

## Informal Minutes<sup>1</sup>

### Of the online consultation meeting<sup>2</sup> of UNECE Steering Committee on ESD

(7 May 2020)

#### Item 1 (Opening of the meeting and adoption of the shortened agenda for the virtual consultation meeting)

The Chair of the Steering Committee (SC), Dr. Aravella Zachariou (the Republic of Cyprus):

- opened the meeting, welcoming everyone and introducing some ground rules of this virtual meeting (write in chat comments name, country, institution, keep microphones on muted, to request the floor write in comments' field RMH).
- mentioned the items from the agenda that will be discussed in today's meeting (items 2,3 a-c, 4, 5 a-d, 6 a-b, 7, 8, 13), it was adopted, and informed the SC that the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held on the 19-20 October 2020 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.
- welcomed the new focal points joining the meeting and the youth members of the Ad Hoc group (AHG) on Youth and ESD for our region, clarifying that the youth participating in today's meeting are young people who participated in the meeting of AHG on Youth and ESD hosted by Austria for discussing the role and participation of youth in ESD processes and were not yet officially nominated by their countries.
- stated that after the meeting the secretariat will send an official e-mail to the focal points and the member states to officially nominate the youth delegates that will participate in the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC to be held in October.
- gave the floor to the new focal points from Romania, Serbia, Switzerland, and Latvia to introduce themselves and to the Deputy Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Alexandr Kadlubay (stated that the Republic of Belarus is highly interested in this agenda and considers young people a driving force of SD. He was sure that this meeting will form a good platform for the preparation of the meeting in October).

#### Item 2. (Election of officers)

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze) provided information on the scheduled elections to take place during the postponed 15th meeting of the SC on 19-20 October 2020:

- reminded SC that this will be an item in the agenda of the meeting in October.
- *the secretariat will send a reminder well before the meeting for the proposal of candidates for the Bureau. If there will be too many, there will be some procedure for election or some negotiation.*
- *member states can also put forward candidates for the Chair and the Vice Chair positions.*

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<sup>1</sup> The present document was prepared by the organizing team in consultation with the secretariat for information purposes only. It is an informal document and therefore was not formally edited or formatted.

<sup>2</sup> The online consultation meeting has been organized on the invitation from the Chair of the Steering Committee in view to achieve progress ahead of the 15th meeting of the SC (rescheduled from 7-8 May to 19-20 October 2020 due to the restrictions on travel and meetings in light of ongoing COVID-19 pandemics). The online consultation meeting was organized via Microsoft Teams platform. 71 participants have connected to the meeting (more information at <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=54279>).

- expressed an opinion about the position of the Chair, saying that since the ministerial meeting is scheduled in Cyprus and the current Chair is from Cyprus it would be logical to continue with the position of the Chair, if Cyprus is willing to keep the seat for the next term.

### Item 3. (Implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD)

Chair:

- the SC will be informed about the summary outcomes of the fourth mandatory reporting cycle which was carried out at the end of fourth phase of the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD during 2017-2019.
- thanked all countries that submitted their NIR and mentioned that the analysis was interesting since it captures holistically the progress of the ESD implementation in the region.
- noted that 6 countries that did not participate in phase 3, submitted their report in phase 4 (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Italy, Tajikistan, Russian Federation, Israel).
- noted that 11 countries that participated in phase 3, didn't submit their report now and *gave them another chance to at least complete the quantitative indicators and **submit it to the secretariat by the end of May***, pointing out that it would be good to do so, since there will be the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting and this report will be circulated to the Ministers of Environment and Education.
- reminded that this is an unofficial meeting and only general findings of the progress report will be provided.
- gave special thanks to Dr Stella Hadjiachilleos, who prepared and analyzed this document.

