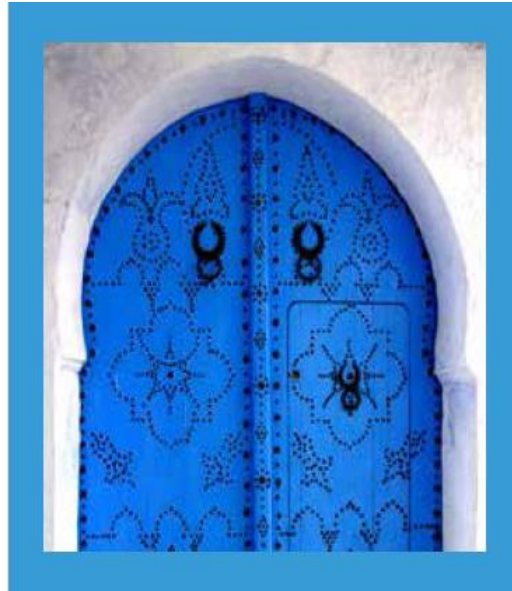




**WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean
Sixty-first session, Tunis, Tunisia
19-22 October 2014**

Information Bulletin 1





Tunisia



Tunisia, is the northernmost country in Africa and, at almost 165 000 square kilometres in area, the smallest country in the Maghreb region of North Africa. It is bordered by Algeria to the west, Libya to the south east and the Mediterranean Sea to the north and east.

Capital: Tunis

Currency: Tunisian dinar

Continent: Africa

Population: 10.89 million

Official language: Arabic

Welcome to Tunisia, a country with three thousand years of history and 1300 kilometers of Mediterranean coastline.

An age-old civilization between East and West, its geo-strategic location in the Mediterranean has placed Tunisia in the forefront of history. A crossroads for brilliant and diversified civilizations, the country was successively Punic, Roman, Vandal, Byzantine, Arab and Muslim, Ottoman, Husseinite, and a French protectorate, before gaining independence in 1956.

The Phoenicians chose Carthage in 814 BC to build a capital for what became the powerful Punic Empire, with prosperity based on commerce. They established an impressive network of trading posts throughout the Mediterranean, strengthening the tradition of world trade. Tunisia naturally evolved into a land of welcome, blessed with many strong points.

During the Roman period, Tunisia developed its exports to the point of becoming the breadbasket of Rome. The manufacture of ceramics and the processing of agricultural products flourished. Oil and wheat production occupied a place of choice. From the Punic period and through six centuries of Roman presence, this land gave birth to illustrious thinkers and historic figures.

The Arab-Muslim civilization began in the 7th century and brought about a golden age in literature, religion, agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, and naval construction. Kairouan was founded in 670 and soon became the second greatest city in the empire, known for the spiritual influence exerted by its great thinkers: the founder of sociology, Ibn Khaldoun; the physician Ibn Al Jazzar; the poet Ibn Rachiq, and many others.

More than anywhere else, past and present are intricately linked in this country that has always welcomed visitors, cooperation and friendship. A long line of remarkable people have contributed to making today Tunisia a special place with a unique makeup that works smoothly. Tolerance, determination to get the job done, and an irrepressible joy of living are the dominant traits to be found in Tunisia.

TUNIS

Tunis is the capital of Tunisia. It is Tunisia's largest city, with a population of 651 183 as of 2013. The greater metropolitan area holds some 2 300 000 inhabitants. Tunis was a small Berber town living in the shadow of Carthage. It began its rise in the eighth century when Arab made it a trading post. It developed around a medina, which still exists today, with mosques, the most important is the Great Mosque Zaytuna.

Situated on the Gulf of Tunis on the Mediterranean Sea, the city extends along the coastal plain and the hills that surround it. At the centre of more modern development lies the old medina. Beyond this district lie the suburbs of Gammarth, La Marsa, Sidi Bou Said, Carthage, Le Kram and the port of La Goulette.

The city's 9th century Medina no longer has its old, stone walls but the tapered streets, souks, mosques, and historic structures remain as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In sharp contrast to the ancient quarter's passageways, is the Ville Nouvelle (New Town) built by the French.

In the centre of the capital, more-recent revitalization has brought fresh glamour and renovation to its fine art nouveau theatres, Franco-Arabic market buildings and colonial cathedrals built in Roman Byzantine style. Now that the area around tree-lined Avenue Bourguiba, which runs

from the TGM train station to the main entrance to the medina, is largely pedestrian it boasts the elegance and pizzazz of a café-lined Parisian boulevard.

The venue of the 61st session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean is Carthage Le Palace Hotel. This hotel is located on Cape Gammarth, 14 km north-east of Tunis.



Le Palace Tunis Hotel

Sources:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tunis>

http://www.investintunisia.tn/site/en/article.php?id_article=800

<http://www.cometotunisia.co.uk/regions-cities/tunis-around>

<http://www.consulfrance-tunis.org/IMG/gif/carte1.gif?301/18d3f20edbacc73a639eb0f21c07e8a1426e707e>

Date and location

The Sixty-first session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean is scheduled to take place in Le Palace Hotel, Gammarth, Tunis, Tunisia, from Sunday 19 October to Wednesday 22 October 2014, inclusive.

