



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
22 February 2019

Original: English

## Economic Commission for Europe

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

**Thirty-eighth session**

Geneva, 10–14 December 2018

### **Report of the Executive Body on its thirty-eighth session\***

#### Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction .....	3
A. Attendance .....	3
B. Organizational matters .....	3
II. Report on credentials .....	3
III. Status of ratification of the Convention and its protocols .....	3
IV. Review of implementation of the 2018–2019 workplan .....	5
A. Science .....	5
B. Policy .....	7
C. Compliance .....	9
D. Capacity-building to promote ratification and implementation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia .....	10
E. Communication and outreach .....	11
V. Revised long-term strategy for the Convention .....	12
VI. Revised mandates of task forces and centres under the Convention .....	13
VII. Information-sharing on activities relevant to the Convention .....	13
VIII. Financial requirements for implementation of the Convention .....	15
IX. Election of officers .....	16
X. Other business .....	17

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

GE.19-02903(E)



\* 1 9 0 2 9 0 3 \*

Please recycle 



XI. Adoption of decisions taken at the thirty-eighth session ..... 17

## **I. Introduction**

1. The thirty-eighth session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) was held from 10 to 14 December 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland.

### **A. Attendance**

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following Parties to the Convention: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. Delegates from Argentina, Brazil, Ghana, India, Mexico, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan also attended the meeting.

3. Also present at the meeting were representatives of the Austrian Environment Agency, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Environmental Bureau, the European Federation of Clean Air and Environmental Protection Associations (EFCA), the European Investment Bank, the European University Institute, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention Associations, Konkuk University, the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East, the Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

### **B. Organizational matters**

4. The Executive Body adopted the agenda for its thirty-eighth session (ECE/EB.AIR/141).

5. The Executive Body adopted the report of its thirty-seventh session (Geneva, 11–14 December 2017) contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/140.

## **II. Report on credentials**

6. Delegations were invited to submit their credentials during the session. The officers of the session reported that 32 Parties to the Convention, which constituted a quorum, were present with original credentials, and that the delegations of 2 Parties had submitted copies of their credentials. The Executive Body took note of the report on credentials.

## **III. Status of ratification of the Convention and its protocols**

7. The Executive Body considered the status of ratification, acceptance and approval of, or accession to the three latest, amended protocols to the Convention — namely the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol), the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The secretariat

reported that 20 Parties, including the European Union, had submitted informal reports on their progress in the ratification of those protocols. In its report, the European Union had provided information on each of its member States. Several Parties to the Convention included in their reports' information on the obstacles to ratification and support required to overcome them.

8. The secretariat informed that at the time of the session, 18 acceptances of amendments by Parties to the original Gothenburg Protocol were required for the entry into force of the Gothenburg Protocol as amended. Thirteen Parties had already accepted the amendments, nine Parties to the original Protocol had indicated that they would accept the amendments by the end of 2019.

9. The secretariat further noted that 23 acceptances of amendments to the Protocol on Heavy Metals were required for the entry into force of the amended version of that Protocol. Eighteen Parties to the original Protocol on Heavy Metals had already accepted the amendments, five had indicated their plans to accept the amendments by the end of 2019. Several Parties to the original Protocol had started preparing for acceptance but had not specified the expected date of acceptance in their informal reports.

10. In addition, the secretariat reported that, at the time of the session, 22 acceptances were required for the entry into force of each amendment to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Nineteen Parties had accepted amendments to annexes I to IV, VI and VIII (decision 2009/1), and sixteen Parties had accepted the amendments to annexes I and II to the Protocol (decision 2009/2). Four Parties had indicated their plans to accept the amendments to the Protocol in 2019.

11. Representatives of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan shared information on their progress in terms of ratification and on existing barriers to it, noting in particular the requirement to become a Party before 31 December 2019 for the application of flexible transitional arrangements. This deadline would not allow all countries in the region to benefit from flexibility in the application of limit values.

12. The Executive Body took note of the information presented by the secretariat on the status of ratification of the three latest protocols and the information shared by Parties on their progress in accepting amendments to and ratification of the protocols, existing barriers and needs. It requested the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-seventh session to further discuss the flexibilities contained in the amended Gothenburg Protocol, and barriers to ratification. The Executive Body encouraged the Parties to the original protocols to accept the amendments, so that they enter into force as early as possible. It furthermore encouraged all other Parties to ratify the protocols as amended.

13. In accordance with article 3, paragraph 11, of the original Gothenburg Protocol and article 3, paragraphs 11 and 11 bis, of the amended text thereof, Canada submitted commitments for automatic incorporation into annex II to the original and amended texts of the Protocol and relevant limit values for automatic incorporation into annexes IV, V, VI, VIII, X and XI to the Protocol as amended. The proposal had been circulated to Parties to the Protocol at least 90 days in advance of the session in accordance with article 13, paragraph 2, thereof. The Executive Body took note of the submission by Canada and of its intention to submit corrections to annex II under the original Gothenburg Protocol and its amended version, related to Canada. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to incorporate the information submitted into the text of the Protocol, both the original and the amended one.

