

Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range
Transboundary Air Pollution

Bureau of the Executive Body

Meeting

4 December 2020, via videoconference

Report of the meeting

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Anna Engleryd (Sweden, Chair), Mr. Sergey Vasiliev (Russian Federation), Mr. Richard Ballaman (Switzerland), Ms. Elizabeth Nichols (United States of America), Ms. Jennifer Kerr (Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review), Ms. Laurence Rouil (Chair of the EMEP Steering Body), Ms. Isaura Rabago (Chair of the Working Group on Effects) and Mr. Manfred Ritter (Chair of the Implementation Committee).

Observer: Ms. Susanne Lindahl (European Union).

II. Preparations for the fifty-eighth session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the fortieth session of the Executive Body

The secretariat informed the Bureau of the number of registrations for both sessions and credentials received for the session of the Executive Body. It noted that the link and instructions to join the session would be circulated to registered participants as soon as a technical briefing was organized for the secretariat by the conference management service on 9 December. The secretariat reminded the Bureau of the current restrictions by Geneva authorities for physical presence at meetings and noted that 2 participants would attend the sessions in person.

The Chairs of the Executive Body and the Working Group on Strategies and Review noted the need of a separate meeting for them with the secretariat to discuss technical aspects and asked if a trial of the system could be arranged.

The Bureau discussed the need to restrict the right for making interventions during the sessions. It concluded that this restriction would not be needed in view of possible connection issues and given that not many interventions were foreseen.

The Bureau confirmed the need to organize an informal session on Wednesday from 14:00 to 17:00 CET and requested the secretariat to circulate a link to a Teams meeting. The Chair of WGSR would chair that session. The informal session could be used for discussions on the election of officers and the WGSR draft conclusions and

recommendations. The Bureau agreed that the Chair of WGSR would inform participants of the session of possible issues to be discussed there.

The Chair of the WGSR agreed to send the draft decision on the Gothenburg Protocol review to the Bureau for comments. She would also share an informal plan for the discussion on the review.

The Bureau discussed nominations received for the election of officers and members of the Implementation Committee and options for extending their term of office: automatic extension by one year for EB and WGSR officers in view of exceptional circumstances or extension by one term of 2 years taking into account the review of the Gothenburg Protocol. The secretariat listed the received nominations (8 nominations for the Implementation Committee and 2 nominations for EB officers) and noted that this information would be uploaded on the EB40 session's webpage. The Bureau noted that whereas rule 17 of the rules of procedure indicates a staggered approach for the timing of elections of Chairs in relation to the elections of Vice-chairs, it does not give guidance on the timing of elections for the Chair of the Executive Body in relation to the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

The Chair of the Implementation Committee noted that he had been in contact with all current members of the Committee and confirmed his own and their willingness to run for another term. The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review asked the Chair of the Implementation Committee whether Canada could proceed with nominating a legal expert, in particular in case the United States of America would send its nomination as well. The secretariat noted that in case more than 9 nominations for the Implementation Committee received, the Committee members that had completed the maximum number of terms could be asked to step down. The observer from the European Union and a Bureau Member responded that Parties would themselves define criteria for stepping down as this is a party-driven decision with more possible criteria than number of terms to be taken into account. The EU would coordinate with other parties submitting IC nominations in order to discuss solutions.

The Chair of the Executive Body asked the secretariat to chair the session on the election of officers under item 7 of the Executive Body agenda.

III. Calendar of meetings in 2021

The secretariat listed the provisional dates of official meetings in 2021 and noted that these would be indicated on the website soon. The dates of the EMEP SB and WGE Extended Bureaux meeting would have to be determined by Parties. The Bureau noted that 4 days for the session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review would not be sufficient, if held in a hybrid mode with 2 hours of interpretation per day. The EU observer noted that the secretariat had to strive for as many hours of the session as possible. The secretariat explained that the 2-hour slot was chosen to accommodate participation of delegations from all parts of the UNECE region. In case delegates from North America could join the session starting in the morning CET, the daily session could be extended to 2+2 hours. The issue would be further discussed between the Chair and representatives of Parties from North America. The secretariat would explore further possibilities with the conference management services.

IV. Date, time and place for the next meeting

The Bureau tentatively agreed to hold its next meeting remotely on 12 January 2021.