

Guidelines for rules of conduct for meeting participants

Note by the Secretariat

1. During their teleconference held on 16 December 2015, the Presidents of the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions were informed of the development, by the Secretariat, of two guidelines for rules of conduct for meeting participants that address specifically the use of cameras and audio/video recording devices and the participation of representatives of observers at meetings of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The Secretariat informed the Presidents that the development of the guidelines had been initiated by the Secretariat following an incident during the meetings of the conferences of the parties held in 2015, involving an observer taking pictures of another delegate in a way that was felt to be obtrusive.
2. The Secretariat had looked into rules and practices pertaining to the behavior of participants during meetings under other multilateral environmental agreements (including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Vienna Convention, etc.) and concluded that guidelines on the use of cameras and audio/video recording devices by participants at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their subsidiary bodies, and guidelines for the participation of representatives of observers at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their subsidiary bodies, could be useful in preventing such incidents. The guidelines would be shared with the bureaux and be ready for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to be held in 2017 in the form of information documents, as well as made available to all participants in advance of the meetings on the website of the conventions. The Presidents had taken note of the information provided.
3. Annex I to the present document sets out the guidelines on the use of cameras and audio/video recording devices by participants at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their subsidiary bodies. Annex II sets out the guidelines for the participation of representatives of observers at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their subsidiary bodies.

Annex I: Guidelines on the use of cameras and audio/video recording devices by participants at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (BRS) and their subsidiary bodies¹

1. The present BRS guidelines apply to participants using cameras and/or audio/video recording devices within a BRS-designated meeting venue. As required, other guidance or instructions may apply when deemed necessary by the BRS Secretariat or United Nations (UN) Security, in conformity with UN and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s rules and regulations.

A. Still Photographs

2. Still photographs may be taken by meeting participants within the BRS-designated conference venue's public areas, such as lobbies and corridors, and in meeting rooms provided that such activities are carried out unobtrusively and do not disrupt the activities or movements of other participants or the security provisions of that area.

3. In the case of professional/commercial photographers accompanying a party or observer delegation, these should be registered as a member of the delegation of the party or observer and identified as such in the registration form, and the party or observer is to provide information to the Secretariat on the purpose of the photographic assignment. The Secretariat approval is required for any such photographic assignments. Once approved by the Secretariat, the professional/commercial photographer will be assisted by the Secretariat staff or the UN security staff on site to complete his/her assignments, including by being escorted by the Secretariat or the UN security staff into meeting rooms or other areas should this be requested.

B. Video and Audio Recordings

4. Video and audio recordings may be made by participants in public areas, such as lobbies and corridors, provided that those making such recordings have the permission of those they wish to record and such activities do not disrupt the activities or movements of other participants or the security provisions of that area.

5. Audio and video recordings by party or observer participants during open and closed official meetings, including contact groups, and in designated high-security zones, are not permitted.

6. Any professional/commercial audio, video or film producers and technicians that may be accompanying parties and observers should be registered as member of the delegation of the party or observer and identified as such in the registration form, and the party or observer is to provide information to the BRS Secretariat on the purpose of the audio, video or film production. The Secretariat approval is required for any such audio or video assignments. Once approved by the BRS Secretariat, the professional/commercial producer and technicians will be assisted by the Secretariat staff or the UN security staff on site to complete their assignments, including by being escorted by the Secretariat or the UN security staff into meeting rooms or other areas should this be requested.

C. Measures

7. Any non-observance of these guidelines will normally be resolved in consultations between the BRS Secretariat and the relevant meeting participant and/or the entity it represents. It may involve other meeting participants if deemed necessary by the Secretariat.

8. Kindly note that, in conformity with applicable UN/UNEP/FAO rules and regulations, the BRS Secretariat and the UN Security reserve the right to take the following measures for non-observance of the above:

¹ These guidelines are intended for government and observer organization delegations and do not change or replace current policies and arrangements regarding the use of cameras, radio or TV equipment by accredited media organizations at BRS meetings.

- (a) Confiscation of the representative's badge;
- (b) Removal of the representative from the premises;
- (c) Confiscation of unauthorized material;
- (d) Any other measure falling within their mandate that is deemed appropriate or necessary.

9. For the purpose of paragraphs 7 and 8, the BRS Secretariat and the UN Security may act upon a complaint or on its own initiative.

Annex II: Guidelines for the participation of representatives of observers at meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (BRS) and their subsidiary bodies

A. Introduction

1. Meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their subsidiary bodies are convened for negotiations between the parties to the conventions. Observers are welcome to attend these meetings, subject to the relevant provisions of the convention and the rules of procedure.
2. Since the early days of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, observers have been actively involved, attending sessions and exchanging views with other participants, including party representatives. It is recognized that this involvement allows vital experience, expertise, information and perspectives from observers to be brought into the process to generate new insights and approaches. Furthermore, the access and participation of observers to the process promotes transparency in the increasingly complex universal problem of chemicals and waste regulation. Such participation flourishes in an atmosphere of mutual trust, which acknowledges respect for others and their opinions, and takes into account the nature of intergovernmental sessions.
3. The BRS Secretariat has prepared these guidelines to promote a harmonious atmosphere supportive of discussions and negotiations at intergovernmental meetings, and to provide a point of reference for all participants.
4. These guidelines are not exhaustive and are without prejudice to the applicable United Nations (UN) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s rules and regulations. They provide information reflecting current practice regarding attendance and participation of observers at BRS conventions' meetings. They are in line with the guidelines governing observer participation at sessions of other bodies in the UN system.

B. Security and safety

5. Observer representatives admitted to convention meetings shall cooperate with the BRS Secretariat and UN security staff, and comply with their requests and instructions regarding access to and conduct within the venue, including the use of its facilities.
6. Observer representatives shall not interfere with the movement of participants at any time or location within the venue.

C. Etiquette

7. Observer representatives shall respect other participants' social, cultural, religious or other opinions and refrain from personal attacks, whether in verbal, written or physical form.
8. Such personal attacks include, but are not limited to, harassment, threat, and other behavior designed to deter others from holding and expressing different views.
9. During the meetings, observer representatives shall not seek to obtain information dishonestly and follow the common rules of courtesy in international negotiations within the United Nations.

D. Measures

10. Any non-observance of these guidelines will normally be resolved in consultations between the BRS Secretariat and the relevant organizations and individuals. It may involve other meeting participants if deemed necessary by the Secretariat.

11. Kindly note that, in conformity with applicable UN/UNEP/FAO rules and regulations, the BRS Secretariat and the UN Security reserve the right to take the following measures for non-observance of the above:

- (a) Confiscation of the representative's badge;
- (b) Removal of the representative from the premises;
- (c) Confiscation of unauthorized material;
- (d) Any other measure falling within their mandate that is deemed appropriate or necessary.

12. For the purpose of paragraphs 10 and 11, the BRS Secretariat and the UN Security may act upon a complaint or on its own initiative.
