

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

1 December 2020

On 1 December 2020, Members of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme held a virtual meeting. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Sveinung Rotevatn, President of the UN Environment Assembly and Minister of Environment and Climate of the Norway, and H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil. A list of participants is available as an annex to this summary. Agenda and meeting documentation is made available online through the [meeting portal](#).

The Joint Bureaux meeting addressed the following topics:

- Timing and format of the virtual session of UNEA-5;
- Preparation of administrative and budgetary decisions for the virtual session of UNEA-5;
- Preparation of a consensual message for the virtual session of UNEA-5.

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

Overview of main decisions:

- The Members of the two Bureaux jointly approved the structure of the virtual session of UNEA-5 as annexed to the present summary.
- The Members of the two Bureaux further discussed a proposal on the possible development of a consensual statement from the virtual meeting of UNEA-5 and provided guidance to the UNEA President in this regard.

Agenda Item 2: Timing and format of the virtual session of UNEA-5

1. The Executive Director presented a revised draft structure of the virtual session of UNEA-5, which took into account inputs provided by member States and stakeholders at the 7th annual subcommittee and the 152nd meeting of the CPR.
2. Members thanked the Executive Director for the revised structure, acknowledged the need to provide the Secretariat with sufficient time to prepare for the session, approved the proposed theme of the leadership dialogue as being a theme of topical importance (“Contribution of the environmental dimension of sustainable development to building a resilient and inclusive post-pandemic world”), and tasked the Secretariat to prepare, as soon as possible, a concept note on the theme and format of the dialogue for review of the members of the Bureaux. Several members highlighted the importance of engaging stakeholders and representatives from academia and the business community during the virtual session of UNEA and during the leadership dialogue, as appropriate.
3. It was highlighted that the reference in the structure to a possible message from the virtual session of UNEA-5 and to the proposed kick-off of the 50-year commemoration of the creation of UNEP (UNEP@50) was still under consideration and would take into account the feedback from the upcoming open-ended informal consultations on a consensual message for UNEA-5 on 8 December 2020, and the subcommittee meeting of the CPR scheduled for 10 December 2020 respectively.
4. The Bureaux also requested the Secretariat to invite the UN Secretary-General to address the UN Environment Assembly at the opening session of UNEA-5.

Agenda Item 3: Preparation of administrative and budgetary decisions for the virtual session of UNEA-5

5. The Chair of the CPR provided an oral update on the preparation of the following administrative and budgetary decisions for adoption at the virtual meeting of UNEA-5:
 - Medium Term Strategy for 2022-2025 and Programme of Work for the biennium 2022-23;
 - Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions;
 - Date and format of the resumed session of UNEA-5 in February 2022 and of the resumed 5th Open-Ended meeting of the CPR.
6. The Chair informed that the meeting that the CPR Bureau had undertaken an assessment of the elements provided by the Secretariat for the preparation of the three draft decisions prior to its dissemination to member States in view of a first reading on 10 December and a planned second reading at the 153rd meeting of the CPR, prior to final consideration during OECPR-5.

Agenda Item 4: Preparation of a consensual message for the virtual session of UNEA-5

7. The President of UNEA noted that Member States have different views on the best course of action for a possible concluding message from the virtual session of UNEA-5, and sought further guidance from Members on the format and content of such a message, with a view to seeking broad support for this initiative. The President underlined that a possible agreement on a limited number of joint messages from the virtual session of UNEA-5 to the world would be a small but important way to stress the importance of cooperation on environmental issues despite the challenging time of the pandemic. The President also acknowledged the concerns raised by member States with regards to the term “political messages” and expressed openness to find an alternative formulation.
8. Some Members of the Bureaux underlined the challenges relating to virtual negotiation that would be necessary to agree on a consensual message, and expressed a preference to revert such consideration to the resumed session of UNEA-5 in February 2022, when in-person meetings may be possible.
9. Other Members of the Bureaux supported the President’s initiative, underlined that it will enable UNEA to gain greater visibility, and that it will add value to the Assembly by ensuring continuity and relevance in relation to the multilateral environmental agenda, and called for an ambitious joint message from the virtual session of UNEA-5. It was also proposed to label the outcome of this initiative as a “statement” rather than “political message”, so as to distinguish it from a full (negotiated) UNEA Ministerial Declaration.
10. In conclusion, the President welcomed the inputs from Bureaux Members and informed the meeting that he will reflect further on the way forward with a view to find broadest possible support for the initiative, in view of the open-ended consultations scheduled for 8 December 2020.