#### 3a. (Summary outcomes of progress report)

Cyprus:

- the presentation gives a summary of the results on progress achieved and the challenges that were encountered in the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of implementation of the UNECE ESD strategy.
- the report was grounded on the overall objective and the six specific objectives of the UNECE ESD strategy.
- a methodology of comparative analysis was implemented, with caution due to the disparity in group sizes.
- gave a brief summary on major findings in
  - a) policy/ regulatory framework (more effort on coordinating policies promoting ESD, since are often encountered as stand-alone policies)
  - b) formal education (emphasis on content of curricula, varies on environmental, social, economic aspects of ESD)
  - c) WIA (more countries are introducing it at kindergarten level, MS especially in western Europe and EU region prefer not to develop their own set of indicators)
  - d) Quality assessment/ enhancement systems (often are generic, in the next 5 years most MS plan to reinforce student assessment in relation to ESD addressing mostly knowledge, then skills and less behaviors)
  - e) Informal – non formal education (important for learning in ESD, attention in evaluation and monitoring initiatives)
  - f) Development of educators' competencies (through pre- and in-service training, on voluntary participation in most MS, re-orientation of in-service training to ESD competence-based courses)

- g) Tools and materials (widely produced, lack of control criteria and accessibility tools)
- h) Research and development (mostly on the content and methods of ESD and less on evaluation of implementation outcomes, main challenge is to introduce research policies horizontally)
- i) Conservation, use and promotion of knowledge of indigenous people, local, traditional knowledge (viewed holistically across MS' curriculums, addressing a variety of parameters – folk art, dancing, nature)
- j) Assistance needed (variety of parameters – capacity building for government institutions, dissemination of experience and materials)
- k) Challenges (variety among MS and issues – coordination between stakeholders, lack of evaluation mechanisms, funding, strengthening the implementation of the strategy)
- l) Future implementation of strategy (capacity building, quality monitoring, dissemination of experiences and materials, enforcement of synergies, full commitment by schools/ institutions)

Chair:

- due to some comments made in the chat field, noted that most of the documents and the presentation are uploaded on the website of the UNECE ESD SC. There are also new members in the meeting and if they are not familiar with some abbreviations, etc. they can find the report on the website and clarify the questions.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- noted and thanked Cyprus for the generous help from Stella and for the preparation of the report that saved resources that can be used for other purposes.
- Mentioned that in the past the first report was done by the consultant, the other with the help and contributions of MS.

Expert/Observer of SC from European ECO-Forum:

- commented in the chat that this does not represent the real situation in the Czech Republic and requested if it would be possible to give the report to some NGOs for reviewing.

UK:

- thanked Cyprus for the work done and raised a question regarding the possibility of having a peer review, a Key Informant group that will review the draft report, will make comments and ensure there is an additional perspective, a key informant validity to the data used, in order to make the report more authoritative, more valid to be presented to the Ministers. UNESCO and UNEP use this process as standard procedure.
- commented in the chat the importance of Key Informant review and that UNESCO and UNEP use it as standard.

Chair:

- stated that the report will be presented for comments, additions in details, it will be circulated to the focal points of MS in the SC and noted again that this is the draft report and the review will be done in the upcoming meeting in October.

Academic Expert/Observer of SC from University of Gloucestershire:

- thanked Stella for the presentation and commented that even though it looks very optimistic he fears we are missing things because certain projects, tools and developments are taking place internationally through international research and action projects, e.g. the European Funding Mechanisms.
- raised a question regarding an opportunity to turn to EU Research Funding and Foundations to find out whether they know about things happening within the UNECE region that focal points wouldn't pick up because they are international collaborations contributing to ESD.
- UK and Monaco focal points agreed

Academic Expert/Observer of SC from University of Athens, MIO-ECSDE:

- thanked Stella for the report and raised a question whether the Chair, since she is also chairing the Mediterranean Commission for ESD, would like to have a short summary of the situation in the Mediterranean as a whole, as a part or as an annex to the report, and if so it will require time and energy for its preparation.