## IV. Review of implementation of the 2018–2019 workplan

14. The chairs of the subsidiary bodies and the secretariat reported on the implementation of the 2018–2019 workplan (ECE/EB.AIR/140/Add.1).

### A. Science

15. The Chair of the Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) and the Chair of the Working Group on Effects reported on the implementation of item 1 (science) of the workplan and, in particular, on the outcomes of the fourth joint session of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva, 10–14 September 2018), including the conclusions and recommendations for the Executive Body’s consideration (see ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2018/2–ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2018/2, forthcoming). They noted the usefulness of the 2018 thematic sessions on: impact of ammonia emissions and mitigation strategies, heavy metals pollution, focus on mercury, and the lessons learned from the thematic session held in 2017.

16. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body highlighted the extensive reporting of black carbon emissions (by 41 Parties), and the improved emission reporting by countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (8 out of 9 Parties reported data for main pollutants). She presented the updated methods and procedures for the technical reviews of air pollutant emission inventories reported under the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/2018/8) and noted the positive experience in their application. She also presented the proposed methodology for reporting the condensable part of particulate matter (informal document No. 6) and informed about further work on this issue in 2019. She informed about the outcome of adjustment request reviews under the Gothenburg Protocol drawing attention to the case submitted by Spain. She updated on the work of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution, stressing its important role for the Convention and its outreach beyond the ECE region. She presented the highlights of the updated EMEP Monitoring Strategy to be adopted in 2020 noting the need for improved linkages between the different scales (from inter-continental to local) of EMEP activities.

17. The Chair of the Working Group on Effects highlighted the broad response by Parties to the ongoing calls for data issued by the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Materials, including Historical and Cultural Monuments, the establishment of a working group to ensure coherence between the methodological tools developed under the Convention and the World Health Organization with respect to health aspects of air pollution, a thematic report on the current extent of surface water acidification in Europe and North America (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2018/20–ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2018/13), and the establishment of a common Working Group on Effect portal. She presented plans for collaboration with the European Research Infrastructure Consortium “LifeWatch ERIC”, a proposal for workplan items for the Coordination Centre for Effects established at the German Federal Agency and a proposal by Sweden to transform the Joint Expert Group on Dynamic Modelling into a new programme centre.

18. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the reports of the Chair of the EMEP Steering Body and the Chair of the Working Group on Effects and welcomed the results achieved in the implementation of item 1 of the 2018–2019 workplan;

(b) Requested the ad hoc group of legal experts to clarify whether the phrase “the emission factor or methodology used for determining emissions from this source category at the time that the emission reduction commitment was set” in paragraph 2 bis (b) as inserted

by decision 2014/1 amending decision 2012/12, implies that, where the EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook is used, the 1999 (or 1996) version of this Guidebook should be used for the assessment of an adjustment;

(c) Agreed to initiate discussions and to develop a proposal on the approach for the transition to the post-2020 reduction commitments for Parties who have accepted the revised Gothenburg Protocol;

(d) Took note of the information provided by the European Union that the Party would no longer co-lead the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution and urged Parties to consider co-chairing the Task Force;

(e) Adopted decision 2018/1 on updated methods and procedures for the technical reviews of air pollutant emission inventories reported under the Convention as amended during the session;

(f) Took note of the proposed methodology for reporting the condensable part of particulate matter as contained in the informal document on Improving emissions of condensable particulate matter in the context of the Convention, and invited Parties to include information on the way they report condensable in the informative inventory reports in the 2019 reporting round; requested the EMEP Steering Body to consider this information, to finalize the methodology and to submit it to the Executive Body for its consideration at its fortieth session together with an assessment of the scientific consequences of its application;

(g) Approved the exchange of letters establishing a formal working arrangement between the Convention and the European Research Infrastructure Consortium "LifeWatch ERIC" and agreed with their signature; requested the Working Group on Effects and the International Cooperative Programme (ICP) centres to cooperate with 'Life Watch ERIC' in forthcoming calls for action;

(h) Agreed to include the following tasks for Coordination Centre for Effects (CCE) in the 2018-2019 workplan for the implementation of the Convention:

(i) Adapt existing IT Infrastructure and software at the German Environment Agency to fulfil data handling and communication tasks (2018-2019): set up of necessary storage capacities, set up of necessary web-space, review of the CCE background database on critical loads (CL), implementation of R-based calculations to perform CL calculations and mapping;

(ii) Develop framework and skills to improve the information exchange between CCE and National Focal Centres (NFCs; 2019): continue the collaboration on the "Call for data" on critical loads from 2017, develop new assessment tasks together with National Focal Centres, find common understanding for data-handling and presentation;

(iii) Start the collaboration with the ICP Modelling and Mapping and other bodies of the Convention (2018-2019): conduct consultation meetings between the Chair of the Task Force of ICP Modelling and Mapping, co-preparation and realisation of the ICP Modelling and Mapping meeting in Madrid (together with the Task Force of the ICP Modelling and Mapping), prepare and conduct meetings with the Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling/the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre -West, the ICP on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests (ICP Forests) and the ICP on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops (ICP Vegetation) to build up a cooperation network within the Convention.

