

Item 6b: Call for proposals to host 40th Conference in 2018

### **Call for proposals to host 40th Conference in 2018**

Note by Secretariat for ExCo, 22 April 2016

The Secretariat recommends that the Executive Committee:

1. Agree in principle that the host for the 40th Conference should be selected and confirmed during the 2016 calendar year;
2. Decide whether it prefers to have the selection and confirmation complete before, or after, the Marrakesh meeting;
3. Consistent with those timing decisions, authorise the Secretariat to initiate a process to invite proposals to host the 40th Conference.

#### **Strategic Objectives**

The current strategic plan includes the goal to “complete or build upon the work of the Strategic Direction Working Group” (SDWG) (Action Plan 2016-18, Completing Conference Capacity building). One of the SDWG’s key mandates was to implement arrangements “to encourage and confirm hosts well in advance”.

ExCo has previously devised and twice implemented the current successful arrangement for inviting, assessing, recommending and confirming hosts. Compared with the earlier practice that gave host a maximum 12 months preparation time the new process has provided – as seen in the following table - between 15-18 months, an increase of 3 -6 months.

	Deadline for proposals	Confirmed host	Preparation time
38th Conference	April 2015	July 2015	15 months
39th Conference	November 2015	April 2016	18 months

#### **Timing options for seeking proposals for 2018 Conference**

The Secretariat considers that there would be benefits to a future host if an even longer lead period can be assured. It seems perfectly feasible to aim to provide, say, 20 months. A longer lead time may assist hosts to secure large venues, for example, which has emerged as an issue for the host of the 39<sup>th</sup> Conference.

It may be desirable to work towards a set schedule to annually call for hosting proposals 2 years in advance (perhaps with a February deadline). Further work may be needed to decide the optimal schedule but in the meantime we are faced with deciding how to handle a call for the 2018 Conference on an ad hoc basis. The choice seems to be to:

- Have the current Committee call for proposals and seek to complete the entire process prior to the October annual meeting (which would provide a host with full 24 months to plan); or
- Have the current Committee call for proposals but let the next Committee complete the process after to the October annual meeting, with a recommendation to be offered in, say, January or February 2017 (20 months or so preparation). Note that it is anticipated that the Committee membership will remain relatively stable between this Committee and the new Committee (see paper circulated for agenda item 5) so it would be possible for an assessment sub-committee to begin work before October and complete that work afterwards.

If the ExCo decided to seek to complete the process prior to the October meeting the Secretariat would need to move quickly in May to issue a call for proposals by late July or early August.