Chair:

- proposed to send the document to people that raised these issues and to any other that might be interested in their input and comments.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- reacted to comment about UNESCO and UNEP regarding the use of Key Informant review process as a standard.
- previous reports have not formally used this procedure but if the SC wants to, it can be done but there should be some consultation among the Chair and key members of the committee interested in their input in the process.
- reminded the SC that this is a consultation meeting and no decisions can be taken and proposed to have some exchange of comments through e-mails, among the Chair, the secretariat and the interested members of the committee.
- asked the SC to send their ideas on how to proceed with the next steps before the meeting in October for the finalization of the document and suggested the Chair could then organize another shorter video call to agree on operational side of these preparations.

Expert/Observer of SC from CAREC:

- thanked the Chair and Stella for the overviewing report and commented about the Central Asia countries (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) that didn't send their report, stating that they might not be in today's meeting because their focal points may not be fluent in English.
- volunteered to help and support those countries, with the preparation of their report.

### **3b. (Outcomes of Regional Forum on SD for the ECE region held in Geneva in a virtual mode on 19-20/3/20)**

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- mentioned the theme of the High-Level political forum 2020 which will be held in July (Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for SD).

- the meeting of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the ECE Region was held in virtual mode with around 300 participants and the report of the meeting is on the website of the UNECE.

### **3c. (Outcomes of capacity-building activities)**

UNECE Secretariat (Nona Iliukhina):

- gave information about the cancelled capacity-building workshop that was scheduled to take place on 15-16 April 2020 in Baku in Azerbaijan with the contribution of the Swiss government.
- due to COVID-19 pandemic no dates can be fixed yet, but the preparations are ongoing, the program is composed, is an interesting and perspective event, the national focal point (NFP) Ms. Ayla Hasanova from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan is analyzing the responses from the stakeholders.

Azerbaijan:

- thanked for all the information given about the UNECE events, the report, etc.
- mentioned that the preparations for the workshop are almost completed, the list of participants, the program and the venue are ready, and they are waiting for the new date to be agreed with all experts.

### **Item 4 (Status of the trust fund and resource requirements)**

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- the information about the current status of the ESD trust fund is prepared by the secretariat and provided in the Information note No.1, uploaded on the website.
- thanked the countries for their contribution, financial (Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, pledges from Austria, Serbia, Cyprus) and in kind – for organizing meetings of expert groups and preparation of draft report (The Netherlands, Cyprus, Montenegro, Belgium, Austria).
- for October's meeting *a more substantial report on the status of the trust fund will be prepared.*
- mentioned that there might be some mistakes but since this is a preliminary report, the MS can look at the figures and notify the secretariat if they have any comments about their contributions.

Chair:

- thanked all countries which contributed financially and/or in kind and stressed out the importance of the MS's contribution for the survival of the secretariat.

### **Item 5 (Preparations for the UNECE for High-level meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in 2021)**

Chair:

- stated that this High-level meeting is one of the biggest events in the region that will take place in Cyprus in November 2021.
- mentioned the opportunity that is given to this 9<sup>th</sup> ministerial meeting for strengthening ESD in our region since ESD is one of the three main priority strands of the meeting.
- this became a reality due to all work that the Steering Committee is doing all these years and the support and help it got from the Chair of the ECE Committee of Environmental Policy (CEP), Ms. Elisabete Quintas da Silva from Portugal, who shared our vision.

#### **5a. (Organizational issues for the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference)**

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- refers to Information Note 2 that is also uploaded on the website.
- reminded that the CEP is the body in charge of organizing the ministerial meetings of the Environment for Europe process and its decisions are highly relevant to the organization of the High-level meeting of Education and Environment Ministries.
- formal information: Hosting country will be Cyprus.
- selection of themes: 1. Greening the economy in the pan-European region: working towards sustainable infrastructure and 2. Applying principles of circular economy to sustainable tourism.
- organizational issues: (composition of delegates, number of delegates, requirements for the document) are included in the document adopted by the CEP – Organizational issues for the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (see at the following link to the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy, held on 13-15 November 2019 in Geneva: <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=52014>).
- there are two additional documents, Requirements for hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference and Estimated resource requirements for preparing the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.
- recommended the members of the SC to read these documents.

Netherlands:

- suggested to include in the agenda of High-Level Meeting the following theme: Transition to SD in post Corona, and what did we learn from the crisis.

