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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT
FOR IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON
CERTAIN PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Seventh session

Geneva, 14-18 July 2003

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Preparations for the Conference of the Parties

**INFORMATION CONCERNING THE OFFER BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY TO HOST
THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON
PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS IN ROME****

Note by the secretariat

As stated in document UNEP/POPS/INC.7/23, information concerning the offer by the Government of Italy to host the permanent secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in Rome is contained in annex to the present note. The information is circulated as submitted by the Government of Italy and has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/POPS/INC.7/1.

** Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, article 20; Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Stockholm Convention, resolution 6 (in document UNEP/POPS/CONF/4, appendix I); decision INC-6/19 and appendix (in document UNEP/POPS/INC.6/22, annex I).

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Annex:

Genève,

With reference to document UNEP/POP's/INC 6/21 of the 20th March 2002 and to item 5 of the provisional agenda of the sixth INC of the POP's (Geneva 17th –21st June 200), Italy is pleased to submit the candidature of Rome (FAO premises) to host the permanent Secretariat to the Stockholm Convention c/o the FAO in Rome - Pesticides Section.

The candidature is in full agreement with all items listed in the Appendix UNEP/POP'S/INC 6/21 concerning Legal Framework, Features of the Office sites and related financial issues, Local Facilities and Conditions.

With specific reference to paragraph 11 of the Appendix, Italy offers a contribution of 600.000 euro/year to meet the operational costs of the section of the permanent Secretariat or to defray conference-servicing expenses.

This candidature must be considered in the framework of the Italian proposal of unification of the permanent Secretariats of both Rotterdam and the Stockholm Conventions, and in the light of the Italian-Swiss joint candidature for the PIC Secretariat. Therefore Italy has no objections and in fact gives its supports to the candidature of Geneva to host the Chemicals Section of the Permanent Secretariat to the Convention.

The choice of Rome for the Pesticides Section of the Secretariat, and of Geneva for the Chemicals Section, appears most suitable to enhance technical and scientific synergies, respectively with FAO in Rome and UNEP in Geneva, in the implementation of the Convention. In addition, Italy believes that this choice would entail considerable cost savings in terms of administration and logistic.

(Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso)

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Offer

by Italy

**to host the
Permanent Secretariat of the
Stockholm Convention (POP's)**

in Rome

**in response to the Decision INC-6/21 of the 6th Session of the Intergovernmental
Negotiating Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for the
Application of the Stockholm Convention (POP's).**

November 2002

I. Summary

Rome, has become the world capital for the agricultural and food sector owing to the presence of FAO, IFAD, WFP and other sectorial Organisations. Numerous other international organisations of the United Nations system have their headquarters in Rome or have an important representation there.

Concerning the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention (thereafter: Secretariat), its various duties are already performed by a number of specialists attached to FAO in Rome as far as pesticides are concerned. This has proven efficient and financially sound, both for the organisation and for the State Parties.

- The presence in the city of **a very large number of permanent representations (128 countries and 210 missions)** of States and numerous international NGOs creates significant advantages for the Secretariat. Moreover specialised representatives in multilateral chemical affairs are present in many of these missions. This allows for substantial savings on travel costs for the Secretariat.
- In Rome, the Interim POP's Secretariat is located in the ***FAO Building*** , where it benefits from **rent-free premises**, including meeting rooms and modern office facilities.
- In Rome , the Secretariat can already benefit from the excellent structures for conferences and meetings existing in ***FAO Headquarters***, including conference rooms with 16 to 1.210 seats, interpretation facilities into 6 languages, two restaurants, a bank, a post office, various cafeterias and many shops. These structures shall be freely rendered by Italian government. A **highly qualified staff** is available for **simultaneous translations** and for every other need inherent to the organisation of conferences, including **security services**.
- **Rome**, the eternal city, is, thanks to its climate, to its archaeological and architectural treasures and the proverbial charm of its culture and inhabitants, one of the most attractive cities in the world. In Rome, besides Diplomatic Missions accredited to Italy, there are also foreign Missions at the Holy See, the Order of Malta (SMOM), FAO and other international organisations which make **Rome one of the cities with the highest number of Diplomatic Missions in the world** to which one can add NGOs, Academies and various Institutes of Culture. Rome is also one of the modern capitals of the European Union: two intercontinental airports, railways and highways link it to other parts of Europe and to the rest of the world. Known for the excellent quality of its hotels, restaurants and shops, the city offers not only unique museums and monuments but also entertainment, opportunities for all sorts of sports and nearby areas of natural beauty such as the National Parks in the Appennine mountains and the beaches on the Mediterranean sea.
- **Italy has actively supported the international endeavours in the field of chemical management has consistently been amongst the main contributor countries to the process of the dangerous chemicals.** For the specific purpose of the POP's Convention – Pesticides Section, Italy will make available a total sum of **0.6 million Euro per annum**.

