
Committee of Permanent Representatives

Bureau Meeting

Wednesday 12 May

11:00 am - 1:00 pm, GMT+3

Online

MEETING SUMMARY

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

1. H.E. Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, chaired the meeting, in which the following members of the bureau participated:

The Committee of Permanent Representatives Bureau members:

H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Poland, Vice Chair, Eastern European Group;

H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Vice Chair, Asia-Pacific Group and co-facilitator for the process under General Assembly resolution 73/333

H.E. Mr. Maarten Brouwer, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of The Netherlands, Vice Chair, Western European and Other States Group

H.E. Mr. Chol M. U. Ajongo, Rapporteur, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Sudan

The Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly was an *ex officio* Member of the Bureau represented by:

H.E. Ms. Eline Rognlie, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway

The regional groups were represented by:

H.E. Mr. Beyene Russom, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Eritrea, Chair of the Africa Group

Mr. Ado Lohmus Permanent Representative of Estonia, Chair of the Eastern European Group and co-facilitator for the process under General Assembly resolution 73/333

Mr. Asif Choudhury, Deputy High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of United Kingdom, Chair of the Western European and Others Group

H.E. Mr. Martin Gomez Bustillo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina, Chair of the Latin American and Caribbean Group

Mr. Sebastian Gil, Deputy Permanent Representative of the EU delegation in Nairobi

Mr. Mapopa Kaunda, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi, representing H.E. Ms. Agrina Musa, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Malawi, Chair of the Group of G77 and China

Ms. Amanda Mkhwanazi, Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa

The UN Environment Programme Secretariat was represented by:

Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director;
Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director;
Mr. Rafael Peralta, Chief of Staff;
Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies;
Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies;
Mr. Stadler Trengove, Principal Legal Officer.

2. One member of the Bureau raised a point of order and questioned whether the date of the meeting had been decided upon and announced in accordance with established practice and relevant rules of procedure, and requested the Chair to re-classify the meeting as meeting between members of the CPR Bureau and representatives of the regional and political groups, as opposed to a meeting of the CPR Bureau. Upon request, the Principal Legal Officer clarified that the Chair of the Bureau has the authority to call for a meeting on urgent issues, provided that it is properly announced. Given that the meeting had been announced orally at the subcommittee meeting on 6 May and that the secretariat had sent out a notification of the meeting four working days ahead, the Bureau had been properly convened. The Legal Officer also clarified that the Chair has the authority to invite observers to a Bureau meeting, who may intervene at the discretion of the Chair but not take part in any formal decision-making as they are not members of the Bureau. The Chair then overruled the requests made under the point of order and the meeting proceeded.
3. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, in her opening remarks, referred to the recent information consultations with the regional groups, and informed the meeting that she will be returning to Nairobi within short time.
4. The meeting agenda was adopted.

Agenda Item 2: Way forward for the informal consultations under the auspices of the CPR on the implementation of UNGA resolution 73/333.

5. H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan and Mr. Ado Lohmus, Permanent Representative of Estonia, co-facilitators of the informal consultations under the auspices of the CPR on the implementation of UNGA resolution 73/333, provide an update to the meeting on their proposed way forward. Due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic still in place, the co-facilitators proposed to postpone the second consultation from June to early November, in order to allow for an in-person or the consideration of a hybrid meeting. They also proposed that a draft declaration would be shared six weeks in advance of the meeting, and that a series of informal online workshops was planned for June and July which would not involve line-by-line negotiations and would be open to all Member States, Members of Specialized Agencies and interested Stakeholders.
6. One Bureau Member underlined the importance of the consultation in November to be organized as an in-person meeting, and another Bureau Member noted that his regional group does not have a joint position on the matter.
7. The Chair concluded that no objections had been raised to postpone the next consultation and to organize informal online workshops in the upcoming weeks and months, and recommended that

the matter should be brought to the attention of the CPR at its 154th meeting on 20 May under the agenda item “any other business”.