Agenda Item 5: Other matters

11. The meeting agreed to organize the next joint meeting on Friday 19 February 2021, to provide the both Bureaux the opportunity to jointly assess the progress made at OECPR-5.
12. The Executive Director informed the meeting that the UN Secretary-General will provide a public address on the [“State of the planet”](#) on 2 December at the Columbia University.

Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting

13. The President of the Assembly and the Chair of the CPR thanked all Members of the two Bureaux for their inputs and guidance to the discussion. The meeting closed at 17:45

**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, 1
December 2020**

UN Environment Assembly Bureau	
COUNTRY REGIONAL GROUP	NAME DESIGNATION
Norway Western European and Others Group	H.E. Mr. Sveinung Rotevatn, President, Minister of Climate and Environment
Costa Rica Latin America and Caribbean Group	Ms. Ana Campos, Representing H.E. Ms. Andrea Murillo, Vice President and Minister of Environment and Energy of the Republic
Estonia Eastern European Group	Mr. Ado Lohmus Vice President and Permanent Representative of Environment
Indonesia Asia-Pacific Group	Ms. Laksmi Dhewanthi Vice President and Senior Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Forestry
Serbia Eastern European and Group	Ms Jelena Tanaskovic State Secretary of Serbia representing H.E. Mrs. Irena Vujovic, Minister of Environment Protection
Suriname Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mr. Reggy Nelson Vice President and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
France Western European and Others Group	H.E. Ms. Bérangère Abba Vice President, Secretary of State for the Biodiversity
Burkina Faso Africa Group	H.E. Mrs. Madina Kassamba Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso representing H.E. Mr. Bassiere Batio Nestor, Vice President of UNEA and Minister of Green Economy and Climate Change
Bahrain Asia-Pacific Group	H.E. Dr. Mohammed Bin Dainah Vice President and Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment of Bahrain
South Africa Africa Group	Hon. Ms. Barbara Creecy Rappourteur, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau	
Brazil Latin America and Caribbean Group	H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Netherlands Western European and Others Group	Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Representing H.E. Mr. Maarten Brouwer Vice Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Pakistan Asia-Pacific Group	H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, Vice Chair, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative
Poland Eastern European and Group	H.E. Mr. Marek Garztecki Vice Chair of CPR, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Nairobi Based Representatives	
Norway	H.E. Ms. Elin Rognlie Ambassador and Permanent Representative; Ms. Guri Sandborg Deputy Permanent Representative
France	H.E. Mrs. Aline Kuster-Ménager Ambassador and Permanent Representative Ms. Estelle Halimi Deputy Permanent Representative
Burkina Faso	Mr. Yago L. Abdoul Kader First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative

Brazil	Mr. Patrick Luna Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative
South Africa	Ms. Amanda Mkhwanazi Deputy Permanent Representative
Serbia	H.E Ambassador Dragan Zupanjevac Ambassador and Permanent Representative
UN Environment Programme	
	Ms. Inger Andersen Executive Director
	Ms. Joyce Msuya Deputy Executive Director
	Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis Secretary of Governing Bodies and Director – Governance Affairs Office
	Mr. Rafael Peralta Chief of Staff a.i.
	Mr. Ulf Bjornholm Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies and Deputy Director – Governance Affairs Office
	Mr. Stadler Trengove Legal Officer

APPROVED STRUCTURE FOR THE VIRTUAL SESSION OF UNEA-5

This note outlines the approved structure for the virtual session of UNEA-5 to be held on 22 and 23 February 2021 and the distribution of agenda items between the virtual and resumed session of UNEA-5 in February 2022, as approved by the Joint Bureaux on 1 December 2020.

The virtual session of UNEA-5 consists of one opening plenary which will fulfill the functions outlined in the structure contained in this document, one leadership dialogue and one adjournment and wrap-up plenary.

