



International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) IFAD Staff Association and UNIAG Organizing Committee

Rome, 20 December 2017

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**, the IFAD Staff Association and UNIAG Organizing Committee are pleased and honoured to host the **45th United Nations Inter-Agency Games (UNIAG)**, to be held in **Montecatini-Terme, Tuscany, Italy, from 2 to 6 May 2018**. In 2018 IFAD will observe its own 40th anniversary.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a Specialized Agency of the United Nations headquartered in Rome, Italy. This international financial institution was created as a result of decisions made at the 1974 World Food Conference. Since becoming operational in 1978, IFAD has focused exclusively on rural poverty reduction, working with poor rural populations in developing countries to eliminate poverty and hunger; raise the rural poor's productivity and incomes and improve their overall wellbeing.

The **Official Website** of the 2018 United Nations Inter-Agency Games will provide detailed information on all aspects of the Games and the sports facilities, and will be continuously updated leading up to the date of the Games.

THE VENUE

The city of **Montecatini-Terme** is located between Florence and Pisa in the centre of a natural amphitheatre of green hills in the region of **Tuscany**. The area around the city is famous for its architectural and artistic heritage made legendary by Leonardo Da Vinci, Giuseppe Verdi and others. Montecatini-Terme is a garden city; rich with parks and thermal spas which are all easily reached on foot. A vast pine forest within the city creates a peaceful and tranquil atmosphere to renew your spirit with nature. The city has seen past Neolithic settlements, succeeded by Romans and Etruscans – all of whom enjoyed the curative effects of the thermal waters. Montecatini-Terme is easily reached by air, through the international airports of Pisa and Florence, or by train through Florence, or by car via the motorways. Montecatini-Terme is a small city, with not more than 21,000 inhabitants. However, due to its popularity and touristic attractions, Montecatini has over 130 hotels in all categories.

Montecatini-Terme is one of the eleven UNESCO World Heritage cities for '**Great Spas of Europe**', a selected group of spa towns that represent places for healing pain and medical conditions using mineral waters, and was well known for such even before industrial medication developed in the Nineteenth Century. It is one of the most famous and sophisticated Italian spas. The springs in this region have been known since the Middle Ages, and were first owned by the Medici family and then the Habsburgs of Tuscany. The Games were previously held in Montecatini-Terme in 1994 when over 1400 UN staff and their families participated.

More information on the beautiful city of Montecatini-Terme and the surrounding region is available at <https://www.tomontecatini.com/en/>.

ACCOMMODATION

As was the case for the Vienna 2017 UNIAG, participants will be invited to select their own preferred accommodation from the hotel list provided, according to whether they wish to stay in the heart of the city, close to their sport facility, or in the same hotel as friends. Accordingly, the 2018 UNIAG Organizing Committee will not include the cost of hotel accommodation in the package price.

Each participant is responsible for booking and payment of their own accommodation by consulting the on-line hotel list below. The Hotel List shows the special rates negotiated exclusively for the UNIAG 2018. Many listed hotels have pools or wellness centres, restaurants, bars and bicycle rentals. Some hotels have parking facilities or will provide participants with parking coupons at lower prices. All hotels on this list offer a welcome drink, late check-out at 14.00 hours plus a small bottle of mineral water per person per day – most hotels offer free Wi-fi to guests. It is possible for participants to book additional nights, before or after the Games, at the same negotiated rates. The site will also contain proposals for side-events and organized tours, some of which are highlighted later in this letter.

To help participants in arranging their accommodation, the organizing committee have enlisted the help of our partners in Montecatini: **Ranieri Tour Operator**. The agency offers free reservation services to all UNIAG participants and will be able to offer the special rates and advice on the most suitable accommodation in response to your needs. **Please note, in order ensure you obtain these special rates, it is advisable to book through Ranieri Tour Operator as private bookings made directly with hotels may result in different rates than those negotiated for the Games. Ranieri Tour Operator has block-booked rooms in the hotels on the list at rates that are normally non-refundable. However, as a special offer for IAG, cancellations may be made without penalty up to three days before the date of arrival.**

To book your accommodation, choose a hotel from the **Hotel List** on:

<http://montecatinieventi.net/shop/45th-united-nations-inter-agency-games/>

Then send an email with the name of the hotel, type of room and your personal details to **Ranieri Tour Operator** booking@ranieritouroperator.com or call on **+39 0572 772603**. Office hours are 09.00-13.00 – 15.00-19.00. They will then respond with an email confirming your booking. The full hotel cost will be payable through bank transfer or credit card by **31 March 2018**. Full refund will be made if cancellation is necessary and notified in writing at least three days before the date of arrival. Any cancellations made within 48 hours of the date of arrival will incur a penalty of one night's cost. The multi-lingual Ranieri staff is also ready to help with information on the sports facilities, the thermal spas, the city and its many attractions.