II. Answers to the Questionnaire as requested by Decision Inc 6/21

Introduction

Rome: Emotional Chemistry meets Environmental Efficiency

Rome is not only the capital of Italy, but also a cosmopolitan metropolis in full development, where the heritage of a millenary history and the needs of modern life find their meeting point.

Its inhabitants who number more than 2.800.000 (about 5.000.000 considering the whole metropolitan area) make it one of the largest European Union capitals, while the presence of the Holy See, of FAO and many other international organisations, make it a city where the **presence of foreigners** is specially affluent and appreciated by the inhabitants.

In the last few years it has endeavoured to reconcile the needs of an artistic heritage, which is unique in the world, with those of a the third millennium city. Due to the seats in Rome of **FAO, IFAD, and WFP**, an important pole of UN Agencies has been established, which has attracted further international organisations.

In addition to many schools and 10 Italian universities, in Rome there are a number of **foreign schools and universities**. The presence of numerous Academies (French, German, American, Romanian, Hungarian, Belgian and others) and of various Institutes of Culture, as well as the largest Mosque in Western Europe, facilitate contacts and work opportunities for the families of diplomatic missions members. The importance of tourism makes multilingual staff much sought after in the labour market.

With **two international airports**, railways and road links, which connect with most of the European cities, Rome has a highly developed transportation system which meets the demanding needs of a modern capital.

Italy policy towards international organisations

Italy has been host to international organisations **since 1951**, when the Italian Government offered to host FAO in a large former government building even before Italy joined the UN.

Presently the central seats or permanent missions of **23 international organisations, such as FAO, IFAD, WFP, ANUR, UNICRI, UNIDROIT, NATO Defence College, Latin Union, the European Bank and the League of Arab States**, as well as the headquarters of many non governmental organisations **are to be found in Rome**. Most of them specialised in development co-operation while some are active in environmental protection, such as W.W.F-Italy, Friends of the Earth Association and LIPU (League for birds).

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. Privileges and immunities which would be conferred on the permanent secretariat and its staff members.

In Rome the Secretariat and its staff will continue, as long as it remains part of the UN, to enjoy all the privileges and immunities conferred to the United Nations, including the following:

- For the **Secretariat**:
 - Immunity from jurisdiction and execution;
 - Inviolability of the premises, archives, property, funds and assets;
 - Freedom from financial controls, regulations or moratoria of any kind;
 - Facilities in respect of communications;
 - Right to use codes and to receive and send correspondence through diplomatic couriers and sealed bags;
 - The Secretariat, its assets, income and other property is exempt from direct income taxes (with regard to buildings, however, such exemption applies to those owned by the Secretariat and occupied by its branches and to income deriving therefrom).
 - Exemption from customs duties for its official duties;
 - Exemption from indirect taxes (including value-added tax with respect to all purchases of goods for its official use and all services provided for its official use);