In order to allow for maximum participation, interactivity and constructive engagement in the leadership dialogue the Secretariat proposes that the dialogue be organized in two different timeslots in order to facilitate connection and the interaction amongst Ministers and high-level representatives from different time zones.

Each dialogue will be facilitated by a moderator to allow for an interactive exchange of views. Participation in the dialogues is on a voluntary basis. Alternatively, if high-level representatives wish to submit a recorded message, are welcome to submit to the secretariat.

Regarding the theme of the dialogue the Secretariat proposes the dialogue addresses the contribution of the environmental dimension of sustainable development to building a resilient and inclusive post-pandemic world.

The political statement from the virtual session of UNEA-5 and the kick-off of the commemoration of UNEP@50 are considered tentative elements, to be further considered, respectively at the upcoming open-ended informal consultations on a consensual message for UNEA-5 to be held on 8 December 2020 and the CPR Subcommittee meeting scheduled to take place on 10 December 2020.

APPROVED STRUCTURE FOR THE VIRTUAL SESSION OF UNEA-5, 22-23 February 2021

	22 February 2021	23 February 2021
11:00 -14:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Opening Plenary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Functional opening [President and Executive Director] - Address by UN Secretary-General - Adoption of the agenda and organization of work -Statements from Regional and Political Groups - Credentials of representatives -Report by the Committee of PR's on recommended decisions <p style="text-align: center;">ACEFRS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Dialogue: Group B</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Contribution of the environmental dimension of sustainable development to building a resilient and inclusive post-pandemic world</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACEFRS</p>
14:00 -16:00	BREAK	
16:00 - 19:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Dialogue: Group A</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Contribution of the environmental dimension of sustainable development to building a resilient and inclusive post-pandemic world</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACEFRS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Adjournment (Wrap-up) Plenary Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary of Leadership Dialogues - Adoption of procedural decisions including MTS and POW [-Political statement] [-Kick-off of UNEP@50] - <i>Adjournment of the Session.</i> <p style="text-align: center;">ACEFRS</p>

All times indicated in GMT+3. All sessions will be interpreted to the six official languages of the United Nations (ACEFRS). Each leadership dialogue will be facilitated by a moderator to allow for an interactive exchange of views. Participation in the dialogues is voluntary.

Provisional agenda for UNEA-5 as reflected in by [UNEA decision 4/2](#)¹

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Credentials of representatives.
4. Report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
5. International environmental policy and governance issues.
6. Programme of work and budget, and other administrative and budgetary issues.
7. Stakeholder engagement.
8. Contributions to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
9. High-level segment.
10. Provisional agenda and date of the sixth session of the Environment Assembly.
11. Adoption of the resolutions, decisions and outcome document of the session.
12. Election of officers.
13. Other matters.
14. Adoption of the report.
15. Closure of the session.

¹ *The proposed distribution of items for the virtual session of UNEA-5 (February 2021) and the resumed session of UNEA-5 (February 2022) are reflected in the following page.*

Proposed distribution of agenda items for UNEA-5

Agenda items for consideration at the virtual session of UNEA-5 in February 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening of the session. • Adoption of the agenda and organization of work. • Credentials of representatives.** • Report of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.* • Programme of work and budget, and other administrative and budgetary issues including Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-2023 and Medium-Term Strategy for the Period 2022-2025. • Leadership dialogue.
Agenda items that may be referred for consideration at the resumed session of UNEA-5 in February 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International environmental policy and governance issues. • Contributions to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. • High-level segment and Leadership dialogue.** • Stakeholder engagement. • Provisional agenda and date of the sixth session of the Environment Assembly. • Adoption of the resolutions, decisions and outcome document of the session.** • Election of officers. • Other matters. • Adoption of the report. • Closure of the session.
Additional agenda item for UNEA-5 recommended by the Secretariat in accordance with rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure, for consideration both at the virtual session of UENA-5 in February 2021 and at the resumed session in February 2022, or alternatively as a high-level event convened back-to-back with the resumed session.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972.

** The report of CPR will remain open in light of the work required to prepare the resumed session of UNEA-5 and the need to convene an OECPR meeting in 2022.*

*** These items, having been opened in the virtual session (February 2021) will be formally closed during resumed session (February 2022).*