

Committee of Permanent Representatives  
Bureau Meeting  
Thursday 10 May 2018  
8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.,  
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri  
Governance Affairs Office Meeting Room

## **SECRETARIAT MEETING NOTES**

### **1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

1. H.E. Mr. John Moreti, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana, chaired the meeting, in which the following participated:

#### **Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau members were represented by:**

- H.E. Ms. Elizabeth Ines Taylor Jay, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Vice Chair, Group of Latin America and Caribbean States;
- H.E. Mr. Young-dae Kwon, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Vice Chair of Asia- Pacific Group;
- Mr. Toni Sandell, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland, representing H.E. Ms. Tarja Fernandez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Finland, Vice Chair, Western European and Other States Group;
- H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Poland, Rapporteur, Eastern European Group;

#### **The UN Environment Programme Secretariat was represented by:**

- Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director;
- Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies;
- Mr. Ulf Björnholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies;
- Mr. Stadler Trengrove, Senior Legal Officer

2. The meeting adopted the agenda.

### **2. Preparation for the 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

3. The meeting recalled that a final version of the contributions of the UN Environment Assembly to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development had been submitted to the President of the UN Economic and Social Council by the deadline of 27 April 2018, following revisions that were made on the basis of comments by member States at the Subcommittee meeting of 24 April 2018. The meeting agreed that during the

142<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Committee, member States should be invited to take note of the submission of the contribution without any further amendments.

4. The meeting took note of a proposal by the Secretariat to reschedule the Fifth Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to 22-26 October and agreed to present this proposal for consideration by the 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Committee for endorsement.
5. The meeting was informed of an emerging consensus amongst regional and political groups that the Fourth Open-ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives should be held immediately prior to the Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly. The issue would be further discussed by the committee at its 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting with a view to find an agreement acceptable to all member States.
6. The meeting was informed by Mr. Ado Lohmus, Special Envoy for the President of the UN Environment Assembly, that consultations on a Ministerial Declaration for the Fourth Session of the Assembly are expected to commence at the end of May and beginning of June 2018. Mr. Lohmus also communicated regrets for not being able to connect the UN Environment Assembly President by video conference during the 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
7. The meeting underlined the need for clear guidance and constructive feedback from member States with regard to the draft concept note on the theme of the next Assembly, as submitted by the Secretariat. It was noted that this guidance may take the form of informal consultations. In addition, the Secretariat pointed out that the concept note may be useful for developing a possible background document that underpins the theme.
8. The Executive Director provided a brief overview of the quarterly report that he would present to the Committee, which comprised three sections: 1) global and regional development; 2) programmatic updates; and 3) status of financial and human resources. He also informed the meeting that the recruitment process for two major leadership positions in the Secretariat at Assistant Secretary General level had been completed, and shortlist of three names for each position forwarded to the Secretary General for final decision. The Executive Director further informed the meeting that two additional vacancies at Director level had been communicated to member States.
9. On the ongoing UN Reforms by the Secretary General, the Executive Director underlined the key role that the UN Resident Coordinators and the UN Country Teams will play in integrating and coordinating a system-wide UN response at the country level. He pointed out that this may require the UN Environment Programme to re-think its regional and country presence within the framework proposed under the new UN Reforms. He also underlined the imperative to progress achievement in gender parity and balance in geographical representation in staff composition of the organization, especially at senior levels.
10. The Secretariat informed the meeting that a discussion paper on the strengthening and reforming the UN Environment Programme was being developed, and that a draft Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021 is under preparation. These two

documents will, amongst others, present a solid basis for a more in-depth dialogue with member States as we move towards the Assembly.

### **3. Organization of work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

11. The Secretariat provided an update on upcoming meetings, including planned Subcommittee meetings in May and June, a Bureau meeting of the UN Environment Assembly in June, and a Second Joint Preparatory Retreat on 6-7 September 2018 in Tallinn, Estonia. Information on planned regional preparatory meetings for the Assembly was yet to be received.
12. The Chair, supported by other members, reminded the meeting on the importance of ensuring effective intersessional consultations on resolutions and decisions, and the Ministerial Declaration in good time in the run-up to the next Assembly so as to build early consensus for a successful Assembly.

### **4. Date for the next meeting of the Bureau**

13. The meeting agreed to postpone the decision on a date for the next meeting of the Bureau, pending further consultations.

### **5. Other matters**

14. The Rapporteur raised a concern relating to the quality and timeliness of meeting summaries, and the Secretariat committed to intensify existing efforts to ensure high quality and timely generation of summaries of subcommittee meetings, Secretariat Briefings and Bureau meetings.
15. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the next orientation session for new members of the Committee is tentatively scheduled for September or October 2018.
16. The Executive Director made reference to the impasse on the environmental assessment of the Palestinian occupied territories. In seeking to resolve the problem, he had made a special appeal to relevant member States and regional groups to use their influence and good offices to make progress towards the implementation of agreed assessment. He reiterated that concerted preparatory efforts on this issue would minimize the risk of a contentious debate and stand-off at the next Assembly.

### **6. Closing of the Meeting**

17. The meeting closed at 9:30 a.m.