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Committee of Permanent Representatives  
Bureau Meeting  
Wednesday 1 September 2021  
10:00 am – 12.00 pm, GMT+3  
In-person meeting

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

*Meeting agenda and supporting background documents are available on the [meeting portal](#).*

#### **Agenda item1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.**

1. H.E. Luisa Fragoso, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Ambassador of Portugal to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme, chaired the meeting, in which the following members of the bureau participated:

##### **The Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau members**

H.E. Mrs. Selma Malika Haddadi, Ambassador of Algeria to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme, Vice Chair of the CPR

H.E. Mr. Erasmo Roberto Martínez, Ambassador of Mexico to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme, Vice Chair of the CPR

Mr. Ado Lohmus, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the UN Environment Programme, Vice Chair of the CPR

H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, Ambassador of Pakistan to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme, Rapporteur of the CPR

##### **The Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly, represented *ex officio***

Mr. Øystein Størkersen, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme

##### **UN Office at Nairobi (UNON)**

Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Director-General of UNON

##### **The UN Environment Programme Secretariat**

Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director;

Mr. Rafael Peralta, Chief of Staff;

Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies;

Mr. Stadler Trengove, Principal Legal Officer.

2. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members of the Bureau, as well as the Director General of UN Office at Nairobi and Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, followed by opening remarks by the Executive Director. Ms. Anderson expressed her great pleasure to meet the Bureau members in person and looked forward to the discussions at the meeting.
3. The meeting agenda was adopted.

## **Agenda Item 2: Consultation on the format of future meetings.**

4. In her introduction, the Chair noted that many delegations have expressed a strong preference to resume in-person meetings in the UN complex as soon as possible. She also underlined the importance of in-person negotiations to achieve a substantive and meaningful outcome for the resumed session of UNEA-5 and UNEP@50 Special Session, while fully adhering to any restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, as decided by the host country and by the UN Office in Nairobi. She invited the Director General of UNON and Executive Director of UNEP to provide a briefing to the Bureau on this matter.
5. The Director General of UNON informed the Bureau that since July 2021 Kenya is undergoing a 4<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19 infections, and that positive infection rates have remained above 10% nationally. Despite the challenges, the vaccination programme nationwide, and especially within the United Nations family in Nairobi has proceeded well, with 80% of UN staff – including caterers, cleaners, gardeners, commercial operations staff etc. – having received at least one vaccination and about 25% two vaccinations. Thanks to this effective vaccination campaign, the number of deaths and ICU admittances for UN staff and dependents had decreased very radically and are now at or close to zero. She reassured the Bureau that UNON is working closely with UNEP on this matter, as well as with the government of host country, with the aim of creating a “safe haven” in the UN complex in Gigiri, applying a tailor-made approach that may be different from other UN headquarters. She announced that UNON is determined to initiate a gradual return to office for staff members and open the UN complex for Member State meetings, using the 60% capacity ratio already decided, as soon as feasible and is working on detailed guidelines to this end, which are expected to be finalized and presented to the Diplomatic Corp end of September.
6. The Executive Director of UNEP expressed her hope to soon be working together under a “new normal”, possibly based on a system of disclosing vaccination status and/or testing. She noted that thanks to UNON, new infrastructure had been put in place, including open outdoor workspaces. She noted that the 2021 General Assembly will be held virtually in New York, despite the high vaccination rates among the general population, and underlined that in person meetings cannot be a political negotiation but have to be based on health assessments risks and restrictions. She expressed her intention to work closely with UNON and the host country to identify ways to organize hybrid meetings by mid/end October, so that the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the annual subcommittee can be attended by Nairobi-based delegations. She also expressed the hope that – should conditions allow – fully representative in person meetings, including delegates from Member States capitals, will be possible in time for the resumed session of UNEA-5 and UNEP@50.
7. Members of the Bureau thanked the Director General of UNON and Executive Director of UNEP for their briefings and expressed strong support for the plans to resume in-person meetings under certain restrictions and limitations still to be defined, and requested regular updates from UNON on the situation and the development of the guidelines. The secretariat was asked whether it may be possible to organize the 155<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR as a hybrid meeting.
8. The Secretariat responded that given the uncertainties and lack of fully developed participant guidelines and restrictions, the 155<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR will have to remain virtual, while meetings in October may be organized in a hybrid format, including the Annual Subcommittee meeting and other subcommittee meetings as needed, should conditions allow.

9. The Chair thanked the Bureau members for their important contributions and invited the Secretariat to provide additional updates on a regular basis.

### **Agenda Item 3: Organization of Work.**

10. The Secretariat presented two documents under this agenda item including a roadmap of meeting for the Governing Bodies and a draft note on possible key areas of importance for consideration at the resumed session of UNEA-5.
11. The Chair and the members of the Bureau provided following comments:

#### *On the roadmap*

- Suggested to organize the next Bureau meeting ahead of the 155 CPR meeting, e.g. on 21 September or 27 September;
- Requested the Secretariat to seek guidance from the UNEA President on the date for the next joint bureau meeting;
- Flagged a possible change of date for the 156<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR scheduled for 2 December, at the request of the Chair;
- Proposed to add additional subcommittee meetings devoted to consultations on draft UNEA-5 resolutions and UNEP@50;

#### *On the note on possible key areas of importance for consideration at the resumed session of UNEA-5*

- Underlined that the list of key areas and priorities is contingent on whether and when in-person negotiations will be possible, and it is not withstanding the prerogative of Member States to present national initiatives;
- Agreed that the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the annual subcommittee will provide a milestone to consolidate and take stock of Member States' initiatives relating to draft UNEA-5 resolutions;
- Noted that the resumed session of UNEA-5 takes place in extraordinary circumstances, with high expectations to consider issues that were deferred during the online session of UNEA-5, remaining uncertainties relating to the format of the resumed session and its preparatory meetings due to the COVID 19 pandemic, and the fact that UNEA-5 will only have 3 days at its disposal instead of the standard period of 5 days;
- Stressed the importance to start working on draft UNEA-5 resolutions as soon as possible and recommended the CPR Chair to issue guidance to Member States to this end, in close cooperation with the UNEA-5 Presidency;
- Pointed to the need to further consider the difference between administrative and procedural resolutions;
- Underlined the need to agree on appropriate burden-sharing arrangements with regard to the chairing of upcoming subcommittee meetings, taking into account [Decision Ex/1 of the CPR](#);
- Requested the Secretariat, in close consultation with the Chair, to revise the roadmap accordingly.

### **Agenda Item 4: Preparation for the 155th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the 8th Annual Subcommittee meeting**

12. The Secretariat introduced the draft agenda and structure of the 155<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR and of the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Subcommittee meeting.

13. Members of the Bureau broadly welcomed the draft agenda and structure for the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the annual subcommittee, and requested the secretariat, in close consultation with the Chair, to:
  - Further consider how to best implement paragraph 4 of UNEA decisions 5/3, which reads *“Takes note of the reports of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme submitted to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session on progress achieved in the implementation of resolutions of the Assembly, as listed in the annex to the present decision, and decides to review those reports at the eighth annual subcommittee meeting in 2021 and defer taking action thereon until the resumed meeting of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly in February and March 2022”*.
  - Review the timing of the meeting, also taking into account the need to facilitate online capital representation;
  - Ensure sufficient time for consultation on UNEP’s Programme Performance, in accordance with the mandate of the Committee;
  - Ensure sufficient time for consultations on draft UNEA-5 resolutions.

**Agenda Item 5: Other Matters**

14. No other matters were raised.

**Agenda Item 6: Closing of the Meeting.**

15. The meeting closed at 12:50 p.m.