

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Bureau Meeting
Monday, 19 June 2017, 08:30 a.m. – 09:30 a.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi Gigiri,
CW-115 (behind Conference Room 1)

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. H.E. Ms. Julia Pataki, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania, chaired the meeting, in which the following participated:

Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau members

- H.E. Mr. John Moreti, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana, Vice Chair, Africa Group;
- H.E. Ms. Marcela M. Nicodemos, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, Vice Chair, Group of Latin America and Caribbean States
- H.E. Raza Bashir Tarar, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative Pakistan, Vice Chair, Asia-Pacific Group represented by Mr. Shahbaz M. Malik, Deputy Permanent Representative

Incoming Bureau members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

- H.E. Mrs. Elizabeth Ines Taylor Jay, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Vice Chair-designate representing the Latin America and Caribbean States Group;
- Mr. Marek Rohr – Garzdecki, Permanent Representative of Poland, Rapporteur-designate representing the Eastern European Group

The following were absent with apologies:

- Mr. Toni Sandell, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland, Rapporteur, Group of Western European and Other States
- H.E. Ms. Tarja Fernandez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Finland, Vice Chair-designate, Group of Western European and Other States

2. The Secretariat was represented by:

- Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director,

- Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies, Director, Governance Affairs Office;
- Ms. Rosemary Mukasa, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies

3. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda for the meeting.

2. Outcomes of the Second Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives

4. The Chair briefly shared outcomes and recommendations from the Second Joint Preparatory Retreat, which took place in Puntarenas, Costa Rica on 9 to 10 June 2017. The main outcomes discussed include the following:

- 1) The meeting agreed to recommend that the Assembly holds four leadership dialogues under the following themes: (a) Science, evidence and citizens awareness for change; (b) Regulatory frameworks, institutions and the rule of law to address pollution; (c) Practical solutions for a pollution-free planet; and (d) Financing and innovation to combat pollution.
- 2) The Bureaux agreed to recommend to Member States to endorse these proposed themes at the 139th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to be held on 19 June 2017 on a non-objection basis;
- 3) The meeting agreed to reaffirm the timelines set out in the outcome of the Fourth Annual Sub-committee meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for the submission of draft resolutions and emphasized that draft resolutions should be limited in number, linked to the theme of the Assembly (Towards a Pollution-Free Planet) and drafted in succinct and simple language while addressing issues of global concern;
- 4) The Secretariat was requested to refine the selection criteria and launch as soon as possible the call for proposals for side events;
- 5) Participants agreed to request the Secretariat to send a letter to all regional groups encouraging them to undertake early consultations on the possible chair or co-chair of the Committee of the Whole and to consider the matter at their next joint meeting;
- 6) The meeting requested the Executive Director to submit to Member States by 26 June 2017, an advanced version of the Report for the 2017 UN Environment Assembly for information purpose. It was expected that the conclusions in the advanced report should not be changed substantially.
- 7) The meeting agreed that the structure of the outline for the Ministerial Declaration represents a good basis of the zero draft to be released on 30 June 2017 and welcomed the transparency and inclusive approach taken by the President of the Assembly in developing a Declaration as the main outcome of the Assembly;
- 8) Participants expressed commitment towards raising the profile of the Assembly in the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development building on the

standing invitation by the General Assembly for the President of the Assembly to address in such capacity the Forum;