Address

Complexe Cap Gammarth
BP 86 2078 La Marsa, Les Côtés de Carthage
Tunisie
Tel : +216 71 912 000
Fax : +216 71 911 442 / +216 71 911 971

On 19 October 2014, at 9.00 hrs, the pre-RC Technical Meetings will take place in the Le Serail conference hall, followed by the inaugural session of the Regional Committee, in the same hall, at 19:00 hrs.

Registration for participation

The registration form for participation in the 61st session of the RC is attached as Annex A. Each participant should complete the form and return it to the WHO Secretariat not later than 7 September 2014.

Membership and attendance

The Regional Committee shall consist of representatives one each from the Member States forming the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the World Health Organization. The representatives may be accompanied by alternates and advisers (Rule 1 of the Rules of Procedure).

The Regional Director, in consultation with the Regional Committee, may invite States not members of the Committee to participate without vote in the sessions of the Committee. The Regional Director, in consultation with the Regional Committee, may also invite nongovernmental organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Committee (Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure).

Credentials

The Member States shall communicate to the Regional Director, not less than 15 days before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Committee, the name of their representatives, including all alternates and advisers. Similarly organizations and States invited to be represented at the session shall communicate the names of the persons by whom they will be represented. The credentials of representatives and names of alternates, advisers and observers shall be submitted to the Regional Director if possible not less than two days before the opening of the session of the Regional Committee. Such credentials shall be issued by the Head of State, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health or

any other appropriate authority (Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure).

Working languages

The working languages of the Committee are Arabic, English and French. Statements made in any of these languages will be interpreted simultaneously into the other two languages.

Agenda and other documents

The Provisional Agenda for this Regional Committee Session (Document EM/RC61/1) is attached as Annex B. Further official documentation of the session will be available in Arabic, English and French on the home page of the session (<http://www.emro.who.int/rc61>) from early September 2014. Documents will not be dispatched by post. Furthermore, participants are kindly requested to bring all documents to the session, as only limited numbering hard copies will be available.

Submissions by delegations

It would be appreciated if delegations wishing to propose draft resolutions distributed to the Regional Committee could hand them in to the Secretariat at least 2 days before the proposal is discussed, to allow time for translation, reproduction in the working languages and circulation to delegations.

Travel arrangements

Delegates/participants should make their own travel arrangements for both outward and return journeys. They are strongly advised to have their return flights confirmed before departing for Tunisia, as onward reservations and deviations may be difficult to obtain at short notice. The Secretariat will provide assistance with travel arrangements during the session, if needed.

Arrival in Tunisia

Upon arrival at Tunis-Carthage International Airport, transport to the hotel will be made available, provided participants have supplied their travel details on time. In order to facilitate the process, please return Annex A, completed with flight details and transportation requirements.

The journey time by car from the airport to the hotel is around 20 minutes.

Entry visa to Tunisia

Representatives and other participants should obtain visa for Tunisia prior to departure from their home countries. Should any assistance be required, they should contact either the WHO Representative or the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in their countries. Meanwhile, the Regional Office in Cairo is prepared to assist participants from countries where consular authorities of Tunisia are not available in

obtaining their visa on arrival at the airport. Please indicate your need for assistance with visa in Annex A and attach a clear copy of your passport.

Privileges and immunities

All Members officially attending the Regional Committee in Tunis, as well as their alternates and advisers, will enjoy the privileges and immunities granted to Representatives at meetings convened by UN Specialized Agencies, which are set out in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies.

Health requirements on arrival/departure

According to the WHO International Travel and Health Requirements, the Government of Tunisia does not require any vaccination certificates from international travellers except for those coming from yellow fever-infected areas. However, also check with the travel agent or airline concerned regarding any recent developments in health requirements.

Insurance

The Secretariat cannot accept liability for personal accidents or loss of or damage to the private property of participants and accompanying persons, either during or indirectly arising from attendance at the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean. Participants should make their own arrangements with respect to health and travel insurance.

Accommodation

Hotel accommodation has been arranged at Le Palace Hotel. Hotel rates are included in the booking request (Annex A). Participants should complete the form and return it to the WHO Secretariat not later than 7 September 2014.

Hotel bookings will be arranged as and when requests are received and participants will be advised by return about action taken. It is important that requests for hotel accommodation are complete, with the exact duration of stay and number of room bookings to be made, as well as whether each room or suite should be for single or double occupancy.

Please note that the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean cannot undertake to guarantee accommodation and rates for requests received after 7 September 2014.

Transportation

Transport will be provided on arrival and departure and for any official functions which are held away from the hotel, noting that transportation will only be made available to and from the hotel listed in Annex A.