- For the **staff with diplomatic status** (officials of rank P-5 or above):
 - The same privileges and immunities as accorded to members of the permanent missions to the UN with diplomatic status (for example: immunity from personal arrest or detention, immunity from jurisdiction and execution, inviolability of papers, goods and assets, etc.). The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 18 April 1961 applies by analogy;
 - Exemption from direct taxes on salaries, emoluments and allowances paid to them by the POP's Secretariat. This exemption also applies to persons of the nationality of the host country, as long as the POP's Secretariat operates an internal taxation scheme;
 - Exemption from indirect taxes (including value-added tax on articles purchased for their strictly personal use and on all services supplied for their strictly personal use);
 - Exemption from custom duties on articles for their personal use;
 - Access to the Tax-free shop for diplomats in Geneva to meet their personal needs;

- For the **other staff**:
 - Immunity from jurisdiction and execution for acts (including words spoken or written) performed by them in the exercise of their functions;
 - Inviolability of their papers, data media and official documents;

- Exemption from direct taxes on the salaries, emoluments and allowances paid to them by the POP's Secretariat (this exemption also applies to persons of the nationality of the host country as long as the POP's Secretariat operates an internal taxation scheme);
 - Exemption from any immigration restriction, aliens registration formalities and national service obligation;
 - Facilities in respect of currency or exchange regulations;
- For the **delegates** to the conferences:
 - Immunity from personal arrest or detention and immunity from seizure of their personal baggage, except in flagrant cases of offence;
 - Immunity from jurisdiction and execution for acts (including words spoken or written) performed by them in the exercise of their functions;
 - Inviolability of all papers, data media and official documents;
 - Exemption from any immigration restriction, aliens registration formalities and national service obligations;
 - Customs privileges and facilities in accordance with the national law;
 - The same facilities in respect of currency or exchange regulations as are granted to representatives of foreign Governments on temporary official missions;
 - The right to use codes in their official communications and to receive or send documents or correspondence by means of diplomatic couriers or bags;
 - The delegates with diplomatic rank have access to the Tax free shop for diplomats in Geneva to meet their personal needs;
 - For the **experts** on mission:

Experts called upon by the POP's Secretariat will, for the duration of their missions on Italian territory, including travel time, enjoy, such privileges and immunities as to the extent necessary for the discharge of their duties, to wit:

- Immunity from personal arrest or detention and immunity from seizure of their personal baggage, save in flagrant cases of offence;
- Immunity from jurisdiction for acts (including words spoken or written) performed by them in the course of their missions;
- Inviolability of their papers, data media and official documents;
- Exemption from any immigration restrictions, aliens registration formalities and national service obligations;
- The same facilities in respect of currency exchange regulations as are granted to representatives of foreign Governments on temporary official missions;
- The same immunities and facilities concerning their personal baggage as are granted to diplomatic agents;

2. Rules, including any restrictions, applicable to the employment of dependants of staff members

▪ For spouses and children:

The spouses of officials of the Secretariat in Rome enjoy access to the labour market, provided they reside in Italy and under the same roof as the principal holder of the identity card.

The children of officials of the Secretariat who enter Italy on the ground of family reunification before the age of 18 and reside in the two countries under the same roof as the principal holder of the identity card will likewise enjoy access to the labour market even if they take up employment after this age.

Such persons will not be subject to the application of regulations governing the labour market such as priority recruitment of resident workers and prior check on pay and working conditions.

▪ For domestic staff:

Officials of the Secretariat (Senior officials and professional category officials), provided they reside in Italy and are not nationals of the host country, are entitled to hire private servants (domestic staff) under the legitimation card scheme without to comply with the normal immigration rules.

However, the conditions of employment must be compatible with the social order in the host country and minimal rules have in any case to be respected. The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs have issued directives to help the concerned parties - employers as well as employees - to know what their minimal rights and obligations are in this field.

FEATURES OF THE OFFICE SITE AND RELATED FINANCIAL ISSUES

3. Main features of the building to house the permanent secretariat, including office space, facilities for conferences and availability of general services (security, maintenance, etc).