(i) Took note of the proposal by Sweden to transform the Joint Expert Group on Dynamic Modelling into a new centre under the Working Group on Effects; requested the

Working Group on Effects and its Bureau to discuss the proposal at their meetings in 2019 and make a recommendation to the Executive Body for its consideration at its thirty-ninth session.

## **B. Policy**

19. A representative of the Netherlands presented the outcomes of the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop (Gothenburg, Sweden, 19–21 March 2018), which brought together policymakers, scientists and other stakeholders for informal discussions on future needs and directions of air pollution policy and science on an international scale under the theme “Clean Air for a Sustainable Future - Goals and Challenges”. The workshop resulted in a number of recommendations addressed to actors in the field of air pollution including countries, international organizations, conventions, and in particular the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its bodies.

20. The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review reported on the implementation of workplan item 2 (policy) and the outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Working Group (Geneva, 22–25 May 2018). She highlighted the recommendations made by the Working Group at its fifty-sixth session for consideration by the Executive Body, in particular those related to the implementation of the workplan and its proposed changes, the discussions on the draft revised long-term strategy, the outcomes of the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop, and conclusions drawn from the thematic session on residential wood combustion and air pollution. She also informed the Executive Body of other issues discussed by the Working Group, such as mandates of task forces reporting to the Working Group, implementation of the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air Initiative, progress in ratification of the protocols to the Convention and good practices to strengthen implementation of air-pollution related policies, strategies and measures.

21. Representatives of the European Union, Switzerland and the United States welcomed the outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review noting that the format of thematic sessions was a useful and valuable opportunity for Parties to share their detailed experience in the implementation of policies and measures. Representatives of the European Union and Switzerland welcomed the results of the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop expressing their appreciation to Sweden for its initiative. A representative of Germany informed Parties about the upcoming workshop for countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Berlin, 14–16 May 2019) to promote awareness and understanding of control techniques (workplan item 2.3.1).

22. The Co-Chair of the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling presented the proposal of establishing an expert panel on clean air in cities, in accordance with one of the recommendations from the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop, outlining the suggested tasks and expected deliverables.

23. The Executive Body took note of the report of the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review. It also took note of the recommendations of the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop, in particular:

(a) Acknowledged the need for a higher political profile of the Convention in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(b) Agreed to consider the introduction of additional flexibilities for countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, including for the ratification of protocols to the Convention in a possible future review;

(c) Agreed to consider the proposed future activities for the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen, the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues and the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling during the preparation of the 2020–2021 workplan;

(d) Welcomed the proposal for establishing an expert panel on clean air in cities under the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and encouraged Parties to nominate experts and co-chairs for it.

24. The Executive Body agreed with the proposal of the Working Group on Strategies and Review to include a joint workshop on air quality and climate interactions in agriculture in collaboration with the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the 2019 workplan with the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen as a lead body.

25. The Executive Body invited Parties to, and subsidiary bodies of, the Convention to submit views by 20 March 2019 on issues that should be discussed at the fifty-seventh session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in policy discussions pursuant to item 2.1.3 of the 2018–2019 workplan for the Convention taking into account relevant recommendations from the Saltjobaden VI workshop, the long-term strategy for 2020–2030, the report of the policy review group and the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention. In particular, the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects were invited to submit any additional scientific and technical information that they consider should inform the policy discussions. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to compile the submissions referred to above, and to make them available on the website at least six weeks in advance of the fifty-seventh session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

26. The Executive Body noted that the Working Group would hold the workshop under workplan item 2.2 as part of the Working Group's fifty-seventh session, in lieu of a thematic session, and agreed to combine that workshop with the workshop under workplan item 5.3.5. The Executive Body requested the Chair and the Bureau of the Working Group on Strategies and Review to elaborate a proposal for the combined workshop in consultation with the Bureau of the Executive Body.

27. The Executive Body took note of the conclusions of the thematic session on residential wood combustion and air pollution and invited Parties:

(a) To strengthen their air pollution abatement efforts in the small combustion (residential) sector;

(b) To take an integrated approach to air quality, energy efficiency and climate.

28. The Executive Body requested the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues and the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling to develop guidance in relation to prioritizing reductions of particulate matter that are also significant sources of black carbon.

29. The Executive Body agreed that the review and update of the control costs used and the report on the cost of control versus the cost of inaction under items 2.3.9 and 2.3.10 would be focused on countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It also agreed that the report referenced in workplan item 1.1.3.2 would focus on costs of inaction related to addressing ammonia and would be produced in collaboration with both the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen and the Task Force on Modelling and Mapping.

30. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to issue an informal consolidated version of the 2018–2019 workplan including the additional activities agreed by the Executive Body.