Banking facilities

The current exchange rate is TND 1.639 per 1 US\$ which is subject to change should there be a revision in rates. Foreign currency can be exchanged at the hotel or at any bank in Tunis or authorized dealers. The hotel bank is open 24 hours. Major credit cards are accepted in most establishments.

Climate

In October the weather is expected to be warm during the day and cold in the evening. Temperatures during this time of the year range between a maximum of 23°C and a minimum of 15°C.

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR
THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
Sixty-first session
Tunis, Tunisia, 19-22 October 2014**

REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill in the appropriate details and choices for accommodation and transportation and e-mail to emrgoasu@who.int and emrgoasurms@who.int, or by fax to +20 2 26702492-4. The form should be received by WHO by 7 September 2014 latest.

1. Personal data

Name:	Nationality:
Title:	
Representing Country/Organization:	
Phone:	E-mail:

2. Hotel booking at Le Palace Hotel

Please choose your accommodation preference from the listed room categories. Rates are in Tunisian Dinars and inclusive of all taxes and charges. Rooms are on bed and breakfast basis and suite rates are on bed only basis.

Single standard room	200	Ambassador suite	840
Double standard room	220	Ministerial suite (family)	1050
Junior/Business suite	560	Presidential suite	2100
Consul suite	840	Imperial suite "Didon"	4200
Diplomatic suite	840	Imperial suite "Cleopatre"	4200

3. Transport

If you are flying from/to Tunis-Carthage International Airport and would like transport to the hotel on arrival and/or to the airport on departure, please indicate your flight details:

Transport needed on arrival <input type="checkbox"/>		Transport needed on departure <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date		Date	
Flight no.		Flight no.	
Time		Time	

4. Assistance with visa on arrival

Should you need assistance with visa to Tunisia, please check the box and attach a clear copy of your passport.

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
Sixty-first Session
Tunis, Tunisia, 19-22 October 2014**

**EM/RC61/1.Rev.1
15 June 2014**

Provisional Agenda

1. **Opening of the Session**
 - (a) Election of Officers
 - (b) Adoption of the Agenda EM/RC61/1.Rev.1
2. **Programme and budget matters**
 - (a) Operational planning for 2014-2015: process, outcomes, and lessons learnt EM/RC61/2
 - (b) Proposed Programme budget 2016-2017 EM/RC61/3
3. **(a) Annual Report of the Regional Director 2013** EM/RC61/4
Progress reports on:
 - (b) Eradication of poliomyelitis EM/RC61/INF.DOC.1
 - (c) Tobacco-Free Initiative EM/RC61/INF.DOC.2
 - (d) Achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals and global health goals after 2015 EM/RC61/INF.DOC.3
 - (e) Regional strategy for health sector response to HIV 2011-2015 EM/RC61/INF.DOC.4
 - (f) Saving the lives of mothers and children EM/RC61/INF.DOC.5
4. **Technical Discussions**
 - (a) Global health security – challenges and opportunities with special emphasis on International Health Regulations EM/RC61/Tech.Disc.1
 - (b) Emergency preparedness and response EM/RC61/Tech.Disc.2
5. **Technical Papers**
 - (a) Noncommunicable diseases: Implementation of the Political Declaration of the United Nations General EM/RC61/5

Assembly, and follow-up on the UN Review Meeting in
July 2014

(b) Health systems strengthening: progress and prospects
2012-2016 EM/RC61/6

(c) Reinforcing health information systems EM/RC61/7

6. **World Health Assembly and Executive Board**

(a) Resolutions and decisions of regional interest adopted by the
Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly and the Executive
Board at its 134th and 135th Sessions EM/RC61/8

(b) Review of the draft provisional agenda of the 136th Session of
the WHO Executive Board EM/RC61/8-Annex 1

(c) Strategic resource allocation EM/RC61/9

(d) Strategic budget space allocation EM/RC61/10

(e) Framework of engagement with non-State actors EM/RC61/11

7. **Nominations**

(a) Nomination of a Member State to the Joint Coordinating Board
of the Special Programme for Research and Training in
Tropical Disease EM/RC61/12

(b) Nomination of a Member State to the Board of the Global
Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria EM/RC61/13

(c) Nomination of a Member State to the Policy and Coordination
Committee of the Special Programme of Research,
Development, and Research Training in Human Reproduction EM/RC61/14

8. Report of the second meeting of the Technical Advisory
Committee to the Regional Director EM/RC60/INF.DOC.6

9. **Awards for 2014**

(a) Award of the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize and
Fellowship EM/RC61/INF.DOC.7

(b) Award of the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer,
Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern
Mediterranean Region EM/RC61/INF.DOC.8

(c) Award of the Down Syndrome Research Prize EM/RC61/INF.DOC.9

10. Review of implementation of Regional Committee resolutions EM/RC60/INF.DOC.10

2000–2011

11. Place and date of future sessions of the Regional Committee EM/RC61/INF.DOC.11
12. Other business
13. Closing session