

**Summary of the Joint Meeting of the bureaux of the UN Environment  
Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the  
United Nations Environment Programme**

**14 September 2017**

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On 14 September 2017, Bureaux members of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme held a meeting via video-conference, with the participation of Regional and Political groups in observer capacity.

The Joint Bureaux meeting addressed the following topics:

- (1) Preparations for the Committee of the Whole;
- (2) Preparations for the 2017 United Nations Environment Assembly;
- (3) Update on the Ministerial Outcome Document ;
- (4) Visibility of the 2017 UN Environment Assembly;
- (5) Major Groups and stakeholders Engagement in the UN Environment Assembly;

This summary highlights the main joint decisions, discussions and action points, during the third meeting of the joint bureaux of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and of the UN Environment Assembly.

**Main Joint Decisions:**

1. The Bureaux agreed to allow the process of consultations for the candidate for the Chair of Committee of the Whole to continue until 30 September 2017.
2. The Bureaux agreed that the Committee would begin consultations on resolutions on 19 September 2017 but actual negotiations would take place during the third Open Ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
3. The Bureaux agreed to allow more time to share the proposed document presented by the Deputy Executive Director on “Global Coalition for Pollution-Free Planet” among regional groups and Member States and provide feedback and comments.

**Agenda 2: Preparations for the Committee of the Whole**

1. Following the President’s introductory remarks on this agenda item 2, the meeting discussed this item. The meeting requested for more information on the criteria or method followed in choosing or nominating the Chair and rapporteur of the Committee of the Whole. One member recalled a gentle person’s agreement that if the chair of the bureau was from a developing country, then automatically chair of the Committee of the Whole would be from the developed country and vice versa.
2. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the election of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole is guided by Rule 62 of the Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly, which includes the principle of equitable geographical representation. It was clarified that efforts at early endorsement of a Chair were based on a political understanding grounded in the need to have a well-prepared and

successful 2017 UN Environment Assembly.

3. A member expressed doubts about having Co-Chairs its feasibility given the short duration of the session. It was suggested that all negotiations be finished during the Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives. The meeting noted expressions of interest from two regional groups.
4. The meeting agreed to allow until 30 September 2017 for the communication of possible candidates for Chair of Committee of the Whole. The Secretariat was to circulate a reminder to all regional groups and provide a table with information on the distribution of the Chair and Rapporteur of the Committee of the Whole from past Governing Body Sessions.

### **Agenda 3: Preparations for the 2017 UN Environment Assembly**

5. The Chair updated the meeting on preparations for the Assembly focusing on draft resolutions. On draft resolutions, four Member states had submitted draft resolutions, with other Member States and Regional Groups signaling intent to submit drafts by the 22 September 2017 deadline. Consultation would begin on 19 September led by facilitators who are Committee Bureau members. The Secretariat had submitted a draft decision on trust funds and earmarked contributions.
6. In response to the Chair's report, the following points were raised: concerns over line by line reading by the Committee, which some felt should be left to the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives; caution on the proposal for a procedural decision on setting a deadline, given the rights of Member States under the Rules of Procedure and the possibility of locking out important resolutions; need to encourage mergers of drafts; ensuring the participation of non-resident representatives in the negotiations and request for an updated calendar.
7. In conclusion, the meeting agreed on the value in presenting the rationale for the resolutions, gathering comments during the consultations, stock taking with a view to merging or streamlining resolutions, in two readings as planned by the Committee. Negotiations would then take place at the Open ended Committee of Permanent Representatives.
8. Attention was drawn to a note on the current funding status for the 2017 UN Environment Assembly, provided by the Secretariat.

#### **Global Coalition for Pollution-Free Planet**

9. The Deputy Executive Director updated the meeting on the "Global Coalition for Pollution-Free Planet", an idea proposed in response to the question from Barbados on the need to reflect on ways to take forward action beyond UN Environment Assembly and to develop global partnership of multi stakeholders approach to deal with issues of pollution.
10. In the discussion that followed, Members took note of the proposal of the Secretariat. While noting its importance as a concrete vision for follow up they cautioned against duplicating arrangements already in place such as SAICM and creating additional

bureaucracy and instead strengthen UN Environment Programme by mandating it to follow up. They also stressed the need to identify gaps, explain added value and include commitments.

11. In response the Deputy Executive Director clarified that the report by the Executive Directors on theme, "Toward a Pollution Free Planet," already identified gaps and that the intention was not to form a new body but to create a coalition by bringing together policies makers, decision makers, private sectors and other departments to create new dynamics in different institution and capacities for action.
12. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat would elaborate the documents especially gaps, the concept of the coalition and expected outcomes and circulate a revised document. Member States would continue to consult on the proposal within their regional groups and provide further feedback.

### **Scenario Note**

13. On the Scenario note, concern was expressed about the overlap in timing for the Gala dinner and the multi-stakeholders' dialogue and the Secretariat was requested to: extend the time for receiving copies of credentials to 15 November 2017; clarify the different expected outcomes of the UN Environment Assembly; clarify organizational modalities for the four Leadership Dialogue including format, guests and moderators. On member recommended the use of the format used during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment held in Bangkok. More information was requested on logistical and protocol matters.
14. It was agreed that the members would provide written comments on the scenario note to the Secretariat. The Secretariat would circulate a revised copy taking into account the feedback received.

### **Agenda 4: Update on the Ministerial Outcome Document**

15. Following the President's introductory remarks on this agenda, the meeting discussed the Ministerial outcome document. Members expressed support for the ongoing work by the President. Issues raised included: the importance of including credible sources for the statistics and evidence quoted and; the need for clarification on the negotiation process in light of an earlier Joint Bureaux decision that the president would initiate the process and the negotiation will be on ministerial level.
16. In response, the representative of the President assured the meeting that sources of information in the outcome document would be properly referenced. She outlined the roadmap for Outcome document, including the dates for consultations with the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the release dates for the preliminary drafts and final drafts, which were 20 September and 2 November 2017 respectively.

### **Agenda 5: Visibility of the UN Environment Assembly**

17. At the request of the chair, representatives of the respective regional groups briefed the meeting on: the Informal Regional Ministerial Consultation for 2017 Environment Assembly "Europe's call for a Pollution Free Planet", held in Ostrava, Czech Republic:

preparations for upcoming ministerial meeting on “Preparations for the Inter-sessional Meeting of the forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean scheduled to take place 11 – 13 October 2017; the African Ministerial Conference on Environment(AMCEN) which took place in Libreville, Gabon from 12 to 16 June 2017 and; the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment, held in Bangkok from 5 to 8 September 2017.

18. In response to a question on the communication strategy for UN Environment Programme, the Deputy Executive Director highlighted ongoing efforts by the communication department and other departments despite budgetary constraints. These included websites, use of social media, commitments for citizens and political networking. He added that the content of the Executive Director’s report would be made public.

#### **Agenda 6: Major Groups and Stakeholders Engagement in the UN Environment Assembly**

19. In her briefing to the meeting, Ms. Norine Kennedy from US Council for International Business expressed the commitment of the Business Major Group to contribute to existing events; hold a dedicated business event; support the sustainable innovation expo and; provide inputs to resolutions.
20. In the discussion that followed, Major Groups and stakeholders were advised to synthesis inputs and share achievements and best practices in advance. The Bureaux and the Secretariat were advised to take advantage of the offer of support to the Assembly from the Business Major Group.

#### **Agenda 7: Dates of the Next Meeting**

21. It was agreed that the next Joint Meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives would be held 16 November 2017.