## C. Compliance

31. The Chair of the Implementation Committee reported on the implementation of workplan item 3 (compliance), presenting the outcomes of the Committee's fortieth and forty-first sessions (Madrid, 16–18 May 2018 and Geneva, 11–14 September 2018, respectively), as contained in the Committee's twenty-first report to the Executive Body (ECE/EB.AIR/2018/3). In 2018, the Committee closed seven cases of compliance with emission reduction obligations. Seven other cases considered in 2018, would continue to be reviewed by the Committee, together with one new referral made by the secretariat in 2018. The referral on compliance by Denmark with the Gothenburg Protocol (ref. 2/18 (NH<sub>3</sub>)) had been recalled due to an error in the emission database with apologies to Denmark.

32. The Committee Chair presented two draft decisions recommended by the Committee for adoption by the Executive Body: a draft decision concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants; and a draft decision on compliance by Latvia with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/2018/4.

33. The Chair of the Implementation Committee further informed the participants that the Committee had closed 36 cases of compliance by Parties with their reporting obligations under the protocols, and 8 cases would continue to be reviewed in 2019. The Committee Chair requested guidance from the Executive Body on whether the mandate of the Committee should be expanded to include the review of compliance by Parties to the Convention with the exchange of available information under article 8 and in accordance with decision 2013/4. The Committee had not proceeded with reviewing 14 new referrals regarding the exchange of available information under article 8 of the Convention awaiting clarification from the Executive Body on its mandate.

34. The Executive Body took note of the report of the Implementation Committee presented by the Committee Chair. It adopted:

(a) Decision 2018/2 concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with the Protocol on Heavy Metals (ref. 24/13 (Hg), 6/17 (Cd)) and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref.4/17 (dioxin/furan, PAH, HCB));

(b) Decision 2018/3 concerning compliance by Latvia with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 3/10 HCB).

35. The Executive Body:

(a) Requested the Committee to continue to review compliance by Parties with their reporting obligations under the Protocols in force, as specified in decision 2012/25, para. 3;

(b) Stressed the importance of the quality and completeness of emission data for the work of the Convention and urged Parties to submit their data in line with the protocol requirements and available information under article 8 of the Convention;

(c) Agreed to revisit the mandate of the Committee during the 2020–2021 workplan cycle;

(d) Re-elected Austria (Manfred Ritter), France (Jean-Pierre Chang) and Norway (Alice Gaustad) for a fourth term; Belgium (Wendy Altobello), Croatia (Igor Vukovic), Serbia (Nebojsa Redzic), Spain (Martin Fernandez Diez-Picazo), Sweden (Petra Hagström) and the United States (Jennifer Landside) for a second term on the Implementation Committee;

(e) Re-elected Manfred Ritter as Chair of the Implementation Committee.

#### **D. Capacity-building to promote ratification and implementation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia**

36. The Chair of the Coordinating Group on the promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Coordinating Group) informed Parties of its activities, in particular the joint workshop co-organized with the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues back-to-back with the annual meeting of the Coordinating Group (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, 19–20 September 2018). The Chair of the Coordinating Group stressed the need to:

(a) Continue exchanging experience and strengthen capacity of the target countries in the implementation of best available techniques; and

(b) Consider additional flexible mechanisms for stepwise ratification of the protocols to the Convention.

37. The secretariat presented the capacity-building activities it had organized in 2018, which included:

(a) Workshops organized in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Uzbekistan to improve the skills of national experts in emission reporting in accordance with the requirements of the Convention;

(b) Assessment of national air quality management policies and legislation, support in drafting national action plans for ratification and analysis of costs and benefits of ratification in Georgia and Ukraine;

(c) Support to participation of experts from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in sub-regional workshops and meetings, including the Saltsjobaden VI workshop, the special session at the annual meeting of the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections (25–27 April 2018), the workshop on the GAINS (Greenhouse Gas - Air Pollution Interactions and Synergies) model to develop cost-effective emission control strategies (Laxenburg, Austria, 15–19 October 2018) and the joint workshop of the Coordinating Group and the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues.

38. Representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine noted with appreciation the continued support provided by the secretariat, which resulted in increased visibility of the Convention at the decision-making level and improved capacity of national experts. They pointed to the need for further support in order to:

(a) Improve national emission inventories and calculate gridded emissions;

(b) Use the GAINS model and make emission projections;

(c) Identify gaps in national legislation with respect to the requirements of the protocols;

(d) Design action plans for ratification and implementation of the three latest protocols.

39. A representative of the Russian Federation noted the difference in existing approaches to provision of support to countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. These included general support to all countries of the sub-region to achieve the capacity-building related objectives set under the Convention, and contributions earmarked for specific countries or goals. He further noted that the Russian Federation was following the former approach and encouraged other Parties providing their contributions not to single out countries that needed support.

40. Representatives of the European Union and Switzerland welcomed the progress the capacity-building had delivered in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Noting the importance of the advances being made, the representative of the European Union considered it essential to continue the ongoing work and to consider developing new approaches, such as additional flexibilities or stepwise approach to ratification and implementation. The representative of Switzerland reaffirmed the Party's continued support to the countries in Central Asia and Azerbaijan in ratification and implementation of the Convention and its protocols.

