

# International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms

## Tehran – Iran, 3-5 July 2017

### Administrative Note

#### Conference venue:

The *International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (ICCSDS)* will be held in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 3-5 July 2017. **This is an invitation only conference.**

The opening ceremony and the first day – 3<sup>rd</sup> July – of the conference will be held in Tehran at Iran International Conference Center – OIC Hall. As the President is attending the opening ceremony and due to security measures, **no electronic equipment (phone, laptops, cameras etc) will be allowed inside the venue.**



Field visits are scheduled for the second day – 4<sup>th</sup> July – of the conference. Attendees can choose either to visit Kashan, Esfahan, where they will be able to see the measures taking by the Government of I.R. Iran to combat SDS, or they can choose to go to Ahwaz, Khuzestan and see the challenges the residence of the city face due to SDS.



The venue for the third day of the conference – 5<sup>th</sup> July – is the Department of Environment International Conference Hall, located on the Hakim Highway, between Sheikh Fazlolah and Yadegar Emam.



### Accommodation:

Self-funding participants: Participants who are funding their own accommodation should make reservations directly with the Esteghlal Hotel, where a number of rooms have been pre-booked by the Department of Environment at a preferential rate specifically for participants of the conference. The discounted rate for the events is US\$115-199 per night. Please note this rate may vary slightly depending on the room and may be subject to exchange rate fluctuation.

Please inform the hotel on booking that you are attending the *International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms*. Details of the hotel are as follows:

Name: Esteghlal Hotel

Tel: +98 (21) 22660011-25

E-mail address: [info@esteghlalhotel.com](mailto:info@esteghlalhotel.com)

Website: <http://esteghlalhotel.com>

Address: crossroad of Chamran and Valiasr, Tehran, Iran

Funded participants: For funded participants, accommodation and meals will be provided by the Esteghlal Hotel – for more details please see the separate “Information Note for Funded Participants”.

**Transportation from/to airport: (Please be advised that this information may change closer to the event)**

ICCSDS Information Desk will be available to assist guests after going through immigration. They will assist also with transportation from the airport to Esteghlal Hotel.

Upon arrival at the airport, VIP (ministers and deputy minister levels) guests are kindly asked to proceed to the Imam Khomeini Airport (IKA) VIP lounge.

All other participants are kindly requested to proceed through the main arrival terminal and go through passport control. Once this stage is completed there will be an ICCSDS Information Desk available to arrange transportation from the airport to Esteghlal Hotel. Shuttle buses will be available – schedules for which can be obtained from the Information Desk.

*Airport Taxi Service:*

You may also choose to organize your own transport from the IKA to the Esteghlal Hotel by using the airport taxi service at your own expense. Taxis in Tehran are by cash only. There is a taxi rank situated right outside the main arrival terminal. However, if you wish to book in advance, you can arrange this through the Seirosafar Company: <http://seirosafar.ir/>

The approximate cost of a Camry Taxi service from the IKA to the Esteghlal Hotel should be between IRR 800,000 to IRI 900,000. (The current rate is approximately Euro 1 = 40,000 IRR and 1 USD = 37,000 IRR.)

*Hotel Taxi Service:*

When reserving your room at the Esteghlal Hotel, you may also inquire about their hotel/airport transportation services.

**Transportation between hotel and venue:**

Daily round trip transportation will be provided for all participants from the Esteghlal Hotel to the Department of Environment throughout the conference. Should you wish to organize your own transportation between the hotel and the venue, the hotel concierge will arrange transportation by taxi on request.

**Cash Payments Only:**

There is a currency exchange in the arrival hall. As noted above, the current rate is approximately Euro 1 = 40,000 IRR and 1 USD = 37,000 IRR. Kindly note that international credit cards are not accepted in Iran and ATM withdrawals will not be possible. It is highly recommended that you travel with enough cash for the duration of your stay.

**Visas:**

All non-Iranian visitors entering Iran must be in possession of a valid passport (with at least 6 month's validity) and a current visa. You will find all the necessary documents for securing a visa for Iran at this site: <https://goo.gl/ZuXqBa>

Please ensure that you fill out and submit the registration form – part of which is dedicated for visa requests.

Participants with diplomatic passports and UN Laissez-Passers (UNLPs) will be provided with a reference ID with which they can refer to the nearest Iranian Embassy or Consulate to obtain a visa.

Participants should collect their Iranian visas at the Iranian Embassy or Consulate in their respective country. Although participants from many countries (with the exception of USA, Canada, UK, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Bangladesh, India, Colombia, Iraq, Somalia) may obtain their visas upon arrival at the airport, it is strongly recommended that participants arrange to collect their visas before departure. There is no Iranian Embassy in Canada and attendees from this country would need to collect their visa in Washington DC, from the Interest Section of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Registration form:**

You will find the registration form for the ICCSDS here: <https://goo.gl/ZuXqBa>

Should you require any further information or assistance please contact:  
sogol.jafarzadeh@one.un.org

**ANNEX – PRACTICAL INFORMATION NOTE**

**Tehran**

Tehran is the capital city of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is situated in the north of the country. Its coordinates are 35.7° N and 51.4° E and to the north of the city is located the magnificent Alborz Mountain range. The city covers an approximate area of 730 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 13 million people. It is a crowded city with significant traffic congestion.

**Time zone**

Iran Standard Time is UTC+03:30.

