COVID-19 OUTBREAK: BRIEF GUIDE FOR MEETING ORGANISERS AT UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE CENTRE (UNCC), BANGKOK

AIM

This document aims to provide meeting organisers with key information for organising and managing meetings in light of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) spreading globally. The guide has been reviewed and adapted in conjunction with relevant guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH), United Nations Secretariat.

BACKGROUND

Coronaviruses are a large family of respiratory viruses that cause diseases ranging from the common cold to the more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Although the current outbreak of COVID-19 is still being investigated, the virus appears to be moderately infectious and can be passed from human to human, primarily by droplet spread just like other respiratory viruses. While many cases will manifest as a mild illness, a small percentage progress to a more severe illness and pneumonia. For the latest situation update on the outbreak, see https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/

QUICK SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOs</th>
<th>DON'Ts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail the Meeting Information Update on COVID-19 to all participants before the meeting date</td>
<td>Sit on prohibited seats in public spaces and conference/meeting rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collect emergency contact details from all onsite participants including mobile numbers and addresses in Bangkok</td>
<td>Remove and/or move furniture in public spaces and conference/meeting rooms</td>
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<td>Make housekeeping announcement on COVID-19 preventive measures in place, which includes introduction to the COVID-19 video at the opening of your meeting (refer to the sample housekeeping announcement)</td>
<td>Take off a mask in public spaces or when you cannot keep 2-meter physical distance</td>
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KEY INFORMATION TO PROVIDE PARTICIPANTS

The same guidance for influenza or any of the respiratory viruses applies to COVID-19. The following key information should be shared with all meeting participants:

1. **Avoid being exposed to respiratory viruses**
   - Maintain your distance from others – at least 2 meters.
   - Wash or sanitize your hands frequently – this is one of the most effective measures available.
   - WHO advises that face masks should be worn in public where social distancing is not possible to help stop the spread of COVID-19. It is mandatory to wear masks in public spaces in the UNESCAP premises in Bangkok including the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok (UNCC). Anyone who does not wear a mask will not be permitted to enter the premises.
2. Avoid spreading respiratory viruses if you are unwell
- Stay at home or in your accommodation if you become unwell, develop a fever and/or respiratory symptoms.
- If you are unwell, inform the meeting organizer and arrange to get an assessment from a healthcare provider. It is best if you call the Thai Department of Disease Control (DDC) hotline at 1422 for further guidance.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing and use the nearest trash bin with a cover to dispose of it after use. If you do not have a disposable tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently – after coughing, before preparing food or eating, after toilet use, after contact with ill persons, and during exposure to high traffic public areas.

LOGISTICS CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEETING ORGANISERS

The following provide some suggestions of key elements to implement before and during a meeting. Organizers should adapt this in accordance with local health authorities and WHO country office advice.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Organizers should
- Distribute the ‘Guide for Meeting participants’ package (including the accompanying brochures).
- Seek the most current guidance from local health authorities and WHO country office.
- Develop a video teleconferencing (VTC) capability – both for participants and presenters who cannot attend in person.
- Remind participants to have a plan of what to do if they become ill during the meeting and to ensure medical insurance coverage during the meeting.
- Collect emergency contact details of all the external participants including mobile numbers and addresses in Bangkok.
- Inform participants that all personnel entering the United Nations premises in Bangkok go through thermal screening as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gate location</th>
<th>Who can access</th>
<th>Operation Hours</th>
<th>Thermal Scanning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Entrance</td>
<td>• UN grounds pass holders who have a parking decal&lt;br&gt;• (Pre-)authorised visitors&lt;br&gt;• Delegates</td>
<td>Covid-19 restricted hours: Mon-Fri 07:00-18:00</td>
<td>Scanning by nurses before entry</td>
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<td>(vehicle)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Main Entrance</td>
<td>• UN grounds pass ‘S’ and ‘D’ holders – separate channel which bypasses screening (excluding “Affiliate” pass holders, who must pass through screening).&lt;br&gt;• All visitors (security screening).&lt;br&gt;• All conference participants (security screening).</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 07:00-18:00</td>
<td>Self-scanning at UN Main Entrance</td>
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<tr>
<td>(pedestrian)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flagpole Gate</td>
<td>• Meeting participants</td>
<td>Only as per pre-arrangements</td>
<td>Subject to specific event arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pedestrian)</td>
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If a person who undergoes for screening is noted to have a temperature of \( \geq 37.3^\circ C \), s/he will not be allowed to enter the UN premises. A medical staff will evaluate the person as a possible Patient Under Investigation (PUI) at the screening location.

This person will wait in the holding area and undergo evaluation. If, after the evaluation of the medical staff, the person is considered as a PUI, the medical staff will call the Department of Disease Control (DDC) Hotline (1422) to obtain further guidance on the next steps to manage the case.

For those who have symptoms but do not fulfil the criteria for a PUI, depending on the severity of their symptoms, they will be referred to a local hospital for further evaluation and management, or be advised to return to their accommodation to rest. They will also be not allowed to enter the premises.

