

Briefing

Committee of Permanent Representatives

Tuesday 16 January 2018

9:30a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Conference Room 4

United Nations Office in Nairobi, Gigiri

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The Secretary of Governing Bodies, Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis opened the meeting and welcomed new members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, namely Dr. Nicolleta Gomiero, Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy, Mr. Jamal Abdullah Dulaimi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Iraq and Mrs. Pornprom Petklai Nihon, Deputy Permanent Representative of Thailand. The Chair also introduced the new Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies, Mr. Ulf Björnholm, to the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Briefing on the Global Pact for the Environment.

2. The Secretary invited H.E. Mr. Antoine Sivan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France, to brief the meeting on the Global Pact for the Environment.
3. Ambassador Sivan informed the meeting of objectives of the Pact and outlined the contents of a draft resolution on the Pact, which will be officially presented to the United Nations General Assembly in January 2018. Member States were encouraged to join the group of 29 countries who were currently co-sponsoring the draft resolution. He underlined that the process for negotiations would be transparent and inclusive.
4. Ms. Elizabeth Mrema, Director, Law Division, informed the meeting that UN Environment Programme stands ready to support the negotiations process as envisaged in the draft resolution, including by providing essential background information and documents and to support co-facilitators that may be appointed to lead the negotiation process.
5. While some members supported the initiative, others expressed concern over the Pact, asking for further clarification on objectives, rationale and value added of the initiative. They further noted some specific challenges that the initiative might face such as: a) a disconnect between a negotiation process led from New York and the Nairobi-based Committee of Permanent Representatives and UN Environment Programme Secretariat; b) financial constraints in terms of restricted budget allocations; c) links to existing multilateral environmental processes, such as the Paris Climate Change Agenda and other Multilateral Environmental Agreement processes.

6. Members also asked for more clarity on the role of UN Environment Programme in the Pact, including on aspects relating to participation of Civil Society Organizations and budget for their engagement.
7. One representative of Major Groups and Stakeholders supported a strong role for UN Environment Programme to coordinate the process, provided that it did not undermine existing international environmental agreements. In addition, she reiterated the need to ensure strong participation of Civil Society Organizations in the initiative.
8. In response to questions and comments, Ambassador Sivan referred to a dedicated website of the initiative (www.pactenvironment.org) where further information on the initiative is available, and requested the Secretariat to circulate a “White Paper” that describes the concept behind the Pact.
9. Ambassador Sivan concluded that the draft resolution envisages a very strong role and contribution of UN Environment Programme to the initiative and throughout the negotiations once the draft resolution on the Pact has been negotiated and adopted. He supported need to ensure adequate engagement of Civil Society Organizations in the initiative.
10. The meeting closed at 11:30 a.m.