

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Bureau

Eighteenth meeting

Online, 19 November 2020

Report of the eighteenth meeting of the Bureau¹

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden, Chair), Ms. Ulrike Schöler (Germany, Vice-Chair), Mr. Alex Radway (European Union), Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland) and Ms. Kyreieva Viktoria (Ukraine).

Observers: Ms. Mara Silina (European ECO-Forum).

Apologies: Ms. Marie-Rose van den Hende (Belgium, Vice-Chair), Mr. Nebojsa Redzic (Serbia).

II. Opening and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair opened the meeting and the Bureau adopted the provisional agenda. The Chair welcomed the new member of the Bureau, Ms. Kyreieva Viktoria, who was nominated by Ukraine to replace Ms. Lesya Karnaukh (Ukraine).

III. Organizational and procedural matters for the 8th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties linked to extraordinary COVID-19 pandemic-related circumstances

2. The Bureau took note of the experience shared by the secretariat in relation to the Aarhus Convention's 24th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties held in hybrid format on 28-29 October 2020. It was noted that the key challenges for organising meetings in hybrid or virtual formats include technical issues (e.g. required equipment and software on participants's side; unpredictability of the ensuring stable connection), time management and procedural issues related to decision-making.

3. The Bureau then considered the draft operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making in the eighth meeting of the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties due to extraordinary COVID-19 pandemic-related circumstances. After discussion, the Bureau approved the document as revised at the meeting and requested the secretariat to send it to Parties and stakeholders.

IV. Update on preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

4. The secretariat informed the Bureau that due to a number of constraints linked to the COVID-19 pandemic Georgia cannot confirm its commitment to host the upcoming sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention and to the Protocol on PRTRs. The Bureau agreed that in these circumstances the next

¹ This document was not formally edited.

session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol should be held in Geneva unless any Party would confirm its willingness to host the session. The Bureau also agreed to proceed with the preparations for the session as was planned and reassess the situation in Spring 2020 as needed.

V. Election of members of the Bureau at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

5. The Bureau noted that four of the current members of the Bureau will have completed their second term of office at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties and should be replaced: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden), Ms. Ulrike Schüler (Germany), Mr. Nebosja Redzic (Serbia), and Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland). Three remaining members of the Bureau will be eligible for re-election: Ms. Marie-Rose Van den Hende (Belgium), Ms. Kyreieva Viktoria (Ukraine) and Mr. Alex Radway (European Union).