- 9) Participants appreciated Secretariat's efforts to collect commitments from Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations and Private Sector Organizations and requested to be briefed at its next meeting and to update the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
5. She added a few highlights to the main outcomes. With regard to the suggestion of deleting the words, "rule of law", in the second suggested theme for the Leadership Dialogues, the Chair suggested consultation with the President of the UN Environment Assembly. Following her suggestion, a member stressed that the change of word did not affect the substance of themes of the Leadership Dialogues. He informed the meeting that he would not insist on the wording but would let the issue be discussed at the 139th meeting of the Committee.
6. Regarding the way forward on the recommended themes for the Leadership Dialogues, Member States would be requested to endorse them at the 139th meeting of the Committee on a non-objection basis. This would enable the Secretariat to initiate preparations for the Leadership Dialogues as early as possible. In case of possible objection to the endorsement, another opportunity would be provided for member States to share comments at the next Sub-committee meeting to be held on 6 July 2017.
7. Regarding draft resolutions, the Chair proposed that agreement on the number and topics of resolutions should be reached by 15 July 2017 with a view to spurring the formulation of resolutions.
8. With respect to raising the profile of the Assembly in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Chair noted lack of clarity on the participation of the President of the Assembly in the Forum.
9. Some members strongly recommended that the venue for the next joint retreat of the bureaux take place in a venue near Nairobi or in Nairobi to save costs on its preparation.
10. One member noted that ideas on the plan of action with respect to commitments and pledges were not fully captured. In response, the Deputy Executive Director clarified that the suggestion had been for a programme of action by the Secretariat, leading to concrete implementation in the long-term. Further to his clarification, the Chair added that the idea was put forward to enable the Secretariat to monitor implementation of commitments. The Secretariat was to come back with a proposal at the next joint meeting of the bureaux in September.

3. Preparation for the 139th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

11. The Chair briefly introduced the main agenda items, which would be considered during the 139th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. With regard to draft resolutions, the representative of United States would be invited to present its proposed draft resolution on “Eliminating Exposure to Lead in Paint”. Other interested members would be also invited to update the meeting on their intentions to submit draft resolutions or on progress in formulating resolutions.
12. With regard to the election of officers, the Chair informed the meeting that H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr – Garztecki, Permanent Representative of Poland had been nominated as a new Rapporteur of the Committee. The meeting was also informed that the Chairs of each Regional Groups would be called upon to nominate incoming members at the meeting. After the election by acclamation, H.E. Mr. John Moreti, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana, the Chair of the Committee-designate would take the floor to make a few remarks.

4. Date of the next meeting of the Bureau

13. The meeting agreed that the next meeting of the Bureau would be held on 5 or 6 July 2017, subject to confirmation by the incoming Chair.

5. Other matters

14. One member expressed concern on the timelines for circulating meeting documents, highlighting the difficulty to get timely response from capitals. She cited the documents for the 139th meeting of Committee of Permanent Representatives, in support of agenda item 5, which were distributed close to the weekend.
15. The Secretariat noted the timeline for distribution of documents had been affected by the change of date of the 139th meeting of Committee of Permanent Representatives, which has been originally scheduled on 27 June 2017. He stressed that documents could have different timelines on account of their back to back nature. For instance, many of the documents for agenda item 5 were based on the outcomes of the Joint Preparatory Retreat, which had only ended on 10 June 2017. He further highlighted efforts by the Secretariat to distribute meeting documents 7 working days prior to a meeting, under normal circumstances.
16. A member sought clarification about the timelines for the submission of inputs for the ministerial declaration. In the discussion that followed, the Chair reminded the Secretariat that the platform for resolutions and the Ministerial Declaration should soon be functional and would provide direct access to contributions from member States on the Ministerial Declaration.

17. With reference to a letter from the President of the Assembly on the Declaration, it was suggested that official communications to Ministries of Environment be channeled through Permanent Representatives. One member pointed out that some communication was addressed directly to ministers and there was no obligation to channel it through Permanent Representatives. However, in such cases the Permanent Representatives should be kept in copy. The Secretary acknowledged the concerns and requests from members and clarified that the Secretariat has been communicating and circulating documents both to Permanent Representatives and capitals simultaneously.
18. The meeting expressed appreciation for the Chair's hard work, dedication and ceaseless efforts based on the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and consultation. The Chair was grateful for the cooperation and support from Bureau Members, Member States and the Secretariat especially Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, former Executive Director and Mr. Jorge Laguna, Secretary of Governing Bodies. She conveyed best wishes to incoming members. The Deputy Executive Director commended her for being the most dedicated Chair despite her small mission, adding that progress by the Secretariat was due to her guidance.
19. The meeting closed at 9: 24 a.m.