Agenda Item 3: Preparations for the upcoming 154th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

8. The Chair invited the secretariat to introduce the agenda item, with specific focus on the cycle of term of office of the Bureau of the CPR, which was debated at the subcommittee meeting on 6 May and will be further considered at the 154th meeting of the CPR. The Chair further asked the secretariat to clarify its *rationale* for having sent to the Chairs of the Regional Groups on 11 May 2021, the day before the meeting in which this issue would be considered by the Bureau, a note verbale calling for nominations for the CPR Bureau (GovernanceAffairs/CPRBureau/2021).
9. Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, underlined the importance of finding an agreement at the next CPR meeting to ensure a well-functioning governance structure for UNEP and that it is in the hands of Member States to find an agreement. She reiterated the intention of the Secretariat to support Member States in this endeavor, in particular to ensure consistency with relevant rules of procedure and established practice, and referred to the secretariat options paper presented at the subcommittee meeting on 6 May as requested by the CPR Bureau as well as to a recent note sent to the regional Chairs whereby the regional groups are invited to nominate officers to the next CPR Bureau, in accordance with the rules of procedure and established practice and in view of the upcoming elections scheduled for the 154th meeting of the CPR.
10. The Legal Advisor referred to rule 63 in the rules of procedure which states that each subsidiary organ shall elect its own officers, and to decision 19/32 which limits the term of office for the CPR Bureau to 2 years, and underlined that an election should be undertaken before the expiry of current mandate on 30 June 2021. In order to perform its statutory and administrative functions, the secretariat issued a formal invitation to the regional groups for nominations to be received by the Secretariat by 154th meeting of the CPR. It will then be up to Member States to elect a Bureau on the basis of nominations that have been received.
11. The Chair thanked the secretariat for the clarifications and expressed his expectation that informal consultations had taken place following the meeting of the subcommittee on 6 May 2021, in view of reaching an agreement at the 154th meeting of the CPR as mandated by UNEA decision 5/3. The Chair also reiterated his intention to step down from the CPR Bureau as of 30 June 2021.
12. The Chair of one regional group and the Chair of one political group reiterated its preference for option B and that the discussion on possible alignment between the UNEA and CPR Bureaux should be conferred to the process for review by the CPR.
13. The Chair of another regional group and the Chair of another political group reiterated its preference for option A.
14. The Chair of a third regional group informed the meeting that a majority of its members were in favor of option A, with the exception of one Member State which had a preference for option B while indicating some flexibility, and one Member State promoting option C as a possible compromise. The Chair of this regional group also asked the secretariat to clarify the term “re-election” under rule 20 of the rules of procedure. The Legal Officer clarified that members of the

CPR Bureau are elected by name upon nominations of regional groups, and as such, the term “re-election” refers to the election of the same individual to the same elective Office.”

15. The Chair of a fourth regional group, while strongly favoring Option B, also put forward a compromise proposal that would entail: 1) to elect a new CPR Bureau for 1 year, based on the current regional distribution but with new Members; and 2) to agree on a CPR recommendation to UNEA to a) align the terms of offices for the CPR and UNEA Bureaux in future, to prevent the situation whereby one regional group holds the presidency of both Bureaux at the same time; and b) ensure a 2-years term of office for the Bureau of UNEA 6.
16. Members of the CPR Bureau expressed various views in support of options A or B, and underlined the need to find a solution that is in line with the rules and practices of the Bureau and safeguard the continuity of its work, under the leadership of the Chair.
17. The Chair concluded that there is yet no consensus on the matter, but that there is willingness from all sides to find a mutually agreeable solution. He encouraged all groups to consult further among themselves to find agreement before the 154th meeting of the CPR on 20 May. He also noted that if no consensus is reached by 20 May, there would be a need to call for an extraordinary meeting of the CPR to resolve the matter, as the mandate of the current bureau expires on 30 June.

Agenda Item 4: Other matters.

18. No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 5: Closing of the Meeting.

19. The meeting closed at 1:00 pm.