42nd REGIONAL MEETING OF NATIONAL REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (RCA) REPRESENTATIVES

23 APRIL 2020

General Guidelines for conducting meeting via Online Video Conferencing

Introduction

The recent unprecedented event of the Covid-19 pandemic has forced many countries to impose a Restricted Movement Order in order to control the spread of the virus that caused the disease through restricted movements, social distancing and stay at home policy. Hence the ability to conduct socio economic activities through the usual means is very much hampered and innovative ways of doing things has to be sought. One of the ways is by using ICT for all sorts of business transactions through online systems.

Taking the que and in order not to lose sight of RCA management, RCA secretariat has thus decided to resort to online video conference as a means for conducting its meetings, starting with the upcoming RCA National Representative Meeting (NRM) to be held online on 23 April 2020, to be chaired by Malaysia as the current chair of RCA. However, doing meeting in this mode is unprecedented for RCA and conducting the business in this manner calls for a whole new ball game, much different from the physical meetings that we are all used to.

Conducting meetings in this new way is much restricted by the technology itself and by the disparity of technological advancement in various member states or Government Parties. Hence a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has to be developed for conducting the meeting in a more effective manner, including the choice of platform or the technology to be used and the manner that the meeting be conducted, since many of the mechanism for controlling physical meetings are no longer applicable for online meetings.

This is the first time that the SOP is developed and it is inevitable that there would be shortcomings and it is hope that the procedures would further be refined in due time as we matured in mastering the technology and as the technology itself evolved for the better. Though the procedures were developed for a specific platform, it could be generalized for use with other similar platforms. In this instance we are targeting the use of Microsoft Teams as the platform of choice for doing the video conference meeting.

A. Before the Online Video Conference

1. Download and install the Microsoft Teams software in your device. You may download the Microsoft Teams from the link below and follow the installation instructions. You also need to sign-up a Microsoft Teams account, if you do not have one. Then, you may login the software using your registered Microsoft Teams account. https://products.office.com/en-my/microsoft-teams/download-app
2. Alternatively, you may be invited by a registered owner of a Microsoft Teams account to join the team via a link provided to you through your email. Just click on the link provided and follow the instructions step by step to get started with the platform.

Once registered your can begin to use the chat facility and the video conferencing function and a host of other functions provided by the software.

3. Make sure to test your equipment such as your computer, camera, sound system, microphone and internet connection before joining the video conference.

4. If you have material or presentation to be shared during the video conference, make sure your material or presentation is ready, working and visibly readable. The material can also be submitted to the secretariat in advance for reporting purposes. The platform and other similar tools allow you to make presentations by sharing desktop or screen sharing.

5. For items that need to be concluded by emails, the material shall be downloaded, read and understood beforehand and comments provided via emails or any discussions forums or social media tools setup for the purpose. Negotiating the documents in this ways will reduce the need for interactive sessions during the actual meetings which is beneficial for both online or physical meetings.

6. Keep a distance from any electronic devices that may cause noises and interference.

7. You may join the video conference 10 – 15 minutes before the actual start time of the conference.

B. During the Online Video Conference

1. Each session will be moderated by a moderator or the chair.

2. To avoid noises or glitches, only one person should speak at a time. Ensure your device is on mute at all the time and unmute it only after granted by the moderator to speak.

3. Try not to interrupt. You may use chat to request for speak or intervention i.e. 'asking for the floor'. The moderator will ask if there are any questions /comments/voting and will invite the participants to speak.

4. You may identify yourself each time you begin to speak. It is also advisable to speak at a good pace, be concise and stick to the topics on the agenda.

5. During presentation session, only the presenter is allowed to speak. You may reach out to the speaker or moderator after the presentation if you need more insights and clarifications.

6. There is a very slight audio delay. Give participants a chance to respond to questions and comments before interrupting.

7. In the event of voting, you may use chat to respond, whether you agree or disagree. The secretariat will take note and the moderator will announce the result of the voting.

8. Follow agenda and time allotments for the conference.

9. You may hang up when the online video conference is finished.