UK, Secretariat, UNESCO, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, experts/observers from University of Gloucestershire, Learning for a Sustainable Future, The Regional Centre of Expertise “ECODEMIA” Global Action Plan International, MIO-ECSDE, COPERNICUS Alliance agreed with the suggestion, in the chat comments.

Chair:

- agreed it’s a good idea and it will be probably be included from our side and added that the 3 main strands are in draft form and everything is under consideration.
- in consultation with the secretariat and in cooperation with the CEP, the agenda will be completed in October.

Expert/Observer of SC from COPERNICUS Alliance:

- proposed in the chat, that the lifelong aspect could be stressed in the light of pre-requisites for transition processes, especially about the green economy.

Kyrgyzstan and expert/observer of SC from The Regional Centre of Expertise "ECODEMIA" Global Action Plan International agreed on the green economy and the connection with sustainable consumption.

#### **5b. (host country preparations)**

Chair:

- gave small presentation about the progress the Cyprus government made regarding the organization of the 9<sup>th</sup> High-level meeting.
- the ministerial council decided on the hosting of the meeting and provided the responsibility of preparation and supervision to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural development and Environment.
- the Unit of EESD in Cyprus will be the coordinating body among the Ministers and the National Committee, which will be the National Secretariat working in close cooperation with the ECE, UNECE ESD SC, UN staff.
- the venue will be the Filoxenia Conference Center and the accommodation will be in several hotels in Nicosia, Larnaca and Limassol, where shuttles will be provided for transportation to the venue.
- all the details of the requirements of the meeting will be discussed, agreed and signed by the Republic of Cyprus and the UNECE.
- the 3 main priority strands are ESD, circular and clean economy and sustainable tourism.
- stressed out the critical role the SC has on the High-level meeting and the cooperation between the UNECE for ESD SC and the CEP.
- valuable issues raised in chat room will be discussed and reflected upon hopefully in October's and other virtual meetings.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- mentioned that if there are any technical questions or need for more information, they can send him an e-mail, since he is a Secretary to both the CEP and the SC for ESD.
- the agenda consists of 2 parts, the environmental themes that are in the hands of CEP and the agenda of the High-level meeting on ESD that is in the hands of the SC on ESD.
- during the October meeting the SC can decide on the format and content of discussions.

UK:

- requested clarification on which MS are represented in this High-level ministerial meeting focusing on ESD.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- all 56 UNECE member countries can theoretically participate – the CEP and SC on ESD have the same geographical coverage, are working with the same countries but on different subjects.
- practically there would be around 45 countries, where more than 2/3 will be coming at high-level (40-60 high-levels).

Chair:

- countries that are not in the UNECE region can and will be invited to participate as observers.
- many countries from the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East have expressed their interest to participate.

### **5c. (official documents for consideration at the high-level meeting of Education and Environment ministries)**

UNECE Secretariat (Nona Iliukhina):

- regarding the uploaded document on the website – Information Note No.3
- there will be 2 official documents (Draft ministerial statement for the High-level meeting of Education and Environment Ministries, Framework of implementation of UNECE strategy for ESD up to 2030 – a concept note that our Ad hoc group for strategic planning is working on).
- also, information documents (e.g. progress report, any other report SC would consider etc.).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> kind of documents, unofficial, various ones from stakeholders.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- in the Information Note No.2 there is the link for the Organizational issues for the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.
- the status of documents for the meeting will be divided into official substantive documents and information documents.

Germany (from German National Commission for UNESCO):

- asked about the process of preparation of this high-level statement from the SC and *suggested to take into consideration* the Berlin declaration at the ESD World Conference that would take place in May 2021.

The Regional Centre of Expertise “ECODEMIA” Global Action Plan International:

- commented in the chat that is important to pay more attention to the correlation between ESD and the SDGs, something that it feels is missing from the progress report.

agreed by COPERNICUS Alliance, European ECO-Forum and Greece.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- the ministerial statement is prepared by the SC and the first draft should probably be prepared before the meeting next May.
- *suggested to prepare some ideas on what it should include and present them at the meeting in October*, where the secretariat can start preparing the draft which will be discussed and maybe adopted at the May meeting next year.