41. A representative of Belarus informed participants of its readiness to ratify the Gothenburg Protocol and expressed its thanks to the European Union for support provided to Belarus in ratification and implementation of the key protocols to the Convention.

42. The Co-Chair of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues expressed appreciation to the organizers of the joint workshop held together with the meeting of the Coordinating Group, and to experts from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia for taking part in the work of the Task Force.

43. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the reports of the Chair of the Coordinating Group and the secretariat and noted with appreciation the contribution of the capacity-building programme managed by the secretariat and other bilateral projects to increase ratification and improve implementation of the protocols to the Convention in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(b) Noted the needs and requests for further support expressed by countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and requested the secretariat to continue to support them in their efforts towards ratification and implementation of the Convention and its protocols;

(c) Expressed its appreciation to Parties providing contributions to support capacity-building and the participation of delegates and experts from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in the meetings under the Convention.

## **E. Communication and outreach**

44. The secretariat reported on workplan item 5 (communication and outreach), presenting on the activities carried out by the secretariat to promote the Convention. A representative of Switzerland expressed its appreciation to the secretariat for its efforts and drew Parties' attention to the need for continued support to cover related travel costs. A representative of the European Union highlighted the continued importance of raising the visibility of the Convention and expressed support for the related outreach and communication activities carried out by the secretariat. The Executive Body took note of the provided information.

45. The Executive Body discussed the proposals for the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Convention in 2019, as presented by the secretariat in line with workplan item 5.3.4. It agreed to mark the anniversary with the following events during its thirty-ninth session (Geneva, 9–13 December 2019) or in the margins of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (Geneva, 25–29 November 2019), subject to available resources and considering time restrictions:

(a) A global event on clean air;

(b) A ceremonial side-event with awards;

(c) A simulation exercise for emerging leaders in the field of air quality;

- (d) A segment involving high-level representatives.
46. The Executive Body agreed to the proposals to develop communications and promotional materials to raise awareness about air pollution and the Convention, in celebration of its fortieth anniversary, subject to available resources:
- (a) An anniversary publication or brochure, similar to the publication that was developed for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention;
  - (b) A video.
47. The Executive Body also:
- (a) Requested the Executive Body Bureau with external assistance and the secretariat to further elaborate the proposal and present it at the fifty-seventh session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review;
  - (b) Requested the secretariat to circulate a call for contributions;
  - (c) Invited Parties to provide voluntary contributions (cash and in-kind) to fund the anniversary activities estimated at US\$ 34,500;
  - (d) Invited Parties to promote the fortieth anniversary through activities organized at the national level.
48. The secretariat presented a proposal on the establishment of a system of national focal points with a view to facilitating official communication between the Parties and the secretariat. The Executive Body took note of the provided information and adopted decision 2018/4 on designation of focal points under the Convention.

## **V. Revised long-term strategy for the Convention**

49. The Chair of the Executive Body recalled the establishment of the ad-hoc policy review group of experts on the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention (policy review group) by the Executive Body at its thirty-fifth session (Geneva, 2–4 May 2016), subsequent decision 2017/4 instructing the policy review group to elaborate a draft revised long-term strategy, in consultation with the Bureau of the Executive Body, using as guidance the elements agreed by the Executive Body at its thirty-seventh session (ECE/EB.AIR/140, annex III), to submit it for consideration by the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-sixth session and to report thereon to the Executive Body at its thirty-eighth session. She further recalled the comments and recommendations by the Working Group on Strategies and Review (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/120), as well as consultations with the Steering Body for EMEP, the Working Group on Effects (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2018/2 and ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2018/2) and the Bureau of the Executive Body in September 2018, based on which a revised draft had been prepared by the policy review group and submitted for consideration by the Executive Body.
50. The Chair of the policy review group presented the draft revised long-term strategy (ECE/EB.AIR/2018/1/Rev.1). She also introduced proposals of the policy review group for further action in response to the Saltjobaden VI workshop recommendations not yet included in the draft revised long-term strategy, as contained in informal document no. 4.
51. The Executive Body welcomed the proposed draft strategy and expressed its thanks to the policy review group for its work. Having introduced some amendments to the text, the Executive Body adopted decision 2018/5 on the long-term strategy for the Convention for 2020–2030 and beyond.

52. The Executive Body took note of the proposals of the policy review group for further action in response to the Saltjobaden VI workshop recommendations and agreed that the relevant bodies of the Convention should take the workshop's recommendations into account in the development of their 2020–2021 workplan, along with the long-term recommendations as contained in the report of the policy review group (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2017/3 and ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2017/3/Corr.1) and the table of recommendations by the policy review group (informal document no.2) presented to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-fifth session (Geneva, 31 May–2 June 2017).

## **VI. Revised mandates of task forces and centres under the Convention**

53. The Chairs of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects presented the revised mandates for the task forces and centres under the Convention as contained in documents ECE/EB.AIR/2018/5, ECE/EB.AIR/2018/6 and ECE/EB.AIR/2018/7.