In **Rome**, the Secretariat will be hosted in the *FAO building*.

The FAO building is a large construction with a great architectural merit, built in the 30's to house a many government office. It was freely transferred to FAO for its own use in 1951. It has been modernised many times and it **is located in one of the most picturesque places of the City** (near the Circo Massimo and Caracalla Thermal Baths). The *FAO building* is specially equipped with numerous conferences rooms and modern electronic and communication means. Furthermore, a very high satellite connectivity is available through link with Telespazio. The *FAO building* is provided with every comfort, including shops, restaurants, a bank, a newsagent, a bookstall, and a post office.

Inside the *FAO building* a special duty free shop is available for international civil servants working at the FAO and members of diplomatic mission accredited to the FAO.

The *FAO building* belongs to the Italian State, which ask no rent (other than the symbolic dollar to be paid each year according to the Headquarters Agreements). Italy provides to the special maintenance of the complex, and pays a notable amount for its day-to-day up-keep.

The security needs of the complex are adequately met by the Organisation's security services.

4. Basis for placing the office facilities at the disposal of the permanent secretariat, such as:

- (a) Ownership by the permanent secretariat (through donation or purchase);
- (b) Ownership by the host Government without rent;
- (c) Host Government ownership with rent, and amount of such rent.

The Pesticides section of the Secretariat is hosted on a rent-free the FAO Building.

5. Responsibility for:

(a) Major maintenance and repairs to the office facilities;

Major maintenance and repairs of the FAO Building are entirely on Italian charge.

(b) Normal maintenance and repair;

Normal maintenance and repairs are assumed by the resident organisation at their own costs. Nevertheless the Italian State contributes actively by means of yearly grants.

(c) Utilities, including communication facilities.

Utilities are paid by resident organisations.

6. Extent to which the office facilities would be furnished and equipped by the host Government.

The Secretariat is already fully operational.

7. Duration of the arrangements regarding office space.

The Secretariat can enjoy the facilities provided in Rome for as long as it wishes, at the same conditions.

LOCAL FACILITIES AND CONDITIONS

8. Description of the following facilities and conditions:

(a) Diplomatic representations in the host city.

At present day, 216 Diplomatic Missions are established in **Rome** 130 are accredited to the Italian State, 63 to the Holy See and 23 to the FAO, and the other U.N. Organisations.

(b) Presence of international organisations.

In the last years the presence of international organisations acting in Rome was much increased, accentuating in this way the international character which has always distinguished this city.

Presently the central seats or Permanent Representations of 23 international organisations are hosted in Rome, among which we can remember:

- Food and Agriculture Organisation (**FAO**)
- International Found for Agricultural Development (**IFAD**)
- World Food Program (**WFP**)
- **IPGRI**
- **ACNUR**
- **OMS**
- **OIL**
- **OIM**
- **IDLI**

- UNICRI
- UNIDROIT

Moreover, are present the Seats and offices of the Latin Union, the League of the Arab States of the European Commission of U.N. of more than 70 ONG, most of which are specialised in matters related to agriculture and development , but among which we also find organisations dealing with environment such as WWF-Italy, Association Friends for the Earth, The League for Environment and the League for Birds.

(c) Availability of international conference facilities and the conditions for their use (free of charge, rent, etc.).

The *FAO Building* is equipped with 21 conferences rooms varying in size from 15 to 1.210 places; they are all fitted with the most modern technology and are freely available to the Secretariat. The total number of seats is 3.025 and the room equipment includes a screen, a movie projector, fittings for video-conferences and simultaneous translation. Inside the *FAO Building* there are two restaurants, various cafeterias, a bookstall, a post office, various cafeterias and many shops.

(d) Access to qualified conference servicing staff, e.g. interpreters, translators, editors and meeting co-ordinators, familiar with United Nations conferences and practices.