Expert/Observer of SC from COPERNICUS Alliance:

- wondered in the chat, if the themes of the High-level meeting of Education and Environment Ministries are linked with ESD and in which way, since they seem to deal mainly with economic issues.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- replied in the chat that the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference is a sum of two meetings (Environment ministers and High-level meeting of Environment and Education ministries). The second has its separate session, the agenda of which will be decided upon by the ESD SC at its meeting in May 2021.

#### **5d. (resource requirements)**

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- the uploaded Information note has a link for Estimated resource requirements for preparing the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.
- the figures in the document are indicative and refer to the preparation of the entire conference.
- if the SC would like to have additional activities (e.g. organizing a site event, inviting experts for parallel discussion, publications), this must be discussed in the framework of SC's trust fund.
- substantial part of these costs will be contributed by the host country, the Republic of Cyprus and that will be negotiated between the UNECE and the government of Cyprus.

#### **Item 6 (outcomes of 3 meetings of the ad hoc group for strategic planning)**

Chair:

- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in Hague (November 2018): identification of 4 priority strands (WIA, QE, ICT and digital education, Innovation, entrepreneurship and employability).
- 14<sup>th</sup> SC meeting: the draft of the strategic planning was presented, recommended changes, additions and completions were made by the rest of the active MS.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in Cyprus (September 2020): examination and reconsideration of strategic planning after the suggestions of the SC.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting in Cyprus (March 2020): the meeting was cancelled due to covid-19 pandemic.
- Virtual meeting of the Ad hoc group (30<sup>th</sup> April 2020): discussed the priorities and the text under the new situation and global crisis we are facing. Decided to reorganize and rewrite the preamble in order to meet the challenges we are facing in post-pandemic era (responsibility of Roel van Raaij, the Netherlands and Michael Scoullou, MIO-ECSDE), send to other members of the Ad hoc group for their input and impact.
- the task of the SC is to finalize the document by the end of June, in order to be ready for submission as an official document for the 2020 October meeting of the SC.
- planning on sending the documents to few reviewers for their comments and feedback.
- thanked personally everyone who worked on the strategic planning, for their commitment, devotion and passion.

Expert/Observer of SC from NGO PLANET 'ERE:

- the situation with covid-19 showed the importance of the use of the digital tools in formal and informal processes.
- must modify or enlarge the reflection in strand 3 according to new preamble.
- made remark: digital is a tool that serves all users, is particularly suitable for ESD and we need to consider the two orientations of digital, general and focused on ESD.

Academic Expert/Observer of SC from University of Athens, MIO-ECSDE:

- the preamble is almost finalized, it has been enlarged and extended but believes it gives the necessary entry points for the 4 strands and will be useful for the ministerial statement.
- expecting comments from the rest of the members of the Ad hoc group and being optimistic that it will be completed soon and shared with the entire SC.

UK:

- need to have a reality touch to the strategic plan – recast the strategic plan in a way where we can understand where the funding will be coming from and attach the ESD interests and needs of the committee on the bigger agenda.
- we might have effective approaches and activities, but without the funding will remain as a wish list.
- requested for a dialogue amongst the SC about the entry points that will align us with the available funding strands in the next decade.

Chair:

- stated that we are revising this document in order to make it more clear, tangible and feasible to be achieved.
- the work done will be presented in the draft form at the SC for their input, impact, comments, changes, in order to have the consensus of all the participating countries.

#### **Item 7 (outcomes of the first meeting and of the subsequent work of the ad hoc group on youth)**

Chair:

- a novelty established by our committee in order to give youth a key role.
- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was hosted by the government of Austria – thanked the government for a great organization and for giving the opportunity to 15 young people coming from 15 countries of the UNECE region to participate and discuss their role in the new ESD era.
- special gratitude to Peter for the great meeting and thanks to the youth representatives.

