

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

20 November 2018

On 20 November 2018, Bureaux members of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme held a meeting via video-conference. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Siim V. Kiisler, President of the UN Environment Assembly and Minister of Environment of the Republic of Estonia and H.E. Ms. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Ghana. A list of participants is made available in the annex to this summary.

The Joint Bureaux meeting addressed the following topics:

- Consideration of the zero draft of the Ministerial Outcome Document;
- Organization of work of the Bureaux;
- Implementation of UNEA resolution 3/3: “Contributions of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development”;
- Consideration of the draft Implementation Plan on Pollution;
- Communication Strategy for the UN Environment Assembly
- Multi-stakeholder events during the United Nations Environment Assembly

This summary summarizes the key decisions and points of discussion during the joint Bureaux meeting.

The meeting observed a moment of silence in honor of H.E. Ms. Edna Molewa, Vice President of the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly and Minister of Environmental Affairs of the Republic of South Africa.

Overview of decisions:

1. The meeting agreed to further consider a non-paper for starting a discussion how to strengthen the governing bodies of UNEA, during the next joint meeting of the Bureaux.
2. The meeting agreed to amend the provisional agenda of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly, as mandated by UNEA resolution 3/3.
3. The meeting requested the Secretariat to further develop and revise the communication strategy based on inputs provided by members of the Bureaux at the meeting.
4. The meeting requested the Secretariat to revise the Sustainable Innovation Expo note and the note on leadership dialogues, and to seek feedback from the Committee of Permanent Representatives before finalization.
5. The meeting requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the Science Policy Business Forum at its next meeting at the latest.
6. The meeting decided to schedule the next joint meeting of the joint Bureaux on 7 January 2018.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of the zero draft of the Ministerial Outcome Document

1. The President of the UN Environment Assembly provided an update on the development of a zero draft of the Ministerial Outcome Document, with three proposed main focus areas:
 - to ensure transparency and accountability of global environmental data and promoting digital solutions.
 - to foster sustainable and efficient resource management.
 - to support the engagement of civil society, citizens, academia and the private sector

The President also announced that informal consultations on the draft Ministerial Declaration with representatives from the Committee of Permanent Representatives was scheduled for 22 November 2018, reminded of the deadline of 30 November for written comments, and recalled that the next draft of the Ministerial Outcome Document will be made available in the second half of December 2018.

2. The meeting welcomed the draft Ministerial Declaration, and provided several remarks on its content, including:
 - The importance of clear, short, balanced, political and action-oriented language, which is understandable to both the public and policy makers and which is less technical
 - The need for potential targets and deadlines to be broad and realistic, while taking into account national circumstances
 - Better alignment between the priority areas and the theme of the Assembly including by reconsidering the current structure
 - Improved links with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, using agreed language
 - The need for the draft to include the concept of means of implementation.

Agenda Item 3: Organization of work of the Bureaux

3. The Secretariat provided an overview of planned resolutions for the Environment Assembly based on submissions from member States to date, and informed the meeting that all documentation relating to draft resolutions are made available on the [UN Environment Assembly papersmart portal](#).
4. The meeting was informed that the Africa Group intends to submit several additional concept notes for draft resolutions within short.
5. The Secretariat informed the meeting on the following additional decisions and resolutions that may be tabled by the Secretariat:
 - Resolution on the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021
 - Decision on the summary of policy makers of the 6th Global Environment Outlook
 - Decision on date and agenda for the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly
 - A possible procedural decision on the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the UN Environment Programme in 2022.
6. The President introduced a non-paper for starting a discussion on how to strengthen the governing bodies of UNEA, and invited the bureau to consider this matter further at the next joint Bureaux meeting, in particular with regard to:
 - the process of nomination of negotiation facilitators, possibly including members of both Bureaux;
 - how to ensure smooth continuity from OECPR to UNEA-4;
 - the nomination and role of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole
 - the draft Terms of Reference for Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of UNEA resolution 3/3: “Contributions of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development”

7. The Secretariat informed the meeting that UNEA resolution 3/3: “Contributions of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development” calls for the inclusion of “a standing agenda item of the United Nations Environment Assembly on contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, with the aim of considering in its deliberations the Sustainable Development Goals under review at the annual meetings of the high-level political forum”.
8. The meeting agreed to include the agenda item, as proposed by the Secretariat in a revised annotated agenda for the Environment Assembly.