54. The Executive Body adopted decision 2018/6 on the revised mandate of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen and decision 2018/7 on the revised mandate of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues.

55. The Executive Body took note of the draft revised mandates for the scientific centres and task forces under EMEP and WGE, as contained in documents ECE/EB.AIR/2018/6 and ECE/EB.AIR/2018/7 and adopted them provisionally with amendments made during the session. It further requested the secretariat to finalize them and submit draft decisions for their formal adoption at its next session.

56. The Executive Body decided that the Coordinating Centre for Effects would continue to operate under the current mandate, specified in EB.AIR/WG.1/2000/4, annex VII and requested the secretariat to take this into account when establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with the centre for 2019, as well as the specific tasks approved under para. 18 (h) above.

## **VII. Information-sharing on activities relevant to the Convention**

### **(a) Activities of international organizations relevant to the Convention**

57. A representative of WHO presented the outcomes of the First Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health and (Geneva, 30 October to 1 November 2018). She also informed about the priorities of the Global Platform on Air Quality and Health and the update of the air quality guidelines. She highlighted health and economic impact assessment tools, such as AirQ+ in the framework of the Urban Health Initiative and the the BreatheLife communications campaign.

58. A representative of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition provided information on progress in 2018, namely, on the Supporting National Action and Planning on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants initiative, the launch of the regional assessment for the Asia-Pacific region, updates from the sectoral initiatives, and the Solution Centre.

59. A representative of the secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants provided information on the global monitoring plan and on effectiveness evaluation of the Convention. She noted increased global capacity for monitoring of persistent organic pollutants through strategic partnerships, ongoing efforts to update

guidance document for the global monitoring plan and recommendations for listing new substances in the annexes to the Convention in 2019.

60. A representative of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury presented on the main outcomes of the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 19–23 November 2018), including the adoption of guidance documents and decisions on the effectiveness evaluation framework.

61. A representative of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific's East and North-East Asia Office and secretariat to the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation presented on the transboundary impacts of air pollution in North-East Asia the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership which was launched in October 2018.

62. Representatives of the Joint Research Centre of the European Union presented on air quality co-benefits of long-term climate policies, highlighting the European Union strategy for long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and a report on global trends of methane emissions and their impacts on ozone concentrations.

63. A representative of WMO highlighted the outcomes of the seventieth session of the WMO Executive Council, including a decision on Integrated Health Services, to be implemented together with WHO. She also informed about an assessment of low-cost sensor applications, a new programme to provide integrated services for megacities and large urban complexes, recent activities of the Integrated Global Greenhouse Gas Information System, and the Global Atmosphere Watch network.

64. A representative of the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention and Environmental Protection Associations highlighted the eighteenth World Clean Air Congress (Istanbul, Turkey, 23–27 September 2019). He also presented a commitment to the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air Initiative and a proposal for cooperation with the Convention.

65. A representative of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme highlighted upcoming activities in the years 2019 to 2021, including an integrated assessment of short-lived climate pollutants, an assessment of mercury in the Arctic and work on climate trends and patterns.

66. The Executive Body took note of information provided.

**(b) Event on clean air globally**

67. In a special informal segment of the session, representatives of countries, organizations and networks in various regions discussed cooperation on clean air. They discussed possible options for further enhancing broader geographic (interregional) cooperation and building on existing national and regional activities.

68. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the discussions during the event on "Clean air globally". It requested the rapporteur, in consultation with the secretariat, to prepare a summary of the informal session for inclusion in the report of its thirty-eighth session (see annex);

(b) Agreed to establish a forum for collaboration on reducing air pollution and requested the Bureau of the Executive Body to further elaborate this proposal for discussion at the fifty-seventh session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the fifth joint session of the Steering Body to EMEP and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva, 9–13 September 2019), with a view to making a recommendation for the consideration of the Executive Body at its thirty-ninth session;

(c) Requested the secretariat to create a page on the Convention website on international cooperation to reduce air pollution.

## **VIII. Financial requirements for implementation of the Convention**

69. The secretariat introduced the note on the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/2018/2) and informed the Executive Body about the status of Parties' contributions to the trust funds for financing the Convention's implementation in 2018–2019 and the use of resources in 2017. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body presented the in-depth review of the EMEP budget, covered by mandatory contributions, and annotated EMEP budget proposal for 2019 (informal document no.3). The secretariat provided information on the amount of contributions made by Parties to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities in the 2009–2017 period, and in 2018 as of 30 November, estimated at US\$783,913.