In Rome, thanks to the presence of FAO, WFP and other international UN organisations, highly qualified staff for simultaneous translations and for every other need inherent to the organisation of conferences, including security services, is locally available.

Moreover, there is a large foreign community in the city for study or work reason, through which it is easy to find qualified staff.

(e) International transports facilities

By air:

Rome has two intercontinental airports: one in Fiumicino (Leonardo da Vinci Airport), about 20 km away from downtown and from where intercontinental flights depart regularly, the other in Ciampino (Giovan Battista Pastine Airport), which is situated 15 km from the centre of the town, and is specialised in charter flights. 85 airlines serve these two airports in addition to many charter companies. A total of about 145 destination can be reached from Rome. In the year 2000, the total number of flights amounted to 320.000, carrying more than 26 million passengers.

Fiumicino airport is very well linked to the new international hub of Milano-Malpensa by the Italian Railways.

Both at Fiumicino airport and at Ciampino airport, free parking places are available for cars displaying a diplomatic plate.

In both airports there are various duty free shops.

Italian Railways link Rome – Fiumicino airport to the main stations in the city. There is a direct connection with Termini station (30 minutes) and an indirect one with many stops, one of which is at Roma - Ostiense Station (35 minutes) near the *FAO Building* (1 underground stop).

By surface:

Many trains depart from **Rome** Termini Station, connecting Rome with Paris, Barcelona, Geneva, Monaco and Vienna, in addition of course to other Italian cities such as Naples, Florence, Venice, Milan and Turin.

(f) Local transport facilities.

Public transportation services are available inside the host city with access to:

- The proposed building/accommodations;
- The residence sections;
- The International Airport;
- Hotels.

In Rome there is a complete service of buses, trolley-cars and an underground system crossing all zones of the city with more than 200 lines. The underground B line, which connects quickly the main stations in town (Termini, 4 stops, 10/12 minutes, Roma - Ostiense, 1 stop, 3 minutes stop at Circo Massimo - FAO) which is directly in front of the entrance of the *FAO building*, and thus connects it very conveniently with the rest of the city.

(g) Local availability of trained personnel for possible employment in the permanent secretariat, taking account of language and skills.

The presence of numerous diplomatic representations, Academies, Institutes of Culture, International organisations and ONG make it possible and easy to find highly qualified staff to work in an international environment.

The recent choice of Rome as the seat of the Secretariat of some important international organisations, such as IPGRI, is a further evidence of the facility with which international organisations succeed in working in the context of UN Roman Pole.

The possibilities of jobs for the family of foreign staff, due to the presence of many international bodies and societies and of a tourism sector always in quest of multilingual personnel, are excellent.

(h) Health facilities and access to them by staff members of the permanent Secretariat.

Health care

Italy offer excellent medical and hospital facilities of all kinds. Rome's hospital network and private clinics operate to the highest medical standards and can offer all types of care. These institutions are accustomed to patients from abroad and are able to cope not only with their patient's medical requirements but also their linguistic and cultural needs. In addition to the public sector hospitals, there are many private clinics offering a variety of medical facilities.

Within one hour's drive from Rome, there are several thermal baths, such as Fiuggi, Tivoli and Saturnia, which are very well known for the effectiveness of their special rheumatological and dermatologist treatments, as well for the cosmetic qualities of their mineral waters and mud. All of these spas are available for daily treatment as well as for longer stays.

Medical insurance

In Italy, Public Health system provides basic treatment free of charge or with partial reimbursement, (a small percentage paid by the patient) for special cures. These facilities are available for foreign citizens enrolled in the Local Health Agencies (ASL) and they may benefit from treatments provided by the Italian Health Service, both in public hospitals and in most private clinics.

Furthermore it is possible to subscribe to a private insurance scheme, which offers a full reimbursement of medical expenses incurred in private clinics.

(i) Availability of suitable housing.

