

155th Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
28 September 2021
10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Online meeting

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Note: This Chair's summary complements the detailed minutes of the meeting developed by the UN Office in Nairobi. All pre-meeting and post-meeting documents, including statements provided in writing by member States, are available [here](#).

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

1. The meeting was opened by H.E. Mrs. Luísa Fragoso, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Portugal. The meeting welcomed newly arrived representatives to the Committee and bid farewell to departing representatives.
2. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, provided brief opening remarks, and expressed appreciation at being able to participate in-person in this online meeting, which had a limited in-room presence.

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda of the 154th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

3. The provisional meeting [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the draft minutes of the 154th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

4. The [draft minutes](#) of the 154th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives were adopted.

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Executive Director.

5. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, provided a statement, available [here](#). The Quarterly Report of the Executive Director to the 154th meeting of the CPR is available [here](#). In the ensuing dialogue, delegations who took the floor, inter alia:
 - Welcomed the report and statement of the Executive Director.
 - Expressed appreciation for the inclusive way the new Chair and Bureau of the Committee are conducting their work.
 - Thanked the Executive Director for the consultations with regional groups on the special session on UNEP@50 and expressed readiness to work together towards the commemoration,

- further expressing hope that UNEA-5.2 and UNEP@50 will be held in person. Some delegations advocated that the political declaration under the 73/333 process should be endorsed at the special session.
- Expressed support for the work under the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and stressed the urgent need to raise the ambition of financing for environment and nature.
 - Welcomed the outcome of the recent Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution, with several delegations expressing support for the establishment of an international negotiating committee for a global instrument on marine litter and plastic pollution at UNEA-5.2.
 - Underlined the importance to provide core funding to the Environment Fund for the fulfillment of UNEP's mandate, and invited all Member States to contribute their "fair share" to the Environment Fund, as determined by the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions (VISC),
 - Welcomed the efforts by UNON and the Government of Kenya to find the appropriate modalities to resume in person meetings and sought further clarity on the size of delegations and protocols to ensure health safety, with one delegation expressing concern over in-person meetings under current circumstances and advocating for stricter health restrictions.
 - Reiterated the need to ensure geographic balance among UNEP staff, requested additional information on the geographical representation with a breakdown on staff across UNEP offices and UNEP MEAs, as well as regular updates on the results of the UNEP talent acquisition and outreach strategy.
 - Underlined that there is a heavy workload underway to consider draft resolutions and requested the secretariat to provide adequate support for the upcoming negotiations.
 - Provided information on various environmental initiatives taking place in different countries, often in partnerships with UNEP.
 - One delegation highlighted the recently adopted modalities resolution for the international meeting on Stockholm+50, which will take place in June 2022, and informed delegations that preparations were well underway.
 - A representative of the UNEA-5 President expressed appreciation for the constructive collaboration with delegations and looked forward to continued broad consultations in order to ensure that UNEA-5 achieves meaningful and ambitious outcomes.
6. The Executive Director thanked delegations for their inputs and guidance, took note of the comments received, and expressed her appreciation for the strong leadership demonstrated by various countries, including on marine-litter and plastic-related issues. She took note of the comments on staffing and noted that the secretariat is recruiting a special focal point on the implementation of UNEP's talent acquisition and outreach strategy. The Executive Director also recognized the urgency to act for nature and the need to ensure a successful and impactful UNEA-5.2 and UNEP@50.

Agenda Item 5: Preparations for the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50)

7. The Executive Director provided a presentation on the preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the UNEP, and summarized initial feedback received at informal

consultations with the regional groups held during the first half of September. The presentation is available [here](#).