70. With respect to the financing of EMEP activities, the Executive Body:

(a) Decided on the detailed use of resources in 2019 as set out in table 2 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2018/2;

(b) Supported the Steering Body's call on the Parties to the Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP Protocol) to consider making additional voluntary contributions, in kind or in cash through the trust fund, to ensure that the work in 2019 could be accomplished as foreseen in the 2018–2019 workplan for the implementation of the Convention;

(c) Requested the Steering Body, with the assistance of its Bureau, to present the details of the 2020 budget for approval by the Executive Body at its thirty-ninth session;

(d) Urged Parties that had not yet done so to pay their 2018 contributions in cash to the trust fund and, in 2019, to pay their contributions so that they reached the trust fund in the first half of the year;

(e) Urged Parties with arrears to pay them in full to the trust fund;

(f) Requested the secretariat to present a revised annex to the EMEP Protocol and a revised scale of mandatory contributions for the period 2020–2021, based on the most recent United Nations scale of assessments, for consideration at the thirty-ninth session in 2019.

71. With respect to effects-oriented activities, the Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities for 2018 and welcomed the payments made, but also expressed disappointment at the lack of response by many Parties;

(b) Urged all Parties that had not yet done so to consider providing the recommended contributions to the trust fund for the financing of core activities without undue delay;

(c) Decided that the essential international coordination costs for financing the core activities of the Convention and its protocols, other than those covered by the EMEP Protocol, shall be US\$2,152,700 in 2019, and shall provisionally be US\$2,152,700 in 2020 and US\$2,152,700 in 2021;

(d) Invited the secretariat to provide information on the amount of contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities as of 30 November 2019 at its thirty-ninth session of the Executive Body and to use the amount as a basis to co-fund the effects-oriented activities in 2020;

(e) Requested the secretariat to inform Parties of the recommended contributions to the trust fund to meet the 2019 budget, inviting them to make them as agreed in revised decision 2002/1;

(f) Encouraged Parties to make the recommended contributions to the trust fund before 30 November each year;

(g) Noted with appreciation the essential support provided to the Convention and its bodies by lead countries, countries hosting centres and those organizing meetings, and countries that funded activities of their national focal centres/points and also the active participation of national experts;

(h) Adopted decision 2018/8 on amendment to decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities;

(i) Requested the secretariat to present a revised recommended scale of contributions for the period 2020–2021, based on the most recent United Nations scale of assessments, for consideration at its thirty-ninth session in 2019;

(j) In view of the establishment of a formal working arrangement for collaboration, approved the contributions from LifeWatch ERIC to the core activities under the Convention in line with its decision 2002/1, para. 3.

72. With respect to promotion and implementation of the Convention, the Executive Body:

(a) Reiterated its support to this element of the work programme, as an increase in implementation of the Convention in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia is crucial for the future of the Convention;

(b) Invited all Parties, but especially those that led task forces and expert groups, to promote activities such as special workshops in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and to collaborate with the secretariat in developing and carrying out such projects;

(c) Welcomed the contributions to the trust fund and thanked those countries that had contributed.

## **IX. Election of officers**

73. The Chair recalled that in accordance with rule 17 of the rules of procedure (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, decision 2010/9), the Executive Body had re-elected its Chair and two Vice-Chairs and elected a Vice-Chair at its thirty-sixth session (Geneva, 15–16 December 2016). In accordance with rule 21, it also had elected a Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review at the same session.

74. The secretariat informed participants of the following nominations: Anna Engleryd (Sweden), for Chair of the Executive Body; Richard Ballaman (Switzerland), Sergey Vasiliev (Russian Federation) and Katherine Weber (United States) for Vice-Chairs of the Executive Body; and Jennifer Kerr (Canada) for Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

75. A representative of Ukraine informed participants that Ukraine was not supporting the nomination made by the Russian Federation, as the Russian Federation had not followed the

provisions under articles 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Convention with respect to Ukraine. A representative of the United States requested more information about these concerns. A representative of the Russian Federation expressed his objection to the statement by the representative of Ukraine and requested clarification which was not given. The Executive Body took note of the interventions by the delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

76. The Executive Body re-elected Anna Engleryd (Sweden) as its Chair for a third term. It re-elected Katherine Weber (United States) for a second term, Richard Ballaman (Switzerland) for a third term and Sergey Vasiliev (Russian Federation) for a fourth term, as Vice-Chairs. It re-elected Jennifer Kerr (Canada) as Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review for a second term.

## **X. Other business**

77. Representatives of Canada provided information on the workshop on ammonia (Ottawa, 10 October 2018), which brought together policy makers and academia to discuss impacts of ammonia emissions on environment and the mitigation approaches used in North America and other regions. They also informed participants of the outcomes of the Global Methane Forum (Toronto, Canada, 16–18 April 2018) organized in cooperation with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and encouraged participation in the Global Methane Challenge to be launched in 2019.

78. Representatives of Slovakia and the European Union provided information on the second Clean Air Forum (Bratislava, 28–29 November 2019), which would focus on three themes: air quality and energy, air quality and agriculture, and clean air funding mechanisms, and invited Parties to participate.

79. A representative of EFCA informed the Executive Body of the event “Integrating action for clean air and climate protection” (Katowice, Poland, 7 December 2018) co-organized with the Polish Economic Chamber for Sustainable Development in partnership with the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention and Environmental Protection Associations during the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. He further informed Parties of the seventh International Symposium on Ultrafine Particles (Brussels, 15–16 May 2019) organized by EFCA.