Austria:

- interesting and inspiring meeting.
- document of this and Simon's presentation are uploaded on the UNECE website.
- input from Austria youth organizations, Climate Austria citizens' initiatives, Friday's for Future and WWF youth section generation.
- young people need our believe that they can act, that they are interested in changing structures and build up their own future and they need structures to get involved.
- give them respect and motivation, not just funding but the feeling of community, acceptance and recognitions.
- advised that climate action and climate justice must be issues for everyone.
- they need small structures of decision making to get active, linked with democracy.
- aware that you can't activate everyone, but you must focus on and find changemakers and give them the chance to build up something interesting.
- recommendations about funding (ministries, local conference of youth – crowd funding, association member fees).

- interesting question raised: what if a country is not yet fully democratic organized, what can a minister do? – recommendation: create a new social image of leaders for young people for orientation.
- in depth discussions and exchange of good practice in different countries.
- work sessions on 4 strands (WIA: complicated topic, find ways to get feedback form young people, QE: necessary to include youth in planning process, the process of ESD is not one-way, ICT and Digital Education: necessary to introduce digital tools, need a better global youth network and take more awareness on social media as a tool for young people, Entrepreneurship: need for definition on what's green economy, wish to establish an online platform to share documents, experiences, knowledges).

Youth focal point and Ad hoc group coordinator:

- was invited and attended last year's SC meeting and asked to coordinate the process with young people.
- youth Ad hoc group meeting: addressed the topic of young people within the SC – who are young people - within SC defined a set of standards (age, challenges, not homogenous group, etc.).
- MS should nominate a youth member to attend the SC meeting in October, recommendation to keep the current members of the youth Ad hoc group.
- formulated specific recommendations for each strand (Peter, report under agenda Item 7).
- youth engagement at international and national level: need to establish youth networks within institutions, to held regular consultations and meetings, more democratic delegation processes, draft basic terms of reference and minimum requirements, provision of different platforms and mechanisms, understanding that money is an important factor in enabling youth participation.
- youth meeting scheduled for prior to ministerial meeting, probably for March – April next year.
- suggested to the SC if there are people interested in working on resource mobilization there are some calls about climate action, they can check, e.g. Life from European Commission, Erasmus+ on youth.

Chair:

- due to comments on the chat, mentioned that the reason we established the Ad hoc group on youth and ESD was to give them an active role in the process and mechanisms of the UNECE SC.

UK:

- asked if it was possible to have a youth representative joining with the Working Group on Strand 2.

Expert/Observer of SC from CAREC:

- expressed desire to work with members from the youth group on strands 2 and 4.

Expert/Observer of SC from European ECO-Forum:

- in the chat, supported the participation of young people, high school students age 15-18 that the last couple of years showed to be the strongest power of change in Europe.

Youth representative from Ukraine (representative of Partnership Network ESD in Ukraine):

- emphasized that meaningful engagement of youth is crucial to this process.
- this meeting gave the chance to share knowledge and best practices.
- suggested the formation of ESD youth network at regional level.

Youth representative from Slovakia (Slovakia delegate):

- thanked for introducing youth in process, listening to youth proposals and implementing them promptly.
- this is evidence that young people have the chance to influence issues important to SD.
- special thanks to the Chair, to Mrs. Nona Iliukhina, Mr. Peter and Simon.

Youth representative from UK:

- UK focal point.
- commented on Strand 2 (QE) and the meaningful youth participation.

Greece:

- in the chat, thanked the Chair and secretariat for including at the Ad hoc youth group a youth representative from Greece.

Youth representative from Slovenia Youth Council:

- in chat, expressed happiness that youth was included in this process and emphasized the importance of including youth in all phases of the strategic process (drafting, implementation, evaluation).
- offered her time and expertise if needed.

Greece:

- raised a question in chat, regarding the possibility of the secretariat organizing a meeting with experts about the difficulty of young people to understand “The whole Institution approach”.

