius Zongo, Prime Minister of Burkina Faso. Prime Minister Zongo pledged the full support of the Government and people of Burkina Faso to ensure a successful plenary meeting.

The venue for the meeting will be a purpose-built international conference center constructed in a new development in Ouagadougou designated for international organizations and embassies. The conference center includes ample space for plenary sessions, breakout sessions, registration and Secretariat offices, booths for simultaneous interpretation, food services and an Internet café. The conference center is WiFi enabled. A five-star hotel sits next to the conference center and will serve as the primary hotel for the meeting. There are additional hotels nearby. An impressive schedule of social events featuring African culture is planned.

The theme of the 67th Plenary Meeting is "Technologies for Cotton Development." Topics being considered for inclusion in the agenda include biotechnology, the role of governments in technology adoption and delivery, the role of governments in input supply, factors affecting the competitiveness of African cotton industries, the market outlook for cotton, competing crops and exchange rates, new developments in cotton ginning, progress toward standardization of trade rules, and value addition in the cotton chain. A plenary session will be devoted to developments in the Doha Round. The Plenary Meeting will include kickoff activities for the International Year of Natural Fibres in 2009.

Plenary meetings serve as a vehicle to raise the profile of cotton, provide information crucial to decision making and to facilitate cooperation on matters of shared concern. The strength of the ICAC is that it is a representative commodity body with producing, consuming and trading countries including all segments of the cotton industry. For the Committee to fulfill its objectives, broad participation in meetings by governments and industry representatives is necessary.

The 67th Plenary Meeting will be the first ICAC meeting in Africa in 6 years, and this will be only the second plenary meeting in Western and Central Africa in the history of the Committee. A Draft Agenda will be presented to the Standing Committee at the 492nd Meeting in April. Given the importance of cotton to the economy of Burkina Faso, and given the role of Burkina Faso as a technology leader within Africa, the 67th Plenary Meeting promises to be very constructive.