## Climate

Average temperature in July is 36 Degrees Celsius (96.8 Degrees Fahrenheit) with a humidity of 20%.

## Money

The Iranian official currency is Iranian Rials (IRR). No credit/debit cards or travelers cheques are accepted in Iran, and all transactions will have to be in cash. Travelers are advised to carry either USD or Euro cash, preferably in 100 USD/Euro bills. Open market rates can be checked online. The open market rate usually varies slightly from UN Operational Rate of Exchange.

Information on operational exchange rates can be found at this website:

<https://treasury.un.org/operationalrates/OperationalRates.php>

## Electronic banking

Due to the multi-lateral and bi-lateral sanctions imposed on Iran, there is a strict screening put in place by international banks. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that travelers do not undertake any electronic banking activity while in country. Such activities may result in foreign banks blocking the individual's account as a result of activities traced to Iranian IP addresses.

## Language

Farsi/Persian is the official language. English is spoken in hotels and quite widely within Tehran.

## Dress Code

The Islamic Republic of Iran has its own dress code, respecting the laws and customs of Islam. It is applicable to both men and women.

- *Women:* Women in Iran are expected to be modestly dressed. The local custom is for women to wear a long coat/jacket or loose tunic, known locally as a manteau. The coat should be at knee length or longer. It is recommended that women wear long pants (trousers) with a long shirt and a long jacket. As it is very warm in Terhan in July, we recommend you wear light fabrics or linens. Wearing a headscarf is scarf is mandatory in all public places. It is recommended that for official government meetings, that darker colours are worn. For footwear, sandals are acceptable in many place but it is recommended that you wear covered shoes during official meetings.
- *Men:* Men are required to wear long pants (trousers) at all times. Shorts are not acceptable. Normal business suit attire is acceptable for government and official

meetings. Local dress customs for men do not include wearing ties, however it is perfectly acceptable for international visitors and diplomats to do so. Sandals are acceptable footwear for men, but not recommended for official meetings.

For more information on the Iranian dress code please see this link:

<http://www.iranianvisa.com/dress.htm>

### **Handshaking**

In Iran, handshaking between men and women is not practiced. Foreigner males may shake the hand of a foreign female, but not an Iranian female.

### **Alcohol**

The consumption of alcohol is officially prohibited in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Shops and restaurants do not carry or offer alcohol and the import of alcohol is strictly forbidden.

### **Ta'rof**

Ta'rof is the Persian word for politeness and embodies the Iranian concept of social etiquette. In ta'rof, politeness holds the place of honour. Iranians are very hospitable people who take great pride in their hospitality and the comfort of visitors. This kindness is expressed in ensuring that guests are always made to feel comfortable.

### **Water**

It is perfectly safe to drink water from the tap in Tehran. Most other cities also have potable drinking water, but there are exceptions so please check before you travel. Bottled water is widely available.

### **Safety**

In general, Tehran is a very safe city and petty crime is minimal. It is advisable to carry ID with you at all times. Iran is a conservative society and it is advisable not to show affection in public.

### **Traffic**

Tehran is a highly populated city which results in heavy traffic congestion. Public transport is limited to a few Metro lines and bus routes. As a consequence, the roads are heavily populated

with cars, taxis and motorbikes. The result is slow moving traffic causing delays, and visitors should plan their journeys accordingly. Pedestrians are advised to proceed with caution.

## Holidays

Iran follows the Iranian Calendar, starting on 21 March, the Iranian New Year (Nowrooz). Islamic holidays follow the Islamic calendar and change each year. The weekend in Iran is Thursday and Friday, however most international companies and embassies take Friday and Saturday as their weekend.

## Electricity

Electricity in Iran is 220 volt, 50 HZ. Plugs are standard plug Type C.



## Internet

Internet speed is slow and some sites are filtered (Facebook, Twitter, BBC news, LinkedIn). It is advisable to install a VPN before travelling to Iran, for example HotspotVPN. However, it should be noted that slow internet connection speed may mean that the VPN does not work.

## Restaurants

Options for Restaurants in Tehran:

- Restaurants in the Darband area (North of Tehran/mountain area) • Divan Restaurant: ○ Address: 8th Fl., Sam Centre, Fereshteh St.
- Gilaneh Restaurant:
  - Address: District 3, Saba Blvd
- Dizi Restaurant (traditional): ○ Address: Kalantari St. (Iranshahr), No. 52
- Alighapou Restaurant:
  - Address: 55 Ghandi St., Vanak Sq.

## Sightseeing options

Options for sightseeing in Tehran:

1- Golestan Palace and the Grand Bazar:

Address: District 12, Panzdah-e Khordad Square Open  
every day 09:00 – 17:00

2- Sa'dabad Palace:

Address: District 1, Zafaranih area

Open every day 08:00 – 17:00 (buying tickets and entrance no later than 15:30)

3- Niavaran Palace:

Address: Niavaran Square

Open every day 08:00 – 17:00 (buying tickets and entrance no later than 16:00)

4- The National Jewelry Treasury:

Address: Central Bank of I.R. Iran, Ferdowsi Ave. Open  
Saturday to Tuesday 14:00 – 16:30

5. Museum of Contemporary Art:

North Karegar Ave.

Open every day 08:00 – 18:00 (buying tickets and entrance no later than 17:00)

6. National Museum of Iran:

30 Tir Ave.

Open every day 09:00 – 18:00 (buying tickets and entrance no later than 17:00)