## **Item 8 (outcomes of the three meetings and of the subsequent work of the ad hoc group on indicators)**

Netherlands:

- presentation about the monitoring and evaluation process and the set of indicators.
- good work from the excellent group of experts from Belgium, Canada, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Montenegro, UNESCO and UK University of Gloucestershire, on revising the existing set of indicators and elaborating the template of the format for reporting.
- questioned each indicator if it's necessary/needed and how workable/comprehensive is it to answer the questions from the user's point of view.

- considered the agenda for 2015-19 and draft notes for post 2019-20 frameworks, documents from UNESCO.
- lot of the questions refer to the current situation on existence of the relevant documents, but a more interesting question would be “what has changed over time and why did it change?” - added a question about the developments.
- template with ISCED levels – many countries have different education system and different ISCED – tried to simplify and gave some explanatory notes to that.
- some questions were rephrased for better understanding, new were introduced regarding the strands of work for the period 2020-2030.
- went through UNESCO work (thanked Ms. Alison Kennedy from UNESCO) on SDG reporting and especially SDG4 target 4.7 – encompass education for SD and Global Citizenship education, also monitored by the UNESCO 1974 recommendation – tried to apply information from the existing work and discussion on the reporting format.
- appendixes: too detailed about content or learning methods – have more comprehensive four-point scale.
- important: synergy between ECE monitoring and evaluation framework and SDGs and UNESCO – the formal implementation framework to be delivered in Berlin meeting that is a work in progress, so our work is still not completed.
- 3 reports foreseen
  1. Launching M&E exercise, starting this year
  2. Midterm review, starting in 2024
  3. Final review, starting in 2028
- AHG will try to finish the work on the Format for Reporting before summer holiday in order to start the M&E process just after the summer
- for any detail questions about specific indicators, send an e-mail to the secretariat and will try to finalize the questionnaire during the next online meeting.

Chair:

- thanked Roel for leading this process and all the members of this Ad hoc group for all the work they’ve done in a short time.

UK:

- thanked the indicators’ group for the detailed work they’ve done.
- will send a detailed submission once is requested formally on behalf of the UK.
- 1<sup>st</sup> question: what attempts have the group made to reach out to those used the indicators template to find out what worked and didn’t work and therefore how this interaction of the M&E process could be more effective to put forward?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> question refers to timing and timeline that was set out – is logical to align the M&E process to the new strategic plan, but it’s under revision and for example for QE strand it will not collect valuable information in terms of guidance of activities in the next decade.
- comment regarding higher education sector: through this template we are missing out great work done in ESD by the MS, e.g. in UK. How can this process be opened for key informant validity, so it would be more relevant and effective going forward?

Netherlands:

- about timing: 4 strands are still under construction and weren’t finished before the work of this group, consider postponing the meetings but there was pressure of timeline to start the

next M&E at the beginning of the new 10-year period (UNESCO will also shift a bit to 2021 their work of implementing).

- about process: discussed in expert group since many participants there were also leading the national process of collecting data, aware about the quality of the data collecting and the process of filling in the questionnaire as a group and as a multi-stakeholder.
- about higher education: a lot more to say and a lot more research, but the question is if it's necessary to focus especially on this. Can we address higher education in the work of the questionnaire (we consider ESD in formal, informal and non-formal education, in all levels and types) or do we have to address it in a specific strand of work?

Expert/Observer of SC from COPERNICUS Alliance:

- thanked for the inclusion and happy that the work is building on the previous format.
- question: there is no question on the process of preparation of the report on the national level and how the validity of data is ensured because not all countries can ensure a real transparent process involving all actors.

Greece:

- commented in chat that in order to avoid overlaps there must be a connection with UNESCO's work and expertise in the field.
- reporting became a difficult task for MS as they must complete several questionnaires from different agencies and through different set of indicators

Netherlands:

- at the beginning of the questionnaire there is a preamble describing the process by which a country prepares the report.
- some of the last questions are about the multi-stakeholder process and is important to organize the process and collection of data in a way to ensure validity.

