



# **International Cotton Advisory Committee**

## **Provisional Minutes**

### **584<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

**June 11, 2025**

**Hybrid meeting:**

**In-person at the ICAC Secretariat 1629 K Street N.W.**

**Suite 702, Washington, DC 2006**

**Virtually using Zoom**





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**SC–584 Provisional Minutes**  
**Wednesday, June 11, 2025**  
Hybrid Meeting

PROVISIONAL: Any corrections or  
amendments should be communicated  
to the Secretariat no later than 9:00 am, Thursday, June 19, 2025

**Delegates:**

Jigar Raval, Chair ad interim of the Standing Committee, India  
Lars Spjut, Chair of the Subcommittee on Budget, USA  
H.E.M. Aly Toure, Immediate Past Chair of the SC, Cote d'Ivoire  
Matthew Worrell, Australia  
Hanif Channa, Pakistan  
Cagri Arici, Türkiye  
Ibrokhim Abdurakhmonov, Uzbekistan  
ChingChing Shih, Taiwan  
Graham Soley, USA  
Simplice Gue, Cote d'Ivoire  
Nevein Elnahrawi, Egypt  
Annette Bennett, South Africa  
Zoltan Agai, EU  
Patrick Packnett, USA  
Khadim Hussain, Pakistan  
Siaka Kamagate, Cote d'Ivoire  
Benjamin Agon, Benin

**Secretariat:**

Eric Trachtenberg, Executive Director  
Caroline Taco, Business Development Manager  
Keshav Kranthi, Chief Scientist  
Mike McCue, Director of Communications  
Lorena Ruiz, Economist  
Parkhi Vats, Economic Affairs Officer  
Kanwar Usman, Head of Textiles

Yasmina Benchechroun, Business Development Middle East and Africa  
Maria Borisova, Administrative Officer

The meeting began at 10:05 am.

Executive Director Eric Trachtenberg emphasized the importance of having a quorum for Standing Committee meetings and was pleased that there was quorum for this meeting, with 11 members present.

#### Revision of PSAC Documents

- Economic Affairs Officer Ms Parkhi Vats mentioned the request of the Standing Committee to revise the language in in Private Sector Advisory Council (PSAC) documents to avoid mentioning specific meetings like the Cotton Leaders roundtable.
- Members approved the updated version of the document.

#### Proposal for No-objection Formats

- The No-objection procedure was revised to include the provision that decisions approved through the no-objection format would be noted in meeting minutes and discussed at the next Standing Committee meeting.
- The No-objection procedure was approved.

#### World Cotton Market Outlook

- Ms Vats presented the world cotton market outlook for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 seasons, including production estimates for major cotton-producing countries including China, India, Brazil, and Pakistan.
- She pointed out there is uncertainty about consumption trends due to the impact of tariffs and trade disruptions.
- She highlighted the importance of China's consumption and the potential for increased imports from countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, Turkey, India, and Vietnam.
- World trade is expected to increase about 2% to 9.7 million tonnes.

#### Discussion on Tariff Impacts and Scenario Analysis

- Members discussed the current trade environment with potential for tariffs to impact trade in cotton and cotton products.
- Members deliberated a proposal for the ICAC Secretariat to conduct scenario analysis around potential tariffs.



- However, it was acknowledged that trade negotiations were fluid and outcomes uncertain making the prediction of impacts impossible.
- Members agreed that such an analysis would not be pursued at this time.

#### Report from PSAC and Carbon Emission Goals

- Ms Vats reported on the 10th meeting of the PSAC Executive Committee and its focus on strategies for increasing global cotton consumption.
- She said the PSAC is looking to see if anyone has done a survey to understand parameters considered by brands while making purchasing decisions, with a focus on cotton sourcing. If not, the PSAC will conduct one themselves.
- The session title request for the PSAC session at the ICAC Plenary Meeting was approved. It will focus on how cotton brands can achieve their carbon emission goals to remain competitive.

