INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR AN
 INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT FOR
 THE APPLICATION OF THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT
 PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND
 PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE
Eighth session
Rome, 8-12 October 2001
Item 6 (c) of the provisional agenda∗

ISSUES ARISING OUT OF THE CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES

LOCATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

Note by the secretariat

1.   Article 19, paragraph 3 of the Rotterdam Convention provides as follows: "The secretariat functions
for this Convention shall be performed jointly by the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General
of FAO, subject to such arrangements as shall be agreed between them and approved by the Conference of
the Parties."

2.   In its resolution concerning the secretariat, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries which adopted the
Convention called upon the Director-General of FAO and the Executive Director of UNEP to provide a
comparative analysis of offers regarding the physical location of the secretariat for consideration by the
Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, the preparation of such analyses to be carried out in
consultation with the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

3.   After considering this issue at its sixth session, the Committee agreed that the secretariat would
prepare a list of elements of information required for further consideration of the issue of the location of the
secretariat by the Committee at its next session.

4.   At its seventh session, the Committee agreed that the secretariat had prepared an accurate list of the
information that should be requested from countries interested in hosting the permanent secretariat. In
decision INC-7/8, the Committee invited interested countries to provide to the secretariat, by 15 April 2001,
detailed information on the conditions and advantages attached to their offers, with special focus on the

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∗   UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.8/1.

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items listed in the appendix to that decision. The Committee requested the secretariat to compile the offers received and submit them for consideration at its eighth session.

5.   The Committee also agreed that countries interested in hosting the permanent secretariat should submit to the secretariat information on the length of time that they required to process any travel or visa requirements. A number of representatives expressed the view that it would be valuable for the Committee to have an idea of the priority attached to each of the elements. Acknowledging that it would be inappropriate to task the secretariat with such prioritization, the Committee considered that, once the relevant countries had provided the requisite information, the Parties themselves would be in a better position to assess where the priorities lay.

6.   By 15 April 2001, the secretariat had received the following offers:

       (a)   An offer from Germany to host the secretariat in Bonn. This offer is available as UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.8/INF/5;

       (b)   A joint offer from Italy and Switzerland to host the secretariat in Rome and Geneva. This offer is available as UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.8/INF/4.

7.   Copies of the offers received have been circulated to Governments. Further copies will be made available at the eighth session of the Committee.

<u>Possible action by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee</u>

8.   The Committee may wish to make provision for a formal presentation of the offers made, and to establish a contact group with participation from all regional groups and the countries that have submitted offers. This would allow for more detailed presentation of the offers and an in-depth review of the information provided. The contact group may wish to consider and recommend priorities and criteria for comparison of the offers received and to consider the further process in order to facilitate the decision by the Conference of the Parties regarding the location of the secretariat.