In Rome the "rent-a-flat situation" offers a variety of possibilities for all economic needs, ranging from residences just outside town, with all comforts, such as swimming pool and tennis courts, to the fascinating houses in the historical centre or modern apartments in residential areas.

The recent liberalisation of leases and rents has given rise to the an increased in supply, which was quite limited in the past, and to a general reduction in rents. Today, an apartment of 150 mq can be rented for 2.000-2.500 Euro per month; rents in the historical centre are slightly higher (an apartment of 100 mq can entail a rent of 1.500-2.000 Euro per month), while for houses in the outskirts of Rome, in areas with a great architectural value (such as the Appia Antica or Cassia) rents are between 2.500 to 5.000 Euro per month.

A diplomatic clause may be added to most leases facilitating the termination of the lease in case of an earlier leave.

(j) Availability of schools at all levels, including those providing classes in languages other than the local language.

Pre-school system

Pre-school activities reserved for children from 0 to 4 years old are organised by the Municipality of Rome (www.comune.roma.it/), which administers a network of 147 nursery

schools, located in all areas of town and where, during the parent's working hours, more than 8.000 children are looked after by a highly qualified teaching staff.

In Rome there are about 180 nursery schools administered by the municipal authorities.

There are also private institutes, both religious and secular, which offer top-quality teaching at reasonable costs.

Primary, Intermediate and High school system

Italy's state school system, which is totally free of charge, is recognised to have one of the highest standards in the western world. Presently, after primary school, from the age of 6 to the age of 10, children are directed to a second cycle of compulsory schooling (intermediate school) lasting until they reach 13. Secondary education lasts until 18th year of age. Children can choose between secondary schools with different orientations, including the sciences, languages, fine arts, design, etc.. They all give access to university. In Rome there are 394 educational institutes, among which 143 are secondary schools. All Institutes are administered by the Provincial Education Office in Rome.

In Rome there is a conspicuous number of private schools, both religious and secular, which follow the Italian state curricula studiorum. On account of the vast community of foreign people in Rome, there are also some international schools where lessons are given in one or more foreign languages. Presently, there are 12 foreign schools in Rome, which have been officially recognised by the Italian Government.

- Lycée Chateaubriand (prim., sec., sec. sup.) french (www.france-italia.it/chateau/)
- Saint Dominique Ecole Francaise di Roma (sec., sec. sup.) french (www.infotelpg.it/isd/)
- Liceo Spagnolo Cervantes di Roma (prim., sec., sec. sup.)
- Scuola elementare svedese di Roma (prim.)
- The St George's English School di Roma (prim., sec., sec. sup.) (www.stgeorge.school.it/)
- St Stephen's School di Roma (prim., sec., sec. sup.) (www.ststephens.it/)
- Marymount International School di Roma (prim., sec., sec. Sup.) www.marymountrome.com/
- American Overseas School di Roma (prim., sec.) (www.aosr.org/)
- The New School (prim., sec., sec. sup.) (www.newschoolrome.com/)
- Scuola Giapponese di Roma (prim., sec.)
- Scuola Germanica di Roma (prim., sec., sec. sup.) (www.dsrome.de/)
- Scuola Svizzera di Roma (prim., sec., sec. sup.) (www.tiscalinet.it/ssroma/)

Universities:

Italian Universities have gained universal recognition in the academic world for their first-class level of teaching and research. In addition to the Ateneo della Sapienza (University of Rome), - one of the most famous Universities in the world and the largest one in terms of number of students enrolled - a number of other universities have recently been founded.

Academic Institutes in Rome:

- Università degli studi di Roma “La Sapienza” (13 faculties), www.uniroma1.it/
- Università degli studi di Roma “Tor Vergata” (6 faculties), www.uniroma2.it/
- Università degli studi di Roma “Roma Tre” (8 faculties), www.uniroma3.it/

In Rome there is a large number of Research Institutes and Centres for post-graduate vocational training at an international level.