TRANSPORTATION

The city of Montecatini-Terme is 58 kms from **Pisa** International Airport and 42 kms from the airport of **Florence**. For participants arriving by **air**, and who have requested transportation on the Registration Site, buses will be provided free of charge **only on Wednesday, 2 May 2018**, to the centre of Montecatini-Terme and back to the airport on **Sunday, 6 May 2018**. IFAD Volunteers will be on hand in both airports on Wednesday, 2 May to assist arriving participants.

Participants arriving by **train** should change at **Florence (Santa Maria Novella)** station for **Montecatini Centro** station (there are two stations in Montecatini and all trains stop at both). Trains leave Florence station approximately every hour, and tickets cost around €5.50 per person.

Arriving by car is quite simple as the main motorway - A11 or E45 – passes within a few hundred metres of Montecatini-Terme. Travellers should follow signs to the centre of the city and thereby access their hotels. Once arrived in the city, most participants will make little use of their vehicles, and as parking within the city is limited, you may wish to select a hotel with private parking or use the low-cost coupons provided by most hotels. Parking areas on the outskirts of the city are available for longer-term parking.

Participants arriving or departing on other dates will be responsible for their own transportation to/from Montecatini-Terme.

- From **Florence** airport there are hourly local buses from right outside the airport at a cost of €4.50 per person. Taxis for a maximum of four persons will cost around €80.
- Local buses are less frequent from **Pisa** airport; a taxi for a maximum 4 persons will cost around €90.

SPORTS DISCIPLINES

Pending final confirmation, the following disciplines will be organized for IAG 2018: Athletics (Men & Women), Badminton, Basketball, Beach Volleyball, Chess, Cricket, Darts, Football (Men), Golf, Pétanque, Pool-Billiards (Eight Ball), Swimming (Men & Women), Table Tennis (Men & Women), Tennis, Volleyball (Men & Women). Most of the sports facilities are within the city centre and can be reached on foot from all central hotels. Shuttle Pick-up Points will be clearly indicated. The sports facilities in Montecatini-Terme are excellent. A few sports facilities will be reached by organised shuttle buses (Badminton, Beach Volleyball, Golf, some Football and some Volleyball). Please note that a minimum of 4 teams per discipline is required for competitions to take place.

Participants registering for **Golf** should be advised that the Golf Club Montecatini-Terme at Monsummano Terme <http://www.montecatinigolf.com/>, is offering an additional practice day on Wednesday, 2 May, 2018 (included in the UNIAG participation fee), to allow players to familiarize themselves with the course. Shuttle buses from the city centre to the Golf Club will, however be available only on 3 and 4 May, 2018.

Those participating in **Athletics** can find full information on the 11.9 km road race departing from and arriving in front of the Terme Tettuccio, by referring to the following link: https://connect.garmin.com/modern/activity/1939027421?share_unique_id=2. Changing rooms and services will be available at the nearby spa Terme Tamerici.

The DAILY COMPETITION SCHEDULE will be made available on the IAG Website www.interagencygames.org/iag2018. This Schedule will also provide a list of the sports facilities and addresses, as well as the timing of competition for each sport.

SIDE EVENTS

Bars, coffee shops and music: participants can find a selection of welcoming establishments to gather in the evenings to enjoy the night-life of the city on **Via IV Novembre**.

A visit to **Montecatini-Alto**, a medieval city on a hill overlooking Montecatini-Terme, is a must. It can be reached by car or by the one of the oldest **cable-cars** in world. From here you can enjoy scenic views of the spas below and the Tuscan countryside, enjoy drinks and music in the quaint piazza, or sample typical Tuscan cuisine in the restaurants and pizzeria.

Montecatini-Terme's central Tuscany location provides visitors with a vast list of excursions to suit every taste. Participants can visit the famous art cities of **Florence, Pisa and Lucca**. Half-day tours are available to visit the **Carrara Marble Quarries**. Full-day tours include **San Gimignano, Siena and Chianti Vineyards**. Other unforgettable places to discover are **the Cinque Terre** and the **city of Vinci – birthplace of Leonardo Da Vinci** – which can be clearly seen from the Golf Course.

We haven't forgotten our families. Montecatini-Terme has much to offer children: a large shady pine forest with paths, lawns and fountains. Families can enjoy **horse riding; Mini-golf Montecatini; Bici-Park** (bike rental and amusement park); **Parco Termeland** (funfair) Viale Bicchierai, 78; **Adventure Park Tree Experience** (in nearby Fiesole). To enable participants' children to gather and play together, a **Kids Gathering Point** will be indicated in the centre of the town. For families bringing along a child-minder/baby-sitter, we have introduced a special participation fee (see Package Price).

