

# Procedures for elections to fill vacancies in the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution

## Note by the Secretariat

### Background

1. In its resolution 5/8, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) decided that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. UNEA further decided to convene, subject to the availability of resources, an ad hoc open-ended working group (“OEWG”) to prepare proposals for the science-policy panel, to begin its work in 2022 with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024.
2. The first part of the first session of the OEWG (OEWG1.1) was held in Nairobi in a hybrid format, with online participation, on 6 October 2022. The meeting report is available as document [UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/3](#). During the meeting, the working group agreed to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly (“rules of procedure”) to its work as outlined in document [UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1\(I\)/INF/2](#).
3. In addition, the OEWG elected the following officers, in accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure as applicable to its work as follows: Vice-Chairs: Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda for Latin America and the Caribbean region); Salma Qadoori Jabir (Iraq for the Asia and the Pacific region); Oumar Diaouré Cisse (Mali for the African region); Saqlain Syedah (Pakistan for the Asia and the Pacific region); Michel Tschirren (Switzerland for the Western European and Other States Group) and Valentina Sierra (Uruguay for Latin America and the Caribbean region).<sup>1</sup> Rapporteur: Cyrus Mageria (Kenya for the African region). Following the resignation of Ms. Salma Qadoori Jabir (Iraq), the OEWG elected Mr. LI Jinhui of China as Bureau member for the Asia and the Pacific region, through a silence procedure, in accordance with rule 19 of the rules of procedure as applicable to its work.
4. The second part of the first session (OEWG1.2) was held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, from 30 January to 3 February 2023, as a fully in-person meeting. The OEWG elected Ms. Alkemade (Netherlands for the Western European and other States Group) as the Chair of the ad hoc open-ended working group by secret ballot, in accordance with rules 56 and 57 of the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly. The meeting report is available as document [UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/7](#).
5. At OEWG 1.2, two seats for the Eastern European States remained vacant in the Bureau, and four Member States from among those States had presented individual nominees, none of whom had been endorsed by the Eastern European States at the time of the meeting. Following further consultations within the regional group and at the group’s request, to allow for additional regional consultations, the OEWG decided to postpone the election of the Bureau members from the Eastern European States to its second session.

---

<sup>1</sup> Following the resignation of Ms. Valentina Sierra (Uruguay), the OEWG elected Ms. Judith Torres (Uruguay) as Bureau member for the Latin America and the Caribbean region, through a silence procedure ending on 10 December 2023, in accordance with rule 19 of the rules of procedure as applicable to its work.

6. Under item 2 of its agenda ([UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/1/Add.1](#)), the OEWG was invited to finalize the election of its officers at the upcoming second session (OEWG 2) to be held in person in Nairobi, and hosted by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from 11–15 December 2023, through the election of the two remaining Vice-Chairs from the Eastern European States Group.

7. **During a meeting of the plenary at OEWG 2 held on Monday 11 December 2023, the OEWG decided to elect the remaining Vice-Chairs for the Eastern European States Group by secret ballot, in accordance with rule 56 of the rules of procedure. The OEWG agreed that the election shall take place during a meeting of the plenary scheduled for Tuesday 12 December 2023 from 10h00 to 13h00.**

8. **Following further consultations within the regional group and based upon information received from the group as communicated to the OEWG, one individual nominee – Ms. Ana Berejiani (Georgia) – withdrew her candidacy. The following three individual nominations will be considered by the OEWG for election to the two vacant positions of Vice-Chair for the Eastern European States in the Bureau:**

- (i) **Mr. Alexandru Roznov (Romania);**
- (ii) **Mr. Vladimir Lenev (Russian Federation); and**
- (iii) **Mr. Roman Filonenko (Ukraine)**

9. As far as credentials are concerned, credentials for OEWG meetings signed by Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs are **not** required to participate in the meetings of the OEWG. This is in accordance with the practice of the United Nations Environment Programme (“UNEP”) where participation by States in meetings of the subsidiary bodies of UNEA do not require the submission of such credentials signed by Head of State, Head of Government and Minister for Foreign Affairs. As was the case for OEWG1.1, and OEWG1.2, representatives are required to register online through the INDICO platform by uploading a formal letter or a Note Verbale from their Ministry (including *inter alia*, their Ministry for Foreign Affairs or Environment) or a formal letter or Note Verbale from their Embassy or Permanent Mission addressed to the Secretariat containing the composition of delegation. Formal online registration of State representatives for the OEWG, is subject to review and approval by the Secretariat and will be sufficient to participate in OEWG 2, including participating in the election of officers.

10. A summary by the secretariat of the procedures to be followed for the elections of officers to the OEWG as referred to above is provided below.

### **Rules applicable to the election of the two representatives from the Eastern European States Group (EE)**

11. Rule 18 of the rules of procedure, as applicable to the OEWG, requires the OEWG to elect a Bureau and also requires that each of the five regions be represented. In the absence of consensus by the regional group for the election of the two members of the Eastern European States Group, the OEWG shall proceed to elect the two Vice-Chairs by secret ballot in accordance with rules 56 and 58 of the rules of procedure.

