



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
8 December 2020
English
Original: English, French
and Russian

Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Committee

112th meeting

Geneva, 14 December 2020

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Matters relating to the Forum of Mayors

Decisions relating to the Forum of Mayors

Background

1. The eighty-first session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) opened on 6 October 2020 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. As no consensus was reached by 8 October 2020 on agenda item 3 (Forum of Mayors, report of the outcome of the Forum of Mayors, the roundtable “In Focus:SDG11” and related recommendations), draft decision contained in para 22 of the current report (ECE/HBP/206), the Chair decided not to close the eighty-first session of the Committee and to reconvene in a formal meeting with remote participation at the earliest possible date to take action on this decision. Two informal consultations took place on 19 and 26 October 2020, respectively.

2. Following the informal consultations, the eighty-first session of the Committee resumed briefly on 6 November. The Committee decided to defer the draft decision to the ECE Executive Committee and invited the Executive Committee to take action as a matter of urgency. The draft decision is below.

“The Committee:

(a) [Decided that the Forum of Mayors 2021 will take place in Murmansk, Russian Federation; dates of the meeting will be communicated in due course after consultation with the host country];

(b) Decided that the Forum of Mayors will take place in 2022 in Geneva, subject to initial positive assessment by the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management in 2021 of the previous two forums (in 2020 and 2021);

(c) Invited the organizers of the upcoming Forums, as appropriate, to take into account the negative impact of the pandemic on international travel and to plan accordingly, including for virtual participation, to ensure the highest possible geographical representation;

(d) Invited the Forum of Mayors Steering Committee to prepare draft Terms of Reference for the evaluation of the Forum of Mayors 2020 session, to be considered and adopted at the next Committee session (in 2021), and take into consideration, inter alia, the following parameters for the evaluation to be presented by the Steering Committee:

(i) Participation of mayors (at least 20 mayors participated, both online and in person);

(ii) Interest to host by member States (at least one request by a city or a country to host the Forum received), as well as relevant costs;

- (iii) Relevance of the Forum agenda to the United Nations priorities (the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other);
 - (iv) Visibility of the event and media impact (social media posts reposted/shared by others);
 - (v) Output and follow up by mayors (at least five follow-up activities by mayors initiated);
 - (vi) Impact on the Committee programme of work and ECE (an increase in number of cities engaged in the implementation of the Committee programme of work).
- (e) Agreed that the Forum of Mayors is organized in partnership with relevant international organizations, networks of cities, including the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, the Geneva Cities Hub and other relevant organizations, and the ECE nexus on “Sustainable Smart Cities for all Ages”;
- (f) Took note of the ECE Inland Transport Committee decision at its session in February 2020 inviting the Committee “to consider how best to promote the activities and outputs of THE PEP related to sustainable urban transport [...] at the Forum of Mayors in 2021” and requested the Bureau to formulate relevant proposals as part of the preparations to the Forum of Mayors 2021;
- (g) Invited the secretariat to explore synergies and possibilities for cooperation with other relevant sub-programmes of ECE in the preparation for and organization of the Forum and in this regard strongly encouraged the active involvement of the nexus members of the Steering Committee;
- (h) Took note of the proposed process for member States/cities to submit their candidacy to host the Forum of Mayors in the future, if extended beyond 2022, whereby the proposed process includes the following steps:
- (i) A letter of offer should be sent to the secretariat by the member State for the consideration of the Committee;
 - (ii) The Bureau of the Committee and secretariat are to review offers received and ask additional questions/clarification if necessary;
 - (iii) The Bureau considers offers and makes recommendations;
 - (iv) The Committee session decides on the host country/city.
- (i) Based on the results of the evaluation, to be finalized by 2022, the Committee will have to agree on the objectives, format, and frequency of the Forum, if extended beyond 2022, with a view to submitting a proposal on future meetings for endorsement by the ECE Executive Committee and/or by the seventieth session of the Commission in 2023.”

3. In order to consider the issue, informal consultations were held on 8 December 2020 and reviewed an alternative proposal tabled by Switzerland. The result of the informal consultations is contained below. It is understood that the draft decision, presented to EXCOM for consideration, would supersede relevant prior decisions by the CUDHLM.

Draft Decision

The Executive Committee:

4. Recalled the decision of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) of 2019 (ECE/HBP/201) and decided that instead of holding the Forum of Mayors in 2021 it will be convened back-to-back with the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD) in March 2022 in Geneva, including with a view to explore possible synergies with the RFSD in line with the thematic focus of the RFSD/High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2022, subject to the availability of funding.

5. Decides that:

- (a) The Forum 2022 will report both to the RFSD and to CUDHLM, as appropriate;

(b) The thematic focus of the Forum of Mayors will be aligned with the one of the HLPF and RFSD;

(c) The Forum 2022 will be supported by the existing Steering Committee, currently under the CUDHLM, which will further include relevant experts in line with the thematic focus of the Forum.

6. Invites the Secretariat to explore synergies and possibilities for cooperation among relevant sub-programmes of ECE in the preparation for and organization of the Forum.

7. Takes note of the ECE Inland Transport Committee decision at its session in February 2020 inviting the CUDHLM “to consider how best to promote the activities and outputs of THE PEP related to sustainable urban transport [...] at the Forum of Mayors in 2021” and requests the Secretariat in close coordination with the Bureau of CUDHLM to formulate relevant proposals as part of the preparations to the Forum of Mayors in 2022.

8. Decides that:

(a) The evaluation of the Forum will take place in 2022 and results will be considered by CUDHLM at its 83rd session and EXCOM during 2022;

(b) Based on the results of the evaluation, EXCOM will agree on whether to extend the Forum beyond 2022 as well as on the objectives, format and frequency of the Forum;

(c) The Terms of Reference of the evaluation will be prepared by the Steering Committee and adopted by EXCOM in 2021 and will take into consideration, inter alia, the following parameters:

(i) Impact and relevance to the work of UNECE (this would include participation, visibility, output, follow up, mandates, etc.)

(ii) Effectiveness, including best location and affiliation (hosting by member States outside of Headquarters, linkages to Commission or CUDHLM or RFSD, etc.).