REGISTRATION

The **Deadline for Registration and payment is Friday 30 March 2018**. As usual, registration can only be carried out by the designated **Registrar or Focal Point** of your respective Organization/Agency (for the list of Focal Points please refer to www.interagencygames.org/iag2018). We would like to remind all participants and their respective Focal Points/Registrars, that those participants requiring **VISAS** should **only be registered once their visa has been approved.**

VISAS

Registration should only be done AFTER visas are issued. **Very early visa application is recommended as approval time for Schengen zone visas varies from country to country.** Some Embassies will grant a visa no earlier than 3 months before travel date, but participants should ensure that they have all of the required documentation ready for applications by checking beforehand with the Italian Embassy/Consulate nearest to their UN Agency. We are ready to provide an official UNIAG invitation to those requiring visas and additional information will be provided to Focal Points soon. Participants who have registered and paid – but are not granted a valid visa for entry into Italy – will be refused any refund after **Friday, 30 March 2018**

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Upon arrival in Montecatini Terme, participants should check into their hotels and then come to the central **Palazzo dei Congressi, Viale Amendola 2**, to pick up their official **UNIAG 2018 Identification Badges** and welcome packs. Participants should provide a valid photo identification document. However, **Player ID Badges** will only be issued if the participant's name is listed on the certified HR list submitted by the Focal Point/Registrar of respective Organizations/Agencies, in accordance with the General Rules of the UNIAG. Any registered participant whose name is not on the official certified lists will be provided with a **Supporter ID**, and will not be allowed to participate in the sporting competitions themselves.

Information will be available inside the welcome packs regarding all UNIAG events, with sports timetables, maps with sports facilities, shuttle schedules and tourist information.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

Medical certificates are **mandatory in Italy** for certain sports. Each player in the following sports (**Athletics (men & women), Badminton, Basketball, Beach Volleyball, Cricket, Football, Golf, Swimming (men & women), Table Tennis (men & women), Tennis, Volleyball (men & women)**) are required to bring with them to the Games a medical certificate to state that they are physically fit to participate. All Captains should collect the original medical certificates for their team and hand them to the relevant Sports Coordinator before the start of competitions. Participants and supporters are responsible for their own medical insurance. The host organization or the City of Montecatini-Terme will not be held liable. Ambulances, defibrillators and medical staff will be in attendance at all events. Emergency numbers will be provided with the Welcome Packs.

GROUP PHOTOGRAPH

To mark the start of the 2018 Games, a special event will take place. All Participants should gather in front of the **Terme Tettuccio spa at the end of the main street, Viale Giuseppe Verdi, at 17.30 on Wednesday, 2 May**. Here, to the backdrop of flags from nations of the world, a group photograph, taken by a drone camera flying above, will capture the scene of hundreds of UN Staff and their families gathered together in sporting harmony. Copies of the group photograph may be on sale at the Closing Ceremony. Following the photograph opportunity, participants will form a short procession to the **Opera House of Giuseppe Verdi** for the **Opening Ceremony**. Children will certainly enjoy the military Marching Band of the Carabinieri which will accompany us. Festivities will commence at 18.30 hrs with music and cocktails. After Welcoming Remarks by IFAD Management and the Mayor of Montecatini Terme, participants will enjoy a delicious buffet of regional and local delicacies, local entertainment, music and dancing.

PACKAGE PRICE

The package prices are:

Adults (athletes and supporters): **€310.00 per person**.

Children of 12* years and over: **€310 per person**.

Children 6-11* years: **€155**

Children 0-5* years: **free**.

Non-family child minders/baby sitters (not attending Gala Dinner) **€250 per person**

* age on Wednesday, 2 May, 2018

This package price will include the organization of the 45th UNIAG, overall participation, all discipline facilities and coordination, the Opening Ceremony and Buffet, the Closing Ceremony and Gala Dinner, trophies and medals, mineral water during sports competitions, Welcome Pack, transportation to and from airports on stated dates, and the Montecatini Welcome Card <http://www.inmontecatini.it/montecatini-welcome-card/#main>

which entitles participants to many discounted shopping opportunities within the city. **Full payment of Participation Fees is due by Friday, 30 March 2018.**

Cancellations: by **30 March 2018, 100%** refund. By Friday **6 April 2018, 50%** refund. Between 7 and 13 April refunds will only be considered upon presentation of a medical certificate. No refunds will be granted after 13 April, 2018 for any reason, including non-issuance of travel visa.

The Package price is slightly higher than in 2017. Even though we have attempted to keep costs to a minimum, the 2018 UNIAG is being held far from IFAD's headquarters and therefore all venues for Opening and Closing ceremonies, as well as office space for Control Commission, IAG Secretariat, Captains' Meetings and Organizing Committee have had to be rented. In addition, two international airports serve Tuscany, and transportation has been planned for participants' arrivals and departures from both Florence and Pisa.

Further information will be posted on the official website www.interagencygames.org/iag2018 and the Facebook page **Inter-Agency Games** which will be continuously updated with information leading up to the date of the Games.

If you have any questions, please channel these through your respective registrar/focal point.

We invite you all to join us in celebrating the 45th edition of the United Nations Inter Agency Games. We look forward to welcoming you to Montecatini Terme in May 2018.

Vera Weill-Halle
Chairperson, 2018 UNIAG Organizing Committee

Susan Baraldi
Events Coordinator, 2018 UNIAG Organizing Committee