8. The Committee thanked the Executive Director for the presentation, and provided the following comments in summary:
 - Thanked the Executive Director for organizing the informal consultations with the regional groups in Nairobi on the preparations for the special session on UNEP@50.
 - Stressed the need to ensure a successful UNEP@50 with meaningful outcomes to strengthen UNEP, Nairobi's headquarter function, and the multilateral environmental system.
 - One regional group highlighted its expectation that UNEP@50 can better position UNEP to assist Member States, in particular those in the developing world, in the implementation of their international environmental commitments.
 - Asked for more detailed information on the content and plans of the proposal to "upgrade" the World Environment Situation Room. In this context, one regional group further noted that it would be important to enhance the participation of the academia from the Global South in UNEP's scientific processes.
 - Emphasized the importance of effective communication around the commemoration and the need to work towards a UNEP's communication policy that is aligned with multilaterally agreed language, in order to promote a cohesive messaging.
 - Stressed the need to broaden the ownership of the event to stakeholders and academia.
 - Some delegations reiterated their position that the political declaration under the 73/333 process should be endorsed at the special session. One regional group and some individual delegations requested an update on the related process in New York.
 - One delegation underlined the need to ensure that the ambition level regarding outcomes is realistic and aligned with the commemorative nature of the event.
 - One regional group asked for additional clarification on what "reinforcing" the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions would mean.
 - One regional group and some individual delegations noted that the universality of UNEP calls for a more structured and balanced geographical representation in UNEP, including its work under the science policy interface.
 - Regarding the question whether UNEP@50 should have a theme, one regional group suggested the title "Towards the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development", noting that it would be aligned with the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals. One stakeholder proposed that the special session should be entitled "The UNEP We Want".
 - Some delegations recalled that the Committee had recommended that its Vice-Chair representing the Africa Group be tasked with the facilitation of the preparations of the Special Session of UNEA-6 to be convened for this occasion.
9. The Chair thanked delegations for their guidance and proposed to dedicate the next subcommittee meeting on 12 October 2021 to more in-depth discussions on the preparations of UNEP@50, with a focus, for example, on the structure of the special session, the theme for the leadership dialogues, and the possible political outcome. The meeting will be chaired by the Vice Chair of the CPR Bureau representing the African Group, H.E. Mrs. Selma Malika Haddadi. The Chair requested the

Secretariat to provide a background note on the matter in advance of the meeting and reminded of the call to submit early nominations for the UNEA-6 Bureau.

Agenda Item 6: Preparation for the 8th Annual Subcommittee Meeting.

10. The Secretariat provided an update on the preparations for the 8th Annual Subcommittee meeting, to be held on 25 – 29 October, including the [draft structure](#) and [agenda](#), as per guidance of the Bureau of the CPR. The background note is available [here](#).
11. The Committee thanked the Secretariat for the briefing and provided the following comments in summary:
 - Requested that all supporting documentation including the information/progress reports be made available three weeks in advance of the meeting, to allow enough time for delegations to consider the materials.
 - Asked the Secretariat to avoid time-consuming presentations to allow for substantive discussions, including with regard to draft resolutions, through a clear substantive agenda and a flexible structure.
 - Requested more information on the nature and purpose of the possible informal working groups to consider “any remaining open issues”, and the logistics for such meetings taking into account the hybrid format.
 - Noted that achieving an understanding on the format of UNEA-5.2 and of its preparatory process within the CPR is important, emphasized the need to be realistic about what can be accomplished in a possible hybrid format and called for responsibility in terms of the workload, especially with regard to draft resolutions. Further stressed the importance of making wise use of the intersessional period.
 - Welcomed the opportunity to consider the draft ministerial declaration for UNEA 5.
 - Requested additional guidance on the size of delegations and the safety protocols during the meeting.
 - Pointed out that hybrid meetings are not the same as in person meetings, and that all delegations must have equal access to the meeting to ensure inclusivity and equal participation.
 - One stakeholder representative suggested UNEA-5 should address chemical pollution and called on Member States to build on the “Stockholm legacy” to uphold civil society engagement.
12. The Secretariat took note of the comments received and clarified that the draft agenda and structure was designed to allow for sufficient time for the consideration of substantive preparations for UNEA 5.2, under the guidance of the CPR Bureau. Regarding the mandates from UNEA, it is the prerogative of Member States to decide whether they will be considered at UNEA-5 or deferred to a later session of the Assembly; the list of key areas of importance where UNEA-5.2 may wish to take action is not fixed, nor is it exhaustive and it will be up to Member States to decide. The Secretariat also informed that it would revise the agenda of the 8ASC to include an agenda item on the presentation or announcement of draft resolutions, and that it would strive to prepare presentations that are succinct and to the point.
13. The Chair called on Member States to be prepared to table or submit a resolution during or in advance of the 8th meeting of the annual subcommittee and reminded delegations that the subcommittee meeting on 14 October provides an opportunity to do so. The meeting will be chaired

by the Vice Chair of the CPR Bureau representing the Latin American and Caribbean Group, H.E. Mr. Erasmo Roberto Martínez.

Agenda Item 7: Report of the Subcommittee.

14. The Committee adopted the report from the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the main activities and outcomes of the subcommittee meetings held after its 154th meeting on 20 May 2021.

Agenda Item 8: Other matters.

15. The Chair recognized that Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, long-standing Secretary of the Governing Bodies, would be concluding his assignment as of 1 October 2021 and would assume a new role as the Head of the Secretariat of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. To this end, the Committee thanked Mr. Laguna-Celis for his effective leadership as the Secretary and highlighted the key role he played in taking UNEA and the CPR to a higher level of governance and relevance. In this regard, the Chair presented Mr. Laguna-Celis with a certificate of recognition.

Agenda Item 8: Closing of the meeting.

16. The meeting closed at 4:10 pm.