

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 3 May 2018
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri
Conference Room 4

SECRETARIAT MEETING 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, who is also the High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana, formally opened the meeting at 09:30 a.m. The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Secretariat briefing on the organization of the Ad-hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on marine litter and microplastics meeting of 29-31 May 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya.

2. The chair invited Ms. Monika MacDevette, Deputy Director, Ecosystems Division, to provide an update on the progress of preparations for the meeting of Ad-hoc Open-ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics scheduled for 29-31 May 2018. Ms. MacDevette informed the meeting about the status of preparations for the Ad-Hoc meeting, including on the following elements:
 - i. all background documents for the meeting were available on the meeting portal (<https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/adhoc-oeeg>).
 - ii. 35 member States and 19 Major Groups and Stakeholders had confirmed their participation in the meeting.
 - iii. member States were invited to nominate members of the bureau well in advance of the expert meeting.
 - iv. financial support to eligible delegates from Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States was available, through Application Forms on the meeting portal; applications must be done immediately to the Secretariat for consideration and processing.
 - v. member States were requested to submit written inputs in response to the draft organization of work by Monday, 7 May 2018.
3. The briefing by Ms. MacDevette was well received by member States. Several members expressed the expectation that the Ad-hoc meeting had the potential to mobilize strong political interest that would effectively address issues related to marine litter and microplastics at global level.
4. In conclusion, the Chair encouraged regional groups to nominate co-chairs and a rapporteur for the expert meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Secretariat briefing on the progress in the Clean Seas Campaign on marine litter.

5. The Chair invited Mr. Sam Barratt, Chief of Advocacy in the Communication Division, to make a presentation on the progress in the Clean Seas Campaign on marine litter, which was launched in February 2017. Mr. Barratt highlighted, in particular, that:
 - i. the campaign entails a five-year programme to “turn the tide on plastics”, both upstream and downstream;
 - ii. 43 governments had currently pledged to take action in support of the campaign;
 - iii. additional member States were encouraged to join the campaign.
6. The presentation by Mr. Barratt was well received by member states. Some members underlined the importance of the role of partnerships with the private sector to ensure a successful campaign.

Agenda Item 4: Secretariat briefing on 2018 World Environment Day celebrations.

7. The Chair invited Mr. Naysan Sahba, the Director of Communications Division, to provide an update on the World Environment Day 2018 celebrations on 5 June 2018. Mr. Sahba announced that the Government of India had offered to host the global event under the theme “Beat Plastic Pollution”. Build-up activities will be held in various cities and towns of India the week before the main event on 5 June. He further highlighted that:
 - i. the World Environment Day is one of the most successful major UN global events in terms of public participation;
 - ii. this year’s World Environment Day is focused on creating momentum and raise awareness on how to tackle plastics pollution through changed behavior and sustainable production methods and government action.
 - iii. member States are invited to participate actively in this year’s celebrations and to explore the World Environment Day website to access branding toolkits and other resources.
8. Following the presentation, a representative of the Indian delegation confirmed that the Government of India is the official host of the 2018 World Environment Day, gave a brief update on the current status of preparations and offered to provide additional information to the committee on this subject at a date closer to the event.
9. The meeting welcomed the information on the status of preparations for the 2018 World Environment Day, and expressed support for the choice of the theme as a means to promote legal and policy action by governments and concrete action such as beach clean-up, waste management policies, and programmes to support organic agriculture.

Agenda Item 5: Preparations for the 142nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

10. The Chair introduced the agenda item and presented the proposed structure of the 2019 UN Environment Assembly.

11. Reacting to the proposed structure of the 2019 Assembly, some member States expressed doubts whether a full day session for the sixth Global Environment Outlook was appropriate, in view of the need for sufficient time for deliberations of the Committee of the whole.
12. Other points raised by member States included:
 - i. the importance of full interpretation services during the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue;
 - ii. a possible dedicated time slot to consider the contribution of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - iii. whether or not to include a reference to possible voluntary commitments in the structure.
13. The Chair concluded that the proposed structure would be adjusted, taking into account comments by member States, and noted that this issue shall be presented for further consideration by the Committee at its 142nd Meeting, as well as by the Bureau of the Assembly.
14. The Chair introduced the sub-item on the organization of the inter-sessional period, whereby several member States reiterated their positions on the timing of the next Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, with some delegates indicating that they were open to finding a solution that enjoys mutual consensus based on further consultations.
15. On the timing of the Annual Subcommittee, the Secretariat highlighted that further consideration of the proposed dates may be warranted with a view to avoid clashes with other important international meetings in October.
16. The Chair noted that consultations were ongoing to find consensus on the timing of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives and underlined the need to find a mutually agreeable solution by the 142nd meeting of the Committee.
17. On the issue of whether or not to attribute individual member States to the minutes of future regular meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the Chair noted that discussions were inconclusive, and invited the Committee to continue consideration of the matter at future Committee meetings.
18. The meeting closed at 12:10 p.m.