Applications for the status of observer to the Conference of the Parties

Note by the Convention Secretariat

1. The following international intergovernmental organizations have submitted to the Convention Secretariat their applications for observer status to the Conference of the Parties (COP), pursuant to Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of the COP:

   - International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)¹
   - South Centre²

2. A brief summary of the background information received from INTERPOL and the South Centre in support of their applications is provided below.

   International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

3. The application was submitted to the Convention Secretariat through an official letter signed by the Secretary General of the organization.

4. INTERPOL is the world’s largest international police organization, with 190 member countries. Its headquarters are in Lyon, France. It facilitates cross-border cooperation, supports and assists all organizations, authorities and services whose mission is to prevent or combat international crime. A fundamental part of this work is combatting the activities of those transnational organized criminals who generate significant profit from a wide range of illicit activities on a regional and increasingly global basis. The illicit trade in tobacco products is an example. INTERPOL has worked in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to counter such criminality for several years.

¹ See: http://www.interpol.int/en
² See: http://www.southcentre.org/
5. As explained in the application letter, INTERPOL believes that it can play an important role in assisting the Parties to the WHO FCTC, the majority of which are also member countries of INTERPOL, to coordinate and facilitate international cooperation to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products. The activities related to Part V (International Cooperation) of the draft protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products that has been submitted to the COP for adoption (general information sharing, enforcement information sharing, confidentiality and protection of information, assistance and cooperation, joint investigations and law enforcement cooperation) are of particular interest to INTERPOL as these activities are core business to INTERPOL and an integral part of the normal support services that it provides to its Member States.

6. In the application letter, attention was drawn to the fact that INTERPOL also has observer status to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The South Centre

7. The application of the South Centre was submitted through an official letter signed by the Executive Director of the organization.

8. The South Centre is an intergovernmental organization of developing countries with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. As at February 2012, the Centre had 51 Member States. Under Article VI of its Charter, the Centre has three principal organs: the Council of Representatives, made up of the representatives of the Member States; the Board, made up of a Chairperson and nine members acting in their personal capacity, all of whom are appointed by the Council of Representatives and reflect a broad geographical balance among the countries of the South; and the Secretariat, headed by an Executive Director to implement the objectives of the Centre.

9. As explained in the application letter, the South Centre undertakes strategic and policy-oriented research to assist developing countries to achieve a fair, equitable, and rule-based global order. The Centre also supports developing countries and their institutions, such as the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, in enhancing South-South cooperation and coordination on global policy issues, including on trade, climate change, finance, intellectual property, investment, global governance, health, and other issues. In undertaking its mission, the Centre strives to promote and enhance South-South collaboration and solidarity.

10. The application letter also explains that the South Centre regards the WHO FCTC as a prominent example of multilateral cooperation on a key international health policy issue, on which there is a need for better engagement among developing countries. In this context, the South Centre is expanding its activities to include research on the implementation of the WHO FCTC in developing countries, particularly the issue of fiscal policies for global and national tobacco control and sustainable financing for implementation of the WHO FCTC in developing countries.

11. In the application letter, attention was drawn to the fact that the South Centre has observer status in other intergovernmental organizations and bodies including the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Criminal Court, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Group of 24, the Group of 77, and the Non-Aligned Movement.
ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

12. The COP is invited to consider the applications of INTERPOL and the South Centre and consider granting them observer status in accordance with Rule 30 of its Rules of Procedure.