

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU  
TO THE EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION  
Monday 12 December 2011, 9.00 hrs  
Salle XV, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

**1. Twenty-ninth session of the Executive Body**

The Chair opened the meeting outlining the main agenda items for discussion.

**(a) *Revision of the Gothenburg Protocol***

The members of the EB Bureau started to discuss organization of the EB work in break-out groups (list of groups to be set up and a timeline for that). The Chair indicated the main issues to decide on: technical annexes, black carbon, emission ceilings and ammonia/agriculture. The Russian Federation and the US expressed concern about organizing work of particular groups in parallel (e.g. groups on technical annexes and on black carbon).

Discussing the issue of emission ceilings, the EU expressed doubts about possibility to define them during this session and found it more realistic to be finalized by April. The WGSR Chair informed about readiness to indicate ceilings. The Russian Federation proposed to continue further deliberations after the next day's meeting of the EECCA Coordination Group.

The US and the Russian Federation emphasized importance of flexibility issue for the countries in transition. The EU encouraged taking it very carefully, as too much flexibility may result in a weak document.

It was proposed to invite a lawyer to draft the text of the Annex III (in particular, concerning the definition of the European part of the Russian Federation).

The WGSR Chair and the Russian Federation representative noted importance of making relevant amendments to the text, so that non-parties to the protocol are involved.

**(b) *Revision of the Protocol on Heavy Metals***

The Chair proposed to request the WGSR to develop a proposal that can be presented to the EB next December and not to try to pursue the solution that is difficult to achieve.

The WGSR Chair proposed to replicate the same mechanism of the GP revision into this process. It was mentioned that the negotiations would most likely be finished by the end of 2012. He proposed not to change the mandate of the WGSR. The EU agreed that there was

no need to dwell on that if it was not necessary. The US agreed not to change the mandate unless parties wished so; it is better to focus on amendments that would help EECCA countries. The Russian Federation agreed that the revision process should go gradually – starting with the Gothenburg Protocol, and continue with the Protocol on Heavy Metals, rather than in parallel.

### ***c) Revision of the Protocol on POPs***

The Chair proposed two options: 1) to defer the issue and continue discussions next December; 2) to pursue agreement and inclusion of the 3 POPs.

The US agreed to defer discussions. The WGSR Chair reminded about the new information received from Canada, so it would be better to see next year whether it is possible to defer. The EU explained that though its position on focusing more on the Gothenburg Protocol remains unchanged, it would be better to keep it optional in order not to lose an opportunity for discussion.

### ***d) Draft action plan for the implementation of the Long-term strategy***

The Chair noted that although the draft action plan was not an official document, the EB still could have a discussion on that. He asked whether a break-out group had to be established.

The US noted that having it as an informal document did not preclude the EB from agreement and its adoption, unless there were things to discuss further. The EB could probably consider the components of the action plan, if at that moment it was not ready to agree on the entire document.

The Russian Federation noted that it is necessary to look through and discuss further, as it finds the text disputable in some parts.

The WGSR Chair emphasized importance of starting the evaluation process as soon as possible. It should be an external evaluation, we should decide on resources for that.

The US agreed that an evaluation on whether the current structure fits the objectives of the Long-term strategy should be made. It can be done by a group of experts; the parties should decide on its composition.

The WGE Chair agreed with this idea and with importance of this exercise; he proposed that resources from the Trust Fund could be used to cover the services of the consultant.

The US proposed it to be a group of 6-8 people (mix of experts, people who know the convention, representatives of key subsidiary bodies), the parties would adopt the terms of reference; by April-May the report can be presented to the WGSR with discussion in September and further at the EB meeting.

The EMEP Steering Body Chair noted that it made sense to sharpen the topics that were not sharpened in the Strategy. She mentioned the documents to be circulated among EB members informally between the meetings.

The secretariat suggested a mechanism for assessing deliverables to be incorporated; it would be good to have clear timeframes and allocation of responsibilities in the action plan. Any overlaps between the bi-annual work plan and the action plan should be avoided. The secretariat also expressed its wish to be involved in the work of the expert group, as it considers the structure of the secretariat. Moreover, the secretariat could provide a link between the position of member states at the EXCOM and the EB.

It was decided to set a break-out group for the action plan elaboration at the EB 29.

#### *e) Issues relating to the Implementation Committee*

The Chair of the Implementation Committee made a brief on new cases of non-compliance and deferrals. Among other IC recommendations, he emphasized the necessity of the issue on POPs reporting to be addressed; otherwise the IC is not in a position to perform properly due to inconsistencies.

He informed about three new candidates for the IC membership. He also expressed concern about two informal documents posted on the website without the approval of the IC.

The EMEP Steering Body Chair welcomed the stronger position of the IC in terms of POPs emissions reporting. She proposed to keep this part as a separate EB decision.

### **2. Outreach activities**

The secretariat provided an update on the last activities, namely, the 7<sup>th</sup> “Environment for Europe” ministerial conference in Astana; green economy as a new priority direction; cooperation with NEASPEC (North-East Asian Subregional Program for Environmental Cooperation); meeting of the chairs of conventions; review of the 2005 reform (ECE review process).

The Bureau members asked the secretariat to circulate the report of the NEASPEC meeting and the minutes of the meeting of the chairs of the conventions.

**Action: the secretariat to circulate the report once it is finalized.**

The Chair emphasized that the joint statement to the CEP should be agreed with the Bureau members; the methods of further communication within the Bureau in this relation would be established.

### **3. Other business**

The Bureau members expressed concern about the text of the Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure; they decided that “*accredited*” should be changed to “*delegated*”. It was also

decided to take into consideration the fact that in some countries the ministries of foreign affairs request a separate relevant agenda item for credentials issuance.

The Bureau members discussed the issue of allocation of functions to the secretariat in view of budget cuts. It was decided to address existing problems within the Bureau.

The Chair of the WGSR proposed to introduce a new semi-official category of documents to ease burden on the secretariat and not to be bound by number of pages and official schedule. The US and the EU supported this idea and agreed to discuss it further.

There was no consensus among the Bureau members concerning the dates of the next WGSR/EB meeting. It was decided to discuss this issue at the plenary.

The Chair closed the meeting.