

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Bureau Meeting
Thursday, 18 January 2018,
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Executive Office Boardroom
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri

MEETING SUMMARY

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

- H.E. Mr. Raza Bashir Tarar, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Vice Chair, Asia-Pacific Group;
- Mr. Raphael Medina, Deputy Permanent Representative of Colombia, representing H.E. Ms. Elizabeth Ines Taylor Jay, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Vice Chair, Group of Latin America and Caribbean States;
- 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. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director;
- Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies;
- Mr. Ulf Björnholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies;
- Mr. Jian Liu, Chief Scientist;
- Ms. Juliette Biao, Director, Africa Office;
- Mr. Stadler Trengrove, Senior Legal Office

1. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda for the meeting.

2. Lessons learnt from the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

2. The Chair gave the floor to the Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, who presented a summary of lessons learned from the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, from a Secretariat perspective. The intervention can be summarized as follows:

- The success of the third session was to a large extent attributed to the joint collaborative and transparent working arrangements of the Bureaux of the Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
- The appealing nature of a universal and focused theme resulted in the strong ownership over the Assembly by member States, and stakeholders across all fora.
- Approximately 5,000 individuals registered for the Assembly, which created some challenges during the registration process; these issues will be addressed and resolved prior to the 4th Session of the United Nations Environment Programme.
- The Government of Kenya played an exceptional and strong supporting role during the Assembly despite internal political challenges facing the country at the time.
- The engagement of H.E. Edgar Gutiérrez-Espeleta, former President of United Nations Environment Assembly and his office provided strong leadership and engagement throughout the drafting, consensus-building and negotiations of the Ministerial Declaration.
- Further consideration is needed on how to ensure adequate and reliable funding from the regular budget for future sessions of the Assembly. Pointing out that reliance on extra-budgetary sources, including voluntary contributions from member States, remains unpredictable, and can compromise the quality of preparations for the Assembly.
- The capacity of physical and technological conferencing facilities in Nairobi must be strengthened, so as to better sustain meetings with universal attendance and multiple negotiation groups under the Assembly. Based on past experience, future Environment Assemblies are likely to attract even large numbers of participants, hence the need to upgrade and expand the UN meeting facilities at the Nairobi.
- Ways and means to enhance the participation of non-State actors as key participants should be further considered.
- The arrangement of organizing negotiating groups in parallel with the Leadership Dialogues and Multi-Stakeholder dialogue provided a challenge to member states with smaller delegations.

3. One bureau member reminded the meeting of the need for follow up on the implementation of resolutions and Civil Society engagement during the inter-sessional

period. The member further requested that the Secretariat should consider solutions in regards to conferencing facilities that can be addressed in the short-term.

4. One bureau member requested information on the level of media outreach achieved during the Assembly, for reflection in the report on the Lessons Learned for the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
5. The Director of the Africa Office, Ms. Juliette Biao, brought to the attention of the meeting that since the fourth session of the Environment Assembly will be held in the first quarter of 2019, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), cannot provide inputs to the Assembly, as it will be held during the second or third quarter of 2019.
6. The Chair pointed out that last minute requests for documentation compromised the quality of the documentation produced and noted that this should be avoided in future.
7. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat should develop a document on lessons learned that would include inputs from member States and stakeholders.

3. Preparation for the 141st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

11. The Chair briefly introduced the proposed agenda items which will be considered during the 141st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
12. With regard to the meeting's draft agenda, one bureau member suggested to organize timely discussions with member States on the planning and reporting of the Programme of Work and Budget under the Committee of Permanent Representatives; possibly in the form of regular reviews under the sub-committee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
13. One member suggested eliminating the word 'progress' in Agenda number 7 ("Progress of implementation of the programme3.3. of work and budget and the Assembly resolutions.") and underlined the importance of regular, clear and coherent reporting on programme performance to the Committee, to ensure ownership and solid knowledge of programme performance among Member States.
14. Members requested the Secretariat to further consider how to improve the reporting on the implementation of the programme of work and budget and Assembly resolutions, and present proposals to the Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 6 February, 2018.

4. Organization of work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

15. The meeting agreed to convene the next bureau meeting prior to the 141st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 20 February 2018.

5. Date of the next meeting of the Bureau

16. The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting on Tuesday 20 February 2018 at 8:30 a.m., at a venue to be communicated by the Secretariat at a later date.

6. Other matters

17. The Secretary of Governing Bodies briefed the bureau on Ms. Rosemary Mukasa's (former Deputy Secretary to the Governing Bodies) reassignment to the Policy and Programme Division as Senior Program Officer in-charge of Monitoring and Evaluation. Ms. Mukasa has been replaced by Mr. Ulf Björnholm, who attended the meeting in his capacity as new Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies and Deputy Director of Governance Affairs Office.

7. Closing of the Meeting

18. The meeting closed at 3:30 p.m.