12. As to the quorum required to elect vacancies in the Bureau, any election constitutes a decision of the OEWG. Pursuant to rule 32 of the rules of procedure as applicable to the OEWG, the presence of a majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be required for any decision to be taken. Paragraph 7 of UNEA resolution 5/8 provides that the OEWG “should include Governments and regional economic integration organizations” participating on an equal basis. Accordingly, the membership of the OEWG consists of the 193 Member States, the four non-Member States and the European Union as a regional economic integration organization bringing the total to 198 participants. Thus, for the purposes of quorum, one hundred members of the OEWG need to be physically present to proceed with the conduct of the election.

13. Rules 56 and 58 of the rules of procedure provide as follows:

Rule 56

*“All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless otherwise decided by the United Nations Environment Assembly.”*

Rule 58

*“1. When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining the required majority on the first ballot shall be elected.*

*2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is more than the number of places to be filled, those candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be elected.*

*3. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, there shall be held additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, who shall number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled. However, in the case of a tie between a greater number of unsuccessful candidates, a special ballot shall be held for the purpose of reducing the number of candidates to the required number.*

*4. If three restricted ballots are inconclusive, unrestricted ballots shall follow in which votes may be cast for any eligible person or member. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots (subject to exception in the case similar to that of the tie mentioned at the end of the previous paragraph of this rule) shall be restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots. The number of such candidates shall not be more than twice the places remaining to be filled.*

*5. The following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted and so on, until the places are filled.”*

**Balloting procedure for the election of the two Bureau members from the Eastern European States Group (EE)**

14. Upon commencement of balloting, the conference officers will first distribute the ballot papers to the representatives sitting behind their nameplates. Each representative will get a single ballot paper and will be invited to vote for two candidates representing the Eastern European States Group.

15. The ballot papers will indicate the names of the candidates communicated to the Secretariat with two additional spaces on the ballot paper for inscribing the names of any other candidates from the EE. The candidates nominated by EE countries are as follows: Mr. Alexandru Roznov (Romania); Mr. Vladimir Lenev (Russian Federation); and Mr. Roman Filonenko (Ukraine).

16. Accordingly, delegates can

- i. tick the box for two candidates that have been communicated to the Secretariat; OR
- ii. tick the box for one of the candidates and write in the name of another candidate; OR
- iii. tick the box for one of the candidates
- iv. write down the name of up to two representatives that belongs to the EE that have not been printed on the ballot; OR
- v. leave their ballot blank.

17. This procedure will ensure compliance with established United Nations practice and specifically General Assembly resolution 71/323 on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. This resolution in operative paragraph 47 states that “the names of candidates for election by the General Assembly or by the

Main Committees shall be communicated to the Secretariat, where possible, at least 48 hours prior to an election unless otherwise required by specific rules governing the elections concerned, and that those names shall be printed on the ballot papers, while additional space shall be provided on the ballot paper for inscribing other names, where applicable.”

18. The ballot will be considered invalid if representatives tick and/or write down more than TWO names on the ballot paper, or if they write down the name of a representative who does not belong to the Eastern European States Group, or if they write down only the name of a Member State - as the election is for an individual and not a State. If a ballot paper contains any notation other than a vote in favour of two candidates, those notations will be disregarded.

19. Ballot papers need to be filled out clearly. If a mistake is made in the process of filling out the ballot paper, the delegation in question should immediately request a new ballot paper from the Secretariat staff at the front of the room. After the ballot papers are collected, and the presiding officer has announced that the balloting has been closed, the meeting will be suspended to allow time for the counting of the ballots. The Tellers, assisted by the Secretariat, will count the ballots, and the presiding officer will announce the results.

20. The presiding officer will propose three representatives from three Member States to serve as Tellers whose role will be to monitor the election and certify the results. The Secretariat will assist in identifying the Tellers from the representatives participating in the OEWG 2 and the Tellers will not be from the Eastern European States Group.

21. In accordance with rule 49 of the rules of procedure, the majority required is a majority of the members present and voting.

22. Pursuant to rule 52 of the rules of procedure, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting. All delegates are also required to remain at their seats so that the voting process can proceed in an orderly manner. Ballots will only be distributed at the seats of delegates.

23. Once the results have been tallied and the Tellers have certified the results, they shall be communicated to the presiding officer. The meeting will be resumed for the results to be announced and to declare elected the two candidates that has received the largest number of votes and a simple majority of the members present and voting.

24. Pursuant to rule 58, if the number of candidates obtaining a required majority of the members present and voting is less than the number of candidates to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places. The balloting shall be restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot and the number of candidates shall not be more than twice the places remaining to be filled.

25. Further, pursuant to rule 58, in the case of a tie vote, and when it becomes necessary to determine the candidate that will proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there shall be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.