#### CSITC Round Trial Results and Future Plans

- Head of Textiles Kanwar Usman reported on the successful completion of the first quarter CSITC Round Trials, with 106 testing instruments.
- He said the results are consistent with previous years, and the laboratories are performing well.
- Mr Usman discussed efforts to engage the spinning sector and the possibility of offering free testing to some spinning mills.
- Because CSITC members only meet in person once per year, holding virtual meetings should be explored to advance the committee's goals.

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#### SEEP's Work on Regenerative Agriculture and Carbon Credits

- Economist Lorena Ruiz reported on SEEP's focus on regenerative agriculture and climate-related priorities.



- She said the panel is updating the regenerative agriculture guide and matrix, expanding content on carbon sequestration methods, and biological inputs.
- SEEP is exploring a potential role in supporting scalable carbon credit models for large cotton farms.
- The next SEEP meeting, in July or August, will focus on mapping systems and identifying opportunities for cooperation to help cotton producers access high-value carbon credits.

### Introduction of the New ICAC Website

- Communications Director Mike McCue introduced the new ICAC website, highlighting its improved visibility and accessibility.
- New features include a section on projects and training, flags that link to a page with specific member data, a section for videos, and a sponsorship section.
- Mr McCue said he would send all Delegates and Coordinating Agencies a link so members could review and provide comments by the end of the month. It is estimated that the website will go live in early July.
- Mr Usman then discussed the textiles portion of the website, which is also new.
- He said that each member has a page dedicated to it highlighting information such as GDP, imports and exports, and much more. Mr Trachtenberg added that much of this information is of interest to countries seeking inbound investment.

### ICAC Data Portals

- It was suggested and agreed that ICAC's statistics on production, trade, and textiles must include all cotton-producing and consuming countries, with mandatory representation of member countries. It was also agreed that:
  - All ICAC data portals should clearly cite sources to maintain credibility and allow users to verify information.
  - The Chair said superfluous metrics (FDI, GDP) that are readily available elsewhere should be avoided, with a priority on original, exclusive datasets unique to ICAC's mandate.
  - He added that external data links, especially to member country data portals, should be removed to prevent redundancy and maintain focus on ICAC's core offerings.
- Delegates agreed that these changes will greatly improve user experience and reinforce ICAC's authority as the primary source for cotton-specific intelligence.

### Financial Report and Budget Proposal



- Chair of the Budget Subcommittee, Mr Lars Spjut, summarized the discussion on the quarterly financial report and the proposed budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year.
- The proposed budget includes adjustments based on Bangladesh's payment status; the country will be suspended at the end of June if the assessment isn't paid.
- Mr Trachtenberg said he is available to travel to Bangladesh upon request.

#### Budget Approval and Contingency Plans

- Mr Trachtenberg offered a three-part proposal regarding the budget. First, that the Standing Committee approve the budget at the current level of \$1.95 million across 20 members. Second, Bangladesh would be given a one-month extension and if it doesn't pay by the end of July, the budget would be reduced by their assessment amount to \$1.76 million. Third, the ICAC would seek private funding to make up any shortfall. The proposal was approved.
- He also proposed that even if the budget is reduced to \$1.76 million across 19 members, it would go back up to \$1.95 million in 2026-27.
- Mr Patrick Packnett questioned the precedent of committing to a budget beyond the current year and expressed concerns about extending the fiscal year, and as a result, it was decided that the 2026-27 budget would not be approved in advance.
- Business Development Manager Caroline Taco pointed out that in the past, the ICAC has made exceptions to extend payments past the usual timeline. She added that there is nothing in the ICAC Rules and Regulations regarding private funding, so that shouldn't be an issue going forward. However, that money would be raised as part of the Business Plan, since the admin budget is strictly funded by member governments.
- It was noted that the Standing Committee could always reconvene at the end of July if necessary.

