

EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION

Bureau to the Executive Body

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU
TO THE EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION
10 December 2007, Geneva**

Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau

The third meeting of the Bureau in 2007 was chaired by the Chairman of the Executive Body, Mr. M. Williams (United Kingdom), and was attended by Vice-Chairpersons Mr. R. Ballaman (Switzerland), Mr. T. Johannessen (Norway) and Mr. J. Schneider (Austria). Ms S. Gardner (United States) was invited to attend the meeting as observer since Mr. W. Harnett (United States) was unable to be present. Mr. S. Michel (Switzerland), Ms. M. Lešnjak (Slovenia) and Ms. S. Nurmi (Finland) sent their apologies. Mr. K. Bull attended for the UNECE secretariat. Mr. A. Zuber (European Commission) attended as observer.

**I. NOTE OF THE BUREAU MEETING OF 17 SEPTEMBER 2007
(EB BUREAU/2007/2) INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING NOT ELSEWHERE
ON THE AGENDA**

1. The note of the meeting had been circulated and the Bureau agreed that it should be placed on the Convention's website at www.unece.org/env/eb/bureau.

II. TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BODY

2. Mr. Bull outlined the final preparations for the session and noted the poor availability of official documents despite nearly all being submitted before the required deadline. He noted Mr Barlund would give the opening address and that room 662 was available for small meetings throughout the week.

3. Mr. Williams informed the Bureau that he would host a reception for the Executive Body that evening.

A. Accreditation of NGOs

4. Mr. Bull informed the Bureau that only one NGO had applied for accreditation under EB decision 2006/11 – the European Federation of Clean Air and

Environmental Protection Associations (EFCA). The secretariat had provided information on EFCA to the Bureau, including a reference to the EFCA website.

5. The Bureau agreed to recommend accreditation of EFCA to the Executive Body.

B. Review of the Gothenburg Protocol

6. Mr. Ballaman outlined the presentation he would give to the Executive Body. He noted the importance of completing the review process so that a prompt start could be made to the work on revising the Protocol. He suggested that, in view of the timetable of the European Community for revising its National emissions Ceilings Directive, the Executive Body should set itself a target of two years for the negotiations.

7. Mr Schneider and Mr. Johannessen indicated that the scientific work had been completed to support completion of the review process. The Bureau believed that the Parties to the Protocol would find the review satisfactory and decide it was complete.

8. The Bureau agreed that the timetable proposed by Mr. Ballaman be put before the Executive Body following agreement on the completion of the review.

C. Heavy metals and POPs

9. Mr. Ballaman summarized his presentations for the Executive Body and noted the course of action proposed by the Working Group on Strategies and Review. He noted that the work on heavy metals and POPs would need to run in parallel with that for the Gothenburg Protocol revision, which would place a heavy workload on the Working Group.

D. Implementation Committee

10. The Bureau discussed the options for electing members of the Committee and agreed proposals to put before the Executive Body.

11. The Bureau noted the long-term non-compliance with protocol obligations by Spain and Greece. The secretariat noted that Spain was sending a strong delegation to the Executive Body session to provide further information on the steps it was taking to meet its obligations; however, Spain was still some way from moving into compliance. Regarding Greece, it seemed likely that the Greek mission in Geneva would address the Executive Body on this matter. The Bureau agreed with the Committee's proposal for the Executive Body to discuss possibilities for taking further measures to encourage compliance. Mr. Zuber noted that the European Commission was keen to ensure that EU Parties met their obligations and could take some action in this respect. It was agreed that the discussion of further measures would be dealt with separately under the agenda item covering the report of the Implementation Committee.

E. Emission reporting guidelines and new emission centre

12. Mr. Schneider informed the Bureau on progress with the development of the revised emission reporting guidelines. The EMEP Steering Body had agreed the technical parts of the guidelines while the more policy-related issues were being dealt with by the Ad hoc Legal Expert Group under the Working Group on Strategies and Review. The guidelines were not ready for adoption though there was agreement that the new templates would be used from 2009.

13. The Bureau noted that the former Chair of the Ad hoc Group, Maas Goote, had changed jobs so a new Chair would be provided by the Netherlands for a meeting that was being planned for January.

14. Mr. Schneider informed the Bureau on the new emissions centre proposed by Austria. Plans for taking on the work from MSC-West were well under way and a decision from the Executive Body to establish the new centre was anticipated.

