

NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2025/126

Geneva, 18 November 2025

CONCERNING:

CONCERNING THE CANDIDATURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AS MEMBER OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

1. This Notification is being published by the Secretariat following questions raised by Parties in relation to the candidature of the European Union (EU) as regional Member of the Standing Committee for Europe, contained in information document [CoP20 Inf. 18](#) on the *Election of Regional Members of the Standing Committee and of Members of the Animals and Plants Committees*.
2. The Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties, included in Annex 1 to [Resolution Conf. 18.2](#) on the *Establishment of Committees*, contain no restrictions on the election of a regional economic integration organization (REIO) as a Member of the Standing Committee. Paragraph 3, a) of these Terms of Reference refer to “*regional Members that are Parties elected from each of the six major geographic regions*[..]”.
3. In the view of the Secretariat, the EU, being a Party to the Convention, can exercise the right to be elected as a regional Member of the Standing Committee from the major geographic region of Europe, as it officially submitted its candidature 120 days prior to CoP20 in accordance with the provisions set out in Resolution Conf. 18.2. It is the Secretariat’s view that the EU may do so in its capacity as Party to the Convention, irrespective of whether another Party, which is an EU Member State, is also elected as a Member. The two membership positions are not overlapping. In such a case, during meetings, discussions and voting procedures of the Standing Committee, the two regional Members, i.e. the EU and the Party that is an EU Member State, would perform their functions and duties as distinct Members of the Standing Committee. For instance, if a decision of the Standing Committee is put to a vote under Rule 15 of the [Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee](#), the EU as a regional Member of the Committee would have one vote just as any other Member of the Standing Committee.
4. Should the EU be elected as a Member of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat considers that its Representative, Alternative Representative and such Advisors as it may deem necessary, which will be entitled to represent the EU in the Committee, in line with Rule 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee, should be officers of EU institutions.
5. In this context, it is recalled that the EU acceded to the Convention on 9 April 2015, in accordance with Article XXI, and the Convention entered into force for the EU on 8 July 2015. Article XXI paragraph 4 of the Convention provides that “*[i]n matters within their competence, such regional economic integration organizations shall exercise the rights and fulfil the obligations which this*

Convention attributes to their Member States, which are Parties to the Convention. In such cases the Member States of the organizations shall not be entitled to exercise such rights individually. This provision refers to areas of competence of REIO in which such organizations represent their Member States and act on their behalf. This provision should not be interpreted as implying an overall incompatibility in the concurrent exercise of any rights or fulfilment of any obligations by a REIO and its Member States in parallel. As a Member of the Standing Committee, a REIO would not be exercising the rights attributed to its Member States, but its own rights as a Party to the Convention.