#### Carbon Credits and Regenerative Agriculture Proposals

- Chief Scientist Dr Keshav Kranthi reported receiving a consultancy request from Textile Exchange to contribute expertise in Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodologies.
- He further informed the committee about growing interest from multiple governments (including India and several African nations) and private sector partners (Bizpando, EP Carbon, SodeCoton, Beetle Regen, CottonConnect, and Better Cotton Initiative) regarding initiatives to establish carbon credit payments, net-zero carbon farms, and regenerative agriculture systems.
- Dr Kranthi presented the Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) proposal, emphasizing its alignment with ICAC's mission to promote sustainability, climate resilience, and equitable livelihoods. He noted that stagnating yields in Africa and key Asian cotton-producing regions stem largely from soil degradation and climate change impacts, particularly in tropical and semi-arid zones.



- To address these challenges, he said the ICAC has developed climate-resilient technologies that transform crop residues into biochar and compost, thus eliminating harmful burning practices while improving soil health.
- Dr Kranthi said these regenerative approaches rejuvenate soil health, leading to an increase in yields apart from enabling measurable carbon sequestration, potentially qualifying farmers for carbon credit payments estimated at \$150 per hectare annually.
- This dual-benefit system simultaneously enhances farm productivity and grower incomes, which could significantly help in scaling up the adoption rate. ICAC has already implemented training programs in 12 member countries with the goal of increasing soil carbon content by 10% within 2-3 years.
- Dr Kranthi said the proposal highlighted significant stakeholder interest:
  - Bizpando (Europe): Proposed collaboration on carbon payment systems.
  - SodeCoton (Cameroon), Cotton Corporation of India, Beetle Regen, and CottonConnect (UK): Seeking to pilot Net-Zero Carbon Villages using ICAC methodologies.
  - Textile Exchange: Requested ICAC's technical input on integrating soil carbon metrics into LCA tools.
  - US Cotton Trust Protocol: Invited ICAC participation in an ISEAL-funded climate data integrity initiative
- Mr Trachtenberg emphasized the strategic importance of these initiatives, noting their potential to establish ICAC as the preeminent technical authority in carbon finance and regenerative agriculture.
- While recognizing the need for capacity development, he highlighted the opportunities for enhanced financial independence and global leadership for the ICAC.
- Mr Hanif Channa endorsed expanding program engagement to additional African nations, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, citing the transformative potential for smallholder farmers.
- Following the discussions, the Standing Committee approved the ICAC's initiatives to develop collaborations on regenerative agriculture, carbon sequestration, and PES.

#### Plenary Update; Global Cotton and Textile Investment Summit Proposals

- Mr McCue discussed the agenda for the 83<sup>rd</sup> ICAC Plenary Meeting, pointing out that there would be three new sessions in 2025: success stories of creating a domestic textile industry; payment for ecosystem services; and the cotton innovation platform. The agenda was approved.
- Two members previously expressed interest in hosting the first-ever Global Cotton Textile Investment Summit (GCTIS) — Uzbekistan and Cote d'Ivoire — and each delivered a short presentation on the benefits of hosting the event in their country.



- Mr Abdurahmonov presented Uzbekistan's proposal, highlighting the country's economic growth, central location, and infrastructure.
- Ambassador Toure then presented Cote d'Ivoire's proposal, emphasizing the country's experience in hosting international events, its leadership on the African continent, and the need to revive the domestic textile industry.
- Mr Trachtenberg proposed that whichever country was chosen to host in 2026, both countries are worthy and the other should be named host for 2027.
- It was decided that the presentations from Uzbekistan and Cote d'Ivoire would be sent to all members for review, and they would be given 30 days to provide their vote for the 2026 host.

#### RAP 2025 Report; Farewell to Patrick; 2025 Researcher of the Year

- Ms Vats reported on the successful hosting of RAP 2025 in Memphis, Tennessee, with sponsorship from the US cotton industry. There were 10 participants from nine countries and six Secretariat members in attendance.
- Mr Packnett announced his retirement from the USDA and expressed gratitude for his 21 years of service with ICAC.
- Mr Raval proposed a farewell event for Mr Packnett at the Indian embassy, and they agreed to discuss the details offline.
- Dr Kranthi announced that Dr Charudatta Mayee from India was named the winner of the 2025 ICAC Researcher of the Year award.
- August 20, 2025, was proposed as a tentative date for the next SC meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.