F. Opening the Convention

15. The Bureau noted the paper on this topic to be presented to the Executive Body. The emphasis of the document, which followed the previous years' discussions, was mainly on outreach and inter-regional collaboration rather than opening the Convention through amendment. The secretariat noted that there were still no enquiries from non-UNECE States about being able to accede to the Convention.

16. Chair informed the Bureau on the plans of the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum (GAPF) to give a series of presentations at the EB session. These would give the perspective of the different regions on the work of the Convention and how it could contribute globally through outreach. He noted the GAPF was planning to hold a meeting of its various regional representatives in the evening of Wednesday 12 December; members of the Bureau were invited to attend and contribute to the discussions.

17. The secretariat noted that it was continuing to send invitations to non-UNECE States inviting them to attend the EB session. Each year just a few countries took advantage of the invitation. The Bureau felt that this was a useful exercise which demonstrated openness, but suggested that the Executive Body be consulted whether it wished this for the future.

G. Elections

18. The Bureau was informed that Ms. Nurmi and Mr. Harnett were standing down from the Bureau and that the United States would propose Mr. Fantozzi as a replacement. Mr. Michel was standing down as Chair of the Implementation Committee and Mr. Fretheim had indicated he would be willing to replace him. The Bureau discussed candidates for the remaining place on the Bureau and agreed it was important to ensure EU representation.

H. EECCA Action Plan

19. The secretariat reported on activities related to the Action Plan. The Czech funded project with Moldova had started and some progress was being made. The CAPACT project was drawing to a close and a final report had been drafted by Kazakhstan indicating its intention to accede to the EMEP, Heavy Metals, POPs and Gothenburg Protocols.

20. The Bureau agreed that the CAPACT project had been a success but noted the lack of funding to carry out follow up projects in EECCA countries. It also noted that Norway was trying to secure funding for additional support for the secretariat to help implement the Action Plan. The secretariat noted it had finally reached agreement with the Dutch government on a contract for a €600000 project focused on South-east Europe.

I. Documentation and meetings

21. Mr Bull explained that there continued to be problems with the UN Documents Management Section. Documents for all ECE meetings were released very late though the ECE secretariat was doing its best to provide advance copies and gain release of any documents that had been translated. It was likely that some language versions of documents would not be available until after the end of the EB session.

22. The Bureau expressed its disappointment at the lack of availability of some documents. Mr Ballaman noted in particular that the French text for the fortieth session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review was not available. The Bureau proposed that the Executive Body express its displeasure with the situation; this would provide the secretariat with an opportunity to seek ways to improve the flow of documents in the future.

III. FINANCING OF CORE ACTIVITIES NOT COVERED BY EMEP

23. The Bureau noted that the ad hoc group that was to discuss the sharing of non-earmarked funds had not been fully convened and there was still no consensus of views among its members. It was informed that the Netherlands was still not in agreement with the current situation but, if there could be no agreement on alternatives, it would agree to the continuation of current practice “under protest”.

IV. OTHER TRUST FUNDS

24. The secretariat provided information on contributions to Trust Funds. It noted that few contributions had been made to project E112, the Trust Fund to support countries with economies in transition, so several of the activities proposed for 2007 had not taken place. Funds for the project in Moldova had been received from the

Czech government and the agreement with the Dutch government for the South-East Europe project had been signed.

25. Some contributions had been received to the secretariat's Trust Fund in order to fund the secretariat's travel to meetings. Some was from lead countries, some from other Parties. Some lead countries had taken steps to pay for travel in advance and to reimburse more promptly. Such efforts were welcomed by the secretariat. It was hoped that such actions would continue in the future.

V. ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON REACTIVE NITROGEN

26. Mr. Williams noted the continued readiness of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands to lead a new Task Force on reactive nitrogen. There had been much discussion on the mandate of the Task Force and it was likely that further elaboration of text would be needed at the Executive Body session.

27. The Bureau recognized areas of overlapping interests with other Convention bodies and agreed that it was important to address these. It decided to wait to hear comments at the session and convene a drafting group to finalize the mandate if that proved necessary.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

28. There was no other business raised under this item.

VII. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

29. The Bureau agreed to meet at the time of the next session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in April 2008. The secretariat would canvas for suitable times and make the necessary arrangements.