

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Bureau Meeting
Tuesday, 19 March 2024
10:00 – 12:00 (GMT +3)
Conference room 10 and Microsoft Teams
Hybrid meeting

Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. His Excellency Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP, opened and chaired the meeting.
2. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, congratulated the CPR Bureau members for their work during the sixth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives and acknowledged the co-facilitators efforts in navigating tough negotiations.
3. The [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Contribution of UNEA to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

4. The Executive Director introduced the item agenda by recalling UNEA-6 decision mandating the CPR to consider and approve UNEA's written contributions to the HLPF and UNEA and [resolution 3/3](#), in which UNEA requested the Executive Director or the secretariat of UNEP to prepare the contribution, under the guidance of the UNEA President, in consultation with and for consideration by the CPR.
5. Recalling that the draft contribution was circulated to the delegations on Monday, 11 March, the Executive Director then proposed a timeline for the finalization of the contributions:
 - Delegations to provide comments during the CPR Subcommittee meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 19 March and provide written input and comments by **Wednesday, 20 March**.
 - A **revised draft to be circulated by Saturday, 23 March**, with an opportunity to review and comment by delegations during the CPR subcommittee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 26 March and also to provide comments in writing by the end of **Tuesday, 26 March**.
 - The final draft to be circulated on Tuesday, 2 April, to be finalized through a silence procedure concluding on COB Wednesday, 3 April (**EAT**).
 - The final contribution to be transmitted to the President of the Economic and Social Council through a letter from the President of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
6. One Bureau member highlighted the lack of references to the UNEA-6 resolution on highly hazardous pesticides, which is closely related to health and poverty, to nature-based solutions and the United Nations decade on ecosystem restoration in paragraph 14d.
7. The Bureau agreed with the timeline presented by the Secretariat, to be communicated to delegations at the CPR Subcommittee meeting scheduled on the same day, in the afternoon.

Agenda item 3: Lessons learned on the negotiations of the UNEA-6 draft resolutions and decisions.

8. The Executive Director introduced the item and shared the following recommendations:

- a) Better utilization of the Secretariat technical notes, including through thorough discussion in the subcommittee meetings.
- b) Guidelines on submission of draft resolution should include the following criteria for Member States consideration (i) new guidance or instruction to the secretariat; (ii) new commitment or direction by Member States; (iii) definition of a new concept; (iv) urgent matter; or (v) emerging issue.
- c) Suggested a guidance on minimum preambular paragraphs to avoid renegotiating agreed text.
- d) Suggested establishing a comprehensive repository of resolutions on specific topics to avoid duplication, including better use of the Resolutions portal.

9. The co-facilitators shared the following recommendations:

- a) While recognizing that UNEA is a young body and may need a course correction, emphasized the need to address the proliferation of resolutions and review the value of a given resolution to UNEA, UNEP or environmental multilateralism.
- b) Proposed establishing clear guidelines or criteria for submitting draft resolutions, including a checklist or standards to ensure draft resolutions meet certain criteria before being presented. The Secretariat would then guide the proponents to ensure that they only include new commitments or concepts addressing urgent environmental issues.
- c) Suggested better utilization of the ED report to UNEA as expert opinion on emerging issues/point of gaps and consider it an options menu to draw from in determining draft resolution concepts. Also suggested better socialization of the ED report through regional groups.
- d) Proposed having more parallel working groups/contact groups, if possible, or more time for negotiations.
- e) Proposed having a stricter deadline for the submission of drafts as well as setting a limit on the number of draft resolutions to be submitted.
- f) Proposed having clear guidance on the negotiation process during the OECPR and CoW, including agreeing on certain ground rules in the plenary to facilitate the work of the working/contact groups, and outline the deadlines in advance.
- g) Mentioned that proponents should have clear instructions on the “red lines” and important elements to be reflected in the text to avoid delays during the negotiation.
- h) Emphasized the importance of multilateral cooperation for impactful resolutions, noting that resolutions proposed by a group of countries carry more weight.
- i) Advocated for improvements in negotiation preparation, including early identification of co-facilitators, providing training to the co-facilitators, setting clear deadlines, and understanding negotiation timelines.
- j) Recommended ensuring transparency and inclusivity in the negotiation process by involving the capital-based environmental focal points at an early stage, including in the subcommittee meetings.