UK:

- asked clarification on the submission date for formal submission from MS, who is to decide on the timeline and when would that be because she would like the UK to join the reporting process this year.
- raised the issue of ownership and engagement and commented that we cannot expect member States to engage in this process if the first they hear of this is when the questionnaire arrives. A dialogue needs to be established with them, so that they can understand what it is we are trying to do and why it is important that they contribute. They also need timelines and warning of the arrival of this data request so that they can organise the input in effective ways.

Chair:

- the issue of the format of the report was also raised in the last meeting of the SC.
- we can't have it too extensive or too demanding because sometimes, the same person must also complete several other reports.
- mainly the qualitative indicators are too many and this should be re-discussed in October's meeting.

Netherlands:

- is not for me to decide about the timelines and if there is time to elaborate more on the indicators.
- the deadline for the official submission of the template for reporting is by mid February 2021 but we must take under consideration that it also has to be edited and translated in 3 languages, so any changes we make will affect the timing and work of the secretariat.

Chair:

- thanked Roel and the rest of the group for all the work done.
- all these issues will be collected by the secretariat and will proceed with necessary needed changes during the e-mail exchanges amongst the MS.

Expert/Observer of SC from European ECO-Forum:

- in the chat, suggested that meetings could also have an online participation in order to enable the participation of those that for financial reasons are unable to be present in Geneva.

### **Item 13 (publication on ESD from the Economic Commission for Europe region)**

Chair:

- proposed 2 types of publication regarding the progress report.
- prepared 2 draft concept notes (publication for the progress of ESD report, Youth and ESD in UNECE region) and will be circulated among MS for ideas before finalization.
- this is an unofficial meeting - decisions can only be taken by the SC.
- we can take advantage of this period we have before the meeting in October, because for the publications to be ready, printed and circulated at the ministerial meeting they must be submitted to the UNECE by the end of 2020.
- suggested to circulate the draft concept note to MS to reflect on and finalize as a joint document by the MS and work on draft unofficial documents of the publications.
- must agree on the circulation of official e-mail to the SC for contributions on structure and formatting of these 2 concept notes.

UNECE Secretariat:

- the SC must decide on content and outline of the 2 publications – will send an e-mail, the proposal is on the website.
- must decide on format of reporting and the reporting cycle. If the timelines are kept as presented, we were supposed to send out the format for reporting after the meeting in May.
- if it's decided to be postponed or cancelled, for several reasons e.g. the strategic planning framework still needs to be finalized, a new timeline must be drawn.

Netherlands:

- proposed to postpone the reporting cycle, get some input before summer and have some essential details added to the questionnaire.
- but it's important the strategic group to work on the strategic plan until 2030.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- reminded that this is a consultation meeting and no decisions can be made – questions in chat.
- asked colleagues to send their questions, suggestions to the secretariat and they will try to distill the ones that might need another cycle of consultation.
- the Chair and the members of the committee then will decide on how to proceed.

Chair:

- clarified a possible misunderstanding, stating that everything in the committee is an open discussion with all the MS and everyone is included in the processes.
- agreed with Zaal Lomtadze's proposal on sending all the questions via e-mail.

### **Item 15 (other business)**

UNECE Secretariat:

- *e-mail will be sent to MS* to ask for a feedback on how gender is addressed in ESD activities and in the results of the work at the national level and to provide good practice examples if available.

### **Closing of the meeting**

Chair:

- thanked everyone for their attention, commitment, work and support.
- hoped to meet in October under better conditions, will be in touch with all the MS and will try to organize another virtual unofficial meeting.
- thanked Zaal Lomtadze and Nona Iliukhina for their support in organizing the meeting today.

UNECE Secretariat (Nona Iliukhina):

- thanked everyone for their productive and effective work, reminded of the raised questions to be sent by e-mail
- thanked on behalf of all the MS the Chair for her effort to make the committee active.
- request to the members that haven't sent an e-mail for their participation to do so, so they will be included in the list of participants.

UNECE Secretariat (Zaal Lomtadze):

- thanked everyone.
- seems today's consultation format was quite successful and could be repeated upon decision of the members and of the Chair.