Private universities

Private Universities in Rome, both Italian and foreign , are as follows:

- Libera Università Internazionale per gli Studi Sociali - LUISS (2 faculties), www.luiss.it/
- Libera Università Maria SS. Assunta - LUMSA (4 faculties)
- Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
- Pontificia Università Gregoriana
- Pontificia Università Salesiana
- Pontificia Università S.Tommaso
- American University of Rome
- European School of Economics
- John Cabot University, www.johncabot.edu/
- The Pennsylvania State University
- St John’s University, www.stjohns.edu/

Cost of schooling

Public sector:

In Rome, the whole schooling system (including day nursery and nursery schools) is entirely free of charge also for the children of foreign citizens regularly residing in Italy. University taxes are calculated on the basis of students' family income and vary between 100 and 700 Euro per year.

Private sector:

In Italy private schools fees vary depending on the cycle, level and orientation of the schools are comprised between 1.000 and 5.000 Euro per year.

Private Universities have fees which can vary between 3.000 and, for specialisation courses, up to 12.000 Euro per year.

(k) Time needed for processing entry requirements.

Short stay visas for delegates and experts designated by a government or invited by an intergovernmental organisation to attend a meeting in Italy are normally granted within 24 hours after submission of the required documents to the competent Embassy or Consulate. Longer processing times, that however should not exceed 2 weeks, might occur in particular cases. Visas are issued free of charge.

Visas for staff members and their families who have been posted as officials for an intergovernmental organisation or permanent missions will be granted in the shortest possible time and not longer than one month.

Multiple-entry visas with a period of validity up to 3 years can be issued for persons travelling frequently to Italy.

In exceptional circumstances a procedure is available to issue short stay visa upon arrival at the airport in Italy.

Thanks to the Schengen agreement an entry visa to Italy is valid for most of the European Union countries.

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

10. Any additional contributions to be made by the host Government to meet the operating costs of the permanent secretariat or to defray conference-servicing expenses.

With specific reference to paragraph 11 of the Appendix, Italy offers a contribution of 600.00 euro/year to meet the operational costs of the section of the Permanent or to defray conference-servicing expenses.

11. Any other information which the potential host country may deem relevant.

Rome have a long experience of hosting intergovernmental organisations and international conferences. National and local administrations deal diligently and with a minimum of red tape with the sort of questions that organisations, missions, members of their staff and delegates may encounter. Security and border services work rapidly and friendly when delegates arrive. Translation and conference services are to be found on the spot.

To help newcomers, the Italian authorities provide special services:

- The *Cerimoniale della Repubblica*, depending from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, offers to the staff of International Organisations and to foreign guests, its support for all matters related to privileges and immunities.

- The *Cerimoniale* and the *Office of Relazioni Internazionali* of the city of Rome, help the officers of the international organisations and their families in their relations with local bodies.
- The *Association of spouses of diplomats* in Rome provides all sort of information and help to newcomers including to domestic staff. In particular, it organises visits to places of natural and cultural interest.
- The numerous *Embassies* and *Diplomatic Representations*, in co-operation with the Italian authorities, help actively the foreign staff and their families to solve every problem that might arise during their stay.

Rome attract the attention of the *international media*, insuring that the organisations get the coverage they need to make their action known.

In Rome several hundreds of international journalists permanently established are organised in associations:

- L'*Associazione della stampa estera* in Italia (www.stampa-estera.it), established in 1912 and has 540 members from 55 countries, and more than 800 information organs are therein represented.

Rome is amongst the favourite cities providing for headquarters for international activities and home for staff and families.

From all points of view, such as quality of life, jobs, safety, infrastructure, cultural activities, medical services, education and climate, Rome offers many remarkable advantages.

Rome combines the fascination of its monuments and of its history with a very relevant and intensive cultural life. Museums, musical performances, art galleries, theatres and opera houses in such an attractive environment, make the staying in Rome a unique worthwhile life experience.