10. The Legal Advisor provided the following recommendations:

- a) Emphasized the necessity of clearly defining the negotiation period in advance of the OECPR to address concerns raised by delegates about insufficient time. Proposed the establishment of an additional week, prior to the OECPR, specifically dedicated to negotiations, distinct from the discussion phase.
- b) Emphasized the importance of the presence of the proponents in Nairobi.
- c) Suggested the Secretariat's assistance in providing a template for draft resolutions and decisions with guidance on structure and content. Suggested including a specified number of preambular

and operative paragraphs, as well as action-oriented requests to enhance clarity and consistency in resolution drafting.

- d) Proposed revising the clustering of drafts as negotiations progressed.
- e) Proposed restructuring support teams within the Secretariat to provide more defined roles, including lead focal points, legal advisors, and researchers, assigned to specific clusters.
- f) Proposed that proponents utilize the Secretariat more effectively by consulting with them before submitting a draft, in particular, on issues such as linkages to the MTS, PoW, previous mandates and terminology.
- g) Recommended raising awareness among Member States about available research tools such as the LEAP.

11. The Bureau provided the following recommendations for consideration:

- a) Suggested that the clustering of drafts should be revised as the negotiation evolves as some clusters were overburdened.
- b) Welcomed the proposal to have a standard format of a draft resolution to guide the proponent and having a strict deadline for the submission of proposals.
- c) Recommended the Secretariat to provide clear guidelines and messaging on the deadlines.
- d) Supported the proposal on better use of the technical notes including having deep dive discussions on them.
- e) Proposed exploring how to better engage Ministers in the negotiations during the week of UNEA.
- f) Supported early appointment of co-facilitators to ensure that they are properly trained on the different scenarios.

12. The Bureau noted the recommendations and insights for further consideration at the upcoming CPR subcommittee meeting focusing on UNEA-6 lessons learned/evaluation exercise. The Chair requested the Secretariat to incorporate these recommendations into the Bureau meeting summary and in the background document for the UNEA-6 assessment to be conducted in the upcoming CPR subcommittee meeting with consolidated recommendations from the co-facilitators.

Agenda item 4: Organization of work.

13. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that, following instructions from the United Nations Headquarters, the quarterly meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives will no longer offer remote simultaneous interpretation. This decision comes considering the absence of a UN General Assembly resolution mandating hybrid or virtual meetings. As a result, participants joining the meetings online will need to speak in English, as their statements will no longer be interpreted.

Agenda item 5: Other matters.

- 14. One Bureau member raised concerns about the proposed dates of the 11th annual subcommittee meeting, noting views from various Member States in his Group suggesting that holding the meeting in early July may not be ideal with regards to capital-based participation.
- 15. The Secretariat clarified that further to the discussion on the roadmap at the CPR Bureau meeting on 14 February the July dates for the annual subcommittee were tentative. The secretariat is considering alternative options, which will be proposed to the CPR Bureau for consideration.

Agenda item 6: Other matters.

16. The meeting closed at 11:50 a.m.

Annex: List of Participants

The Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau Members

H. E. Mr. Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP.

H. E. Mr. Wael Nasreldin Attiya, Vice Chair of the Committee, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Permanent Representative to UNEP, represented by Ms. Sara Elkhoully Third Secretary of the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

H. E. Ms. Nicol Adamcová, Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ambassador of Czechia to Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP, represented by Mr. Michal Novotny, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Embassy of Czechia.

H. E. Mr. Gunnar Andreas Holm, Vice Chair of the Committee, Ambassador of Norway to Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP, represented by Mr. Øystein Størkersen, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Embassy of Norway.

Mr. Jovan Bernard Reid, Deputy Head of Mission of the Permanent Mission of Barbados.

The UN Environment Programme Secretariat was represented by:

Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director.

Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Deputy Executive Director.

Mr. Nicolas Bertrand, Chief of Staff.

Ms. Radhika Ochalik, Secretary of the Governing Bodies.

Mr. Stadler Trengove, Principal Legal Advisor.