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

Thirtieth session

Geneva, 30 April–4 May 2012

Report of the Executive Body on its thirtieth session

Introduction

1. The thirtieth session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was held from 30 April to 4 May 2012 in Geneva, Switzerland. The decisions adopted by the Executive Body at the session can be found in an addendum to the present report (ECE/EB.AIR/111/Add.1).

A. Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following Parties to the Convention: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and the European Union (EU).

3. The Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling (CIAM) of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) was represented at the session.

4. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also attended: the Clean Air Task Force; the European Environmental Bureau; the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum; and the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative. In addition, representatives from the European Solvents Industry Group and the European Association of Internal Combustion Engine Manufacturers were in attendance.

B. Organizational matters

5. Mr. M. Williams (United Kingdom) chaired the meeting.
6. The Director of the Environment Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) welcomed the participants.
7. The Executive Body adopted its agenda, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/110/Rev.1. It agreed to consider a proposal for an adjustment to annex II to the Convention, which had been submitted by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and circulated by the secretariat in accordance with article 13.
8. The delegation of the United States proposed amendments to paragraphs 19, 25, 40 and 46 of the report of the Executive Body's twenty-ninth session, and the insertion of new paragraphs 18 bis, 25 bis, 25 ter and 25 quater. The delegation of the EU proposed amendments to paragraphs 23, 53 and 54. The delegation of Belarus proposed to add a new paragraph 36 bis.
9. The Executive Body adopted the report of its twenty-ninth session (ECE/EB.AIR/109 and Add.1 and 2), as amended, and requested the secretariat to issue a corrigendum and to post it on the website for the Executive Body's twenty-ninth session.

I. Report on credentials

10. In accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure, delegations were invited to submit their credentials to the secretariat within 24 hours after the opening of the session. The Chair reported that, of the 25 Parties to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol), 23 were present with credentials. One Party to the Gothenburg Protocol was present without credentials and one was not present. Of the Parties to the Convention that were not Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol, 12 were present, of which 9 had credentials. The Chair noted that there were a sufficient number of Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol present to adopt the amendments; non-Parties would also be involved as much as possible in agreeing the amendments.

II. Revision of the Gothenburg Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone and its annexes

11. The Executive Body discussed the proposed draft amendments to the text of the Gothenburg Protocol as contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/2012/1, taking into account the report of the ad hoc group of legal experts reviewing the consolidated negotiating documents setting out proposed amendments to the Gothenburg Protocol (ECE/EB.AIR/2012/2). It addressed a number of pending issues and agreed on a final version of the amended Protocol text.
12. With regard to the guidance documents referred to in its article 1, paragraph 1 (g), article 3, paragraph 6, and article 7, paragraphs 7 and 8, of the agreed amended version of the Protocol, the Executive Body agreed to refer those guidance documents which were available as informal documents for a final confirmation by the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fiftieth session in September 2012. The Working Group could then forward any guidance documents it had agreed upon to the Executive Body at its next session in December 2012 for consideration and adoption.
13. The Executive Body discussed the draft proposed amendments to annexes I to IX and the proposed new annexes X and XI, as contained in documents ECE/EB.AIR/2012/3,

ECE/EB.AIR/2012/4, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/5, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/6, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/7, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/8, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/9, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/10, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/11, ECE/EB.AIR/2012/12 and ECE/EB.AIR/2012/13, and addressed a number of pending issues, before agreeing on the final amendments.

14. With regard to figures related to the EU contained in annex II, the delegation of the EU reiterated that those reflected meaningful and ambitious targets. They would indeed require substantial efforts from many if not all EU member States and in some cases posed outright challenges.

15. The secretariat then introduced a proposed adjustment to annex II submitted by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in accordance with article 13 of the Protocol. The delegation of the United States questioned the legal interpretation of article 13 by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, as presented by the secretariat, and requested more information. The delegation of the EU said it would welcome some clarification on the divergence between the 2010 ceilings proposed by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and those calculated by CIAM for the year 2000. It also suggested that the Executive Body request the EMEP Steering Body to review the rationale for the proposal by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the 2010 ceilings in the light of the projections provided by CIAM. The Executive Body agreed to come back to the issue at its next session in December 2012.

16. With regard to annex III, the delegation of the United States requested the secretariat to issue a revised version of document ECE/EB.AIR/2012/5 to include the designated pollutants emissions management area submitted by the United States in 2004.

17. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to issue revised versions of the above documents reflecting the agreed amendments. It further requested the ad hoc group of legal experts to scrutinize and finalize decisions 2012/1 and 2012/2 on the adoption of those amendments.

18. The Executive Body also considered a draft decision on adjustments under the Gothenburg Protocol to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them and a draft decision on the provisional application of amendments to the Gothenburg Protocol, prepared by a break-out group.

III. Adoption of decisions

19. Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol meeting within the Executive Body adopted:

(a) Decision 2012/1 on amendment of annex I to the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone;

(b) Decision 2012/2 on amendment of the text of and annexes II to IX to the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone and the addition of new annexes X and XI.

20. The Executive Body adopted decision 2012/3 on adjustments under the Gothenburg Protocol to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them.

21. Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol meeting within the Executive Body further adopted decision 2012/4 on provisional application of the amendment to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone.

22. The Executive Body invited the secretariat to deposit the adopted amendments to the Gothenburg Protocol with the Secretary-General of the United Nations by forwarding them to the Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs.
