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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of the Expanded Bureau of the
Contracting Parties to the Convention for the
protection of the Mediterranean Sea against
pollution and its related protocols

Athens, 1-2 November 1988

COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

Note by the Secretariat

Composition of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties
to the Barcelona Convention

1. Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related protocols stipulates that:

"At the commencement of the first sitting of each Ordinary meeting or conference, a president, two vice-presidents and a Rapporteur are to be elected from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties."

Rule 23 stipulates that:

"The Bureau of the meeting or of the conference shall consist of the president, the two vice-presidents and the Rapporteur".

2. At all previous meetings of Contracting Parties the composition of the Bureau was agreed upon during informal consultations of Heads of Delegation prior to the opening of the meeting so that no voting was required. During the Fifth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Athens, 7-11 September 1987)^{1/} an intensive informal consultation took place to reach an agreement on the new composition of the Bureau without resorting to the vote. The Secretariat put forward its suggestion that in the interest of the programme and as a reflection of their equal status and obligations under the Barcelona Convention, all countries should serve on the Bureau. The president of the Fourth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties played an active role to reduce the gap between the different views. Nevertheless, a consensus could not be reached on the composition of the Bureau. Consequently, the meeting carried out a secret ballot in accordance with Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure to elect its Bureau.
3. The resort to the voting system was the first in the history of the Mediterranean Action Plan, a matter which should be avoided in the future in order to save the harmonious atmosphere characterizing the work of the Action Plan.

^{1/} UNEP/IG.74/5 and Corr.1

4. In order to rectify this situation, the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, at its first meeting in 1988 (Athens, 18 February 1988)^{2/} exchanged views on the issue of the composition of the Bureau and authorized the Secretariat to submit at the Expanded Meeting of the Bureau (1-2 November 1988) realistic proposals which should be in the form of principles, so that an acceptable solution could be reached and implemented during the next meeting of the Contracting Parties (Athens, October 1989).
5. The Secretariat is of the opinion that a procedure should be adopted to ensure an equitable distribution of the posts in the Bureau and an orderly rotation of its membership, taking into account the interest of all parties. It is in the interest of the programme and as a reflection of their equal status and obligations under the Barcelona Convention, all countries should serve on the Bureau. This is a reflection of what was stressed by the Secretariat and other representatives during the last meeting as the "principle of universality".
6. Another approach which might be utilized is the grouping system, i.e. to group the Contracting Parties into four sub-groups, each sub-group electing one member, taking into account its past record as Bureau member. The disadvantage of this principle is the difficulty of how to form and select the four sub-groups.

However, a purely mechanical system would avoid the need to group the Contracting Parties if the composition of the Bureau were to be increased from 4 to 6 members (1 President, 4 Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur). It would be sufficient to break the list of Contracting Parties into three groups of six following the alphabetical order:

Group A	Algeria Cyprus Egypt France Greece Israel
Group B	Italy Lebanon Libya Malta Monaco Morocco
Group C	Spain Syria Tunisia Turkey Yugoslavia EEC

Each group happens to contain an almost equal number of Contracting Parties from the north and from the south.

At the start of each Ordinary Meeting the attribution of the Presidency, Vice-Presidency and Rapporteurship would be drawn by lots.

During the first meeting two Contracting Parties would be drawn from each group. At each subsequent meeting one member from each group would retire and three additional Contracting Parties would be drawn to ensure full rotation, after a cycle of six ordinary meetings.

7. The principle of equal geographical distribution can be utilized in this regard. According to this principle each region within the four geographical regions of the Mediterranean (North-South-East-West) will choose its representative to the Bureau.
8. Another principle is to select two countries from the north and two from the south to compose a Bureau. The composition of the Bureaux of the last ordinary meetings reflects to a large extent this principle^{3/}.
9. Distributing the Bureau equally between developed and developing countries is another principle which can be used.
10. Another principle could be the active participation in the Action Plan, reflected, among others, by the regular payment of contributions. Contracting Parties which are two years in arrears are not entitled to vote, they should similarly not be eligible for the Bureau.
11. The last, but not least, principle or method is to apply the Rules of Procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related protocols. These rules clearly define the procedure for electing a new Bureau of each ordinary meeting or conference.
12. To sum up, the main principles or methods which might be applied, individually or jointly, in selecting a Bureau are:
 - a. Universality
 - b. Equitable distribution
 - c. All Contracting Parties should serve in the Bureau
 - d. Grouping system
 - e. Equal geographical distribution
 - f. Selection on the basis of north and south
 - g. Selection on the basis of developed and developing countries.
 - h. Active participation in the Action Plan
 - i. Application of the Rules of Procedure
13. The Secretariat has placed before the meeting the above-mentioned principles or methods in order to facilitate the work of electing Bureaux of the Contracting Parties in the future.

^{3/} Composition of the Bureau (1975-1987)