Agenda Item 5: Consideration of the draft Implementation Plan on Pollution

The Secretariat informed the meeting on progress made on the development and consultations on a draft Implementation Plan, with the aim to finalise the draft in early December.

Agenda Item 6: Communication Strategy for the UN Environment Assembly

19. The Secretariat presented a revised and updated communication strategy for the UN Environment Assembly, informed the meeting of the launch of the [solve different website](#), and announced that the communication toolkit will be shared with member States shortly.
20. The meeting underlined the need to solicit high media awareness around the UN Environment Assembly and recommended the Secretariat to maximize media impact and reach a wider audience; concerns were also raised with regard to the use of the term “planetary boundaries” as a potentially controversial concept.
21. The meeting also requested the Secretariat to update and revise the communication strategy, taking into account the views expressed at the meeting.

Agenda Item 7: Multi-stakeholder events during the United Nations Environment Assembly

22. The Secretariat presented an overview of the different multi-stakeholder events planned for the Assembly, including with regard to Leadership Dialogues, the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, side events, the Sustainable Innovation Expo and the Major Groups and Stakeholder Forum.
23. The meeting considered further work was needed to identify appropriate themes for the themes of the Leadership Dialogues on the basis of a revised proposal developed under the leadership of the President, and to find a more balanced text in the note on the Sustainable Innovation Expo.
24. The meeting agreed that the topic of multi-stakeholder events should be further consulted with the Committee of Permanent Representatives at the Subcommittee meeting on 29 November.
25. The meeting requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the Science Policy Business Forum at its next meeting at the latest.

Agenda Item 8: Dates of the next joint Bureaux meeting of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

21. The meeting agreed that the next Joint Meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives will be held on 7 January 2018 in Nairobi.

Agenda Item 9: Other Matters

22. The Bureau member from Poland expressed concern over the heavy meeting agenda given the limited time allocated for the meeting and recommended a different approach for future Bureaux meetings.

Annex

List of participants Joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, 20 November 2018

UN Environment Assembly Bureau	
COUNTRY REGIONAL GROUP	NAME DESIGNATION
Estonia Eastern European Group	H.E Mr. Siim Valmar Kiisler, President, Minister of Environment
Brazil Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mr. Fernando Estellita Lins de Salvo Coimbra, Vice President, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Iran Asia Pacific Group	H.E. Dr. Naser Moghaddasi, Vice President and Deputy Head of Department of Environment and Chief of International Affairs and Convention Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Gabon Africa Group	H.E. Mr. Jacques Denis Tsanga, Vice President and Minister of Waters, Forest, in charge of Environment and Sustainable Development Goals
Switzerland Western European and Others Group	H.E. Mr. Felix Wertli, Vice President and Head of Section, Global Affairs, Federal Office of the Environment of Switzerland
Pakistan Asia Pacific Group	H.E. Raza Bashir Tarar, Rapporteur, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative
Finland Western European and Others Group	H.E. Ms. Tita Korvenoja, Representing H.E. Mr. Kimmo Tiilikainen, Minister of the Environment, Energy and Housing
South Africa Africa Group	Ms. Shakira Parker, Environmental Affairs of the Republic of South Africa
Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau	
Ghana Africa Group	H.E. Ms. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative
Colombia Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mrs. Elizabeth Ines Taylor Jay, Vice Chair and Ambassador - Designate and Permanent Representative
USA Western European and Others Group	H.E. Ms. Lori Peterson Dando, Vice Chair and Permanent Representative
Korea Asia Pacific Group	Mr. Changgyu Lee, Deputy Permanent Representative
Poland Eastern European Group	H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki, Rapporteur and Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Nairobi Based Representatives	
Iran	Mr. Ahmad Ghalandari, Deputy Permanent Representative
South Africa	Ms. Amanda Mkhwanazi, Deputy Permanent Representative
Finland	Ms. Riikka Jarvenpaa, Permanent Mission of Finland