Personnel with vehicles will enter the UN premises through the Main Vehicle Entrance Gate, which the access is granted for personnel who have parking decals or are pre-authorised to use the parking. Please find enclosed picture of the Main Vehicle Entrance Gate for your ease of reference.

For large-meetings, based on pre-arrangements between CMU, Safety and Security Services and Medical Service, the Flag Pole Gate (pedestrian) may be open for meeting participants. To avoid any congestion while practicing physical distancing, you may be requested to arrange different time slots for meeting participants with some time intervals. Please consult your respective event manager (CMU focal point) for details and cost implications.

Enclosed are pictures of all the Gates for your ease of reference.
DURING THE MEETING

Organizers should:

- Provide an introductory brief (see example below) prior to playing the video on the COVID-19.
- Ensure that participants sit on designated areas and keep physical distancing of 2 meter in conference/meeting rooms. Where physical distancing is not possible, all need to wear face masks.
- Request participants to wear masks in public spaces and to respect advices given by signages and safety ambassadors.
- Keep the list of attendees per meeting room and share it with CMU event manager as soon as the meeting is over.
- Make sure that there is a clear plan of what to do in case participants become unwell – either in the meeting or outside of meeting hours.

EXAMPLE: INTRODUCTORY BRIEF FOR THE CHAIR/SECRETARY OF THE MEETING

We suggest something along these lines:

“We would like to share with you the COVID-19 related precautionary measures while attending meetings at the UNCC.

A. Observe up to 2-meter physical distancing while sitting in the conference (or meeting) room. Please sit on areas not marked with signages. We kindly ask you not to move signages, chairs or furniture in the room.

B. Wear your face mask in public spaces and whenever physical distancing cannot be observed.

C. Disposable microphone covers are available if you speak to the microphone without having your mask on.

These measures are for your safety, and to safeguard the wellbeing of us all. Thanks for your kind attention to the contents of the following video on COVID-19 for Meeting Participants at the UNCC.”

HEALTHCARE FOR MEETING PARTICIPANTS

When feeling unwell outside UN premises: A participant who is unwell with fever, cough or other respiratory symptoms, regardless of whether this person has a history of exposure to COVID-19 (e.g., traveled from a high risk location, cared for someone with COVID-19, etc.) , may be considered a suspect COVID-19 case. As preparation for the meeting, the organizers should remind all participants of where to obtain medical care in the duty station or location of the meeting should they become unwell and to ensure to have the necessary medical insurance available for such services. Information on health care facilities available in Bangkok is provided in the email sample that the Conference Management Unit (CMU) event manager shared with meeting organisers.

When feeling unwell while in UN premises: Any meeting participant at UNCC who feels unwell should contact any UN medical service staff at 02 288 1352/1353/1761 for further guidance and advice on whether they should come to the ESCAP medical clinic for a consultation, or be directed to proceed to the Isolation Room (located on the 2nd level of the UNCC) for evaluation as a suspect case or Patient Under Investigation (PUI).

Medical personnel have the appropriate protective equipment, procedures and training to evaluate suspect cases of COVID-19. They will assess any suspect case and can facilitate referrals to the appropriate hospitals in Bangkok for evaluation and management where required.

Outside of working hours: Contact the UN Medical Services at 02 288 1353. For COVID-19 related emergencies call 1422 which is the Thai Department of Disease Control hotline. For other medical emergencies, call 1669.

FAQ’S FOR MEETING ORGANIZERS

A person with an important role or presentation to make is unwell. What should we do?
The presenter should not attend the meeting. Organizers should ensure there is a mechanism for a videoconference link to allow presenters to stay away but still deliver their information remotely.

**A participant is coughing and unwell. What should we do?**

The first step is for all other participants to keep their distance. Second, ask the participant to wear a mask and keep their distance from others. Call the Medical Service Unit at ext. 1352/1353/1761 for further advice.

**A participant is coughing and unwell AND has recently been in a high-risk country. What do we do?**

If you believe that there is a risk to the other participants, inform the unwell person to call the Medical Service Unit at above extension(s), during business hours. **Outside of working hours:** Contact the UN Medical Services at 02 288 1353. For Covid-19 related emergencies call 1422 which is the Thai Department of Disease Control hotline.

**In the event that someone should be ‘quarantined’, what does this mean?**

This really means 3 key things in practice. The person should:
- Avoid contacts by staying in their accommodation and keeping at least 2 meter away from others.
- Minimize the spread of virus particles by covering coughs, cleaning surfaces and washing or sanitizing hands regularly.
- Seek care or advice by phone first – before seeing a healthcare provider in person.

**Will there be hand sanitizers available?**

Yes, hand sanitizers stations are in place.

**Should participants who are well and free from respiratory symptoms wear face masks?**

Yes, in view of the current situation and following the guidance from the local health care authorities, everyone is asked to wear masks while in public places or areas where you cannot maintain 2-meter physical distancing.

**Is there other information available?**

Yes, we encourage you to review the ‘Travel Advice’ and ‘Protect Yourself’ sections in the World Health Organization website which is constantly updated to reflect the most recent information.