

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 15 March 2018,
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi
Conference Room 4

SECRETARIAT NOTES

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, H.E. Mr. John Moreti, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana, welcomed the members of the Committee to the meeting.
2. The meeting adopted the agenda.

Agenda Item 2: Preparations for the 1st Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

- a) **Consideration of a draft input of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.**
3. Ms. Elizabeth Mrema, Director of the Law Division, made a presentation on the draft input of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, outlining the process for submission and the key messages in the draft document.
4. Several Member States provided feedback on the draft document, as follows:
 - Refrain from including external scientific data that has not been properly verified by the UN.
 - Shorten and improve the structure of the document to make the messages more impactful.
 - Make appropriate reference to all relevant resolutions and outcomes of UN Environment Assembly, also including the first and second sessions.
 - Include a short executive summary to highlight the main messages.

- Ensure that the synthesized report of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum will take appropriate account of the contribution from the Assembly and make the full report available on the Forum's website.
- Include more concrete examples relating to the key messages.
- Widen the scope of the Lessons Learnt section of the paper to address sustainable resource management as well as emerging issues relevant to the Forum.
- Include a reference to work under the Environment Management Group

b) Consideration of a theme for the Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly.

5. Member States expressed strong support for either of the two remaining thematic areas on "Promoting Innovative Solutions to Environmental Challenges" and "Sustainable Consumption and Production", with some Member States suggesting consideration of specific sub-themes such as biodiversity, and others suggesting that the two thematic areas may be combined.
6. Several member States underlined the need for adequate consultations with the Committee before the decision was made by the bureau of the Assembly.
7. A representative of a Major Group supported the thematic area of Sustainable Consumption and Production.
8. The Secretariat was requested to develop a briefing note providing an overview on division of work in the UN as well as a summary on the work undertaken up to date on Sustainable Consumption and Production, including with regard to the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, to facilitate an informed decision by the Bureau.
9. The Chair reminded the meeting of the importance to respect the deadline for decision as laid out in the Assembly resolution, committed to inform the President on the outcome of the discussion in the subcommittee, and encouraged Member States and regional groups to engage in informal consultations with the Assembly President in Nairobi prior to the Joint Retreat, to identify solutions with the broadest possible support.

c) Modalities for the organization of the inter-sessional period.

10. The meeting expressed different opinions on the two options outlined in the note from the Secretariat.
11. Most of the Member States in favor of holding the Open-Ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives immediately before the UN Environment Assembly underlined that this would be on an exceptional basis taking into account the

short period between the third and the fourth sessions of the Assembly, and that it should be based on an efficient and effective use of the intersessional period.

12. One group of Member States expressed a preference for holding the Annual Subcommittee meeting in October/November regardless the timing for the Open-Ended Committee and argued that it should focus on program of work and budget and implementation of current resolutions.
13. Upon request, the Secretariat clarified that the Committee of Permanent Representatives may decide on timing for the Open-Ended Committee without changing the Rules of Procedure, and that changing the duration of the Open-Ended Meeting would require a Decision taken by the Environment Assembly. The Chair concluded that additional consultations would be necessary to achieve consensus on the matter by the 142nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives scheduled for 10 May.

Agenda Item 3: Update on the development of a plan of implementation on the follow-up of the third session of the UN Environment Assembly “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”.

14. Ms. Ligia Noronha, Director of the Economy Division, gave a presentation on the development of an implementation plan based on the outcomes of the third session of the Environment Assembly held under the overarching topic “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”, as mandated in paragraph 14 of the Ministerial Declaration.
15. Several Member States provided feedback on the presentation, as follows:
 - Consideration should be given to re-name the title of the implementation plan as displayed in the presentation.
 - The role of partnerships and private sector needs to be emphasized in the implementation plan going forward..
 - Implementation of resolutions is a central piece of the implementation plan
 - Inclusion of resolutions relevant to the pollution, environment and health topic adopted at previous UN Environment Assembly meetings was welcome.
 - The Secretariat was requested to schedule additional subcommittee meetings on the implementation plan, to allow for more in-depth discussions.
16. Member States also shared some views on the topic of implementation of past resolutions:
 - Tracking of the implementation of past resolutions from UN Environment Assembly meetings and Governing Council decisions should be made simple, possibly through a digital platform easily accessible for Member States.

- The importance of best practices was also raised as an important aspect of the implementation of resolutions and emphasis was placed on the key role of the UN Environment Programme in popularizing these best practices worldwide

17. The Chair concluded that additional consultations are foreseen on the plan of implementation, including at an interactive panel at Open meeting with member States and Stakeholders, scheduled to take place on 22 March 2018 in Nairobi.

Agenda Item 4: Other Matters

18. The Chair informed the meeting that the Financial summary of the third session of the UN Environment Assembly, and the Note on the proposed structure of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly are available online and invited Member States to send in written comments to the Secretariat.

19. The Secretariat informed member States about an upcoming Cultural and environmental event on ethnic diversity and biodiversity hosted by Colombia.

20. One of the political groups suggested to postpone the next meeting of the subcommittee, tentatively scheduled for April 10, taking into consideration holidays around that date such as the Orthodox Good Friday.