



Report of the Chair of the Standing Committee

FORTIFYING THE COTTON SUPPLY CHAIN: NEW
APPROACHES TO NEW CHALLENGES

6-9 December 2021



“I see God in every thread that I draw on the spinning wheel. The spinning wheel represents the hope of the masses.”

-- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

For Mahatma Gandhi, cotton and associated grass root industries were the source of biggest strength and hope for the populace. Cotton farming and related activities continue to play a major role in sustaining the livelihood of millions of people worldwide. As a global think tank in the sector, ICAC provides major institutional support and expertise to cotton farmers and downstream processors. Developing countries look up to the ICAC to provide support for capacity building of their scientists through international exposure visits, fellowships and training programmes. As mankind has come to realize, development without sustainability has lost value in the current scenario. Accordingly, Climate Change and Soil Health have been ICAC's major themes for 2021. ICAC is taking steps to educate the world on how sustainable cotton can be a major mitigating factor of climate change. Accordingly, a major emphasis of the ICAC is on promotion of sustainable cotton cultivation methods with implementation of good agriculture practices. I am confident that the ICAC will continue to support transparency while developing sustainability indicators and measurement systems.

Due to extraordinary situation created by the global pandemic, no Plenary Meeting could be held in 2020. This year, the ICAC is holding a special online Plenary Meeting in December. Meanwhile, ICAC Secretariat and Standing Committee members continued to regularly meet and work, often virtually. 'Cotton Connects' interview series, a 100-page document on the effects of COVID-19 in countries around the world, numerous online conferences and field visits throughout the year, were only some of the rigorous activities undertaken. The ICAC developed a soil and plant health app that is interactive and can speak to a farmer in at least 7 Indian languages in addition to French, English, Nyanja and Tonga. The ICAC also hired its first-ever textiles expert. A hybrid Strategic Working Group meeting was held on 27 July 2021 to deliberate on the following themes: Value Proposition for Membership; Business Model for Attractive Plenary Meetings; and Increasing engagement with Delegates. Its outcome will help to further finetune the framework of involvement of members in ICAC activities.

Due to the unexpected posting of the Chair ad Interim of the Standing Committee, Mr Selman Kurt, (Foreign Trade Specialist), Embassy of Turkey, following officers were nominated in the Steering Committee Meeting in Dec, 2020, for the period between the Steering Committee in 2020 until the end of the Plenary Meeting in 2021: Mr Anshul Sharma, Embassy of India, as Chair; Mr Patrick Packnett, USDA, USA, as Vice-chair, and Mr Selman Kurt as Immediate Past Chair.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to my colleagues in Standing Committee for their active participation in the functioning of the organization. I would also like to thank the ICAC Secretariat for putting in long hours in virtual workspace, and in the field, to ensure that the ICAC continues to deliver value to the global cotton community.

Thank You