## **XI. Adoption of decisions taken at the thirty-eighth session**

80. The Executive Body adopted its decisions and agreed on the recommendations of its thirty-eighth session.

## Annex

### Chair's summary of the Global event on clean air

#### A. Introduction

1. The Global event on clean air was organized with the objective to discuss cooperation on clean air. Representatives of countries, organizations and networks from different regions shared experience in reducing air pollution with a focus on common challenges, policy instruments and best practices. Possible options to further enhance inter-regional information sharing and cooperation, building on existing national and regional activities were discussed.
2. The present summary was prepared by the rapporteur and the secretariat.
3. The global event was opened by the Executive Secretary of ECE, who emphasized the importance for enhanced cooperation at the global level to reduce transboundary air pollution, including in the ECE region. Recalling the findings of the 2016 scientific assessment report of the Convention and the outcomes of discussions under United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), she drew attention to the need for further sharing of existing knowledge through regional and inter-regional cooperation.
4. A representative from UNEP highlighted efforts undertaken to address air pollution globally through the implementation of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/8 on preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally, including the establishment of a global air quality programme, which looks at air monitoring networks, air quality management strategies, trainings, awareness raising and communications.
5. A representative from WHO reflected on the outcomes of the First WHO Conference on Air Pollution and Health, which clearly showed the need for reducing air pollution to prevent health impacts. She stressed that cooperation should be built on existing networks and agreements.

#### B. Air pollution as a global problem – views from the regions and proposals for cooperation

##### Main challenges

6. Country participants reported that high levels of particulate matter are a major challenge in their countries, in some cases originating in other countries, thus constituting a transboundary problem. Some participants also reported on high ozone concentrations in cities. While health impacts are the main drivers in most countries, protecting ecosystems is also a priority in some countries. In some regions where the population is growing rapidly, exposure to air pollution, especially in urban areas and in poorer neighborhoods, will dramatically increase in the years to come. Air pollution is thus becoming a social equity problem. In some regions, air pollution, particularly indoor air pollution, predominantly affects women and children. The main sources of pollution identified by panelists are transport, energy and industrial sectors, forest fires, fires from agricultural practice, volcanos, dust, open burning, cooking and heating, and indoor air pollution. Imports of fuels and used vehicles that only comply with low emission standards also constitute a major problem in some regions.

7. Participants reported that monitoring programmes are available in some countries, but that they are sometimes fragmented, not covering all regions within a country, and that improved monitoring data is needed. For some regions, participants noted a lack of emission data and weak legal frameworks to regulate air pollution. Participants also reported that capacity building and a lack of human resources in the field of air pollution is a problem.

#### **Strategies to fight air pollution**

8. Participants agreed that comprehensive mitigation strategies were necessary, which need to include coordinated actions to reduce greenhouse gases and air pollutants. Regional and national plans to reduce emissions are needed, which should be complemented by enhanced transboundary cooperation. International cooperation in the framework of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the WMO Global Atmospheric Watch, the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (HTAP) and the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention and Environmental Protection Associations (IUAPPA) has already been helpful to advance the issue of air pollution. Bilateral cooperation between countries was also highlighted to advance the reduction of air pollution.

9. Some participants reported on sectoral measures, such as higher fuel quality standards and cleaner public transport such as electric buses and those running on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

10. Several participants agreed that additional technical cooperation and capacity building was needed, specifically in the areas of monitoring, modelling, source apportionment studies, air quality forecasting, and technology transfer. Adequate resources were needed to fund monitoring. Some participants reported that they were already experimenting with low-cost sensors, while they also acknowledged that these devices could only complement other monitoring solutions. Expert communication to the public on air pollution issues, specifically on the long-range transport of air pollutants, and awareness raising was also considered key. In this context, participants highlighted principle 10 of the Rio Declaration – which sets out the principles of environmental democracy – and the right to know about the quality of the air in a given region. Since economic development and air quality is closely linked, regional economic development agencies were considered key partners in working on solutions to reduce air pollution.

#### **Areas for international cooperation**

11. Participants agreed that the Air Convention could act as a model for cooperation to address air pollution also in other regions. Specifically, the technical infrastructure on emissions inventories, modelling, and monitoring and tools for risk assessment allowing for evaluation of improvements on environmental protection and effectiveness of air pollution policies could be used as a model in other regions. Cooperation with the Convention could be enhanced on both the science and the policy level.

12. Participants also agreed that a forum for collaboration on air pollution with countries, sub-national governments and organizations could be useful. The forum could begin with information and knowledge-sharing and use existing experiences and structures and determine next steps together. Participants suggested that the focus should be on integrated solutions to avoid trade-offs.

### **C. Batumi Action for Cleaner Air as an instrument for cooperation and learning**

13. The Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA), an initiative that was launched at the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016), provides an opportunity to inspire voluntary actions and promote enhanced collaboration.

Governments are invited to voluntarily commit to specific actions in the areas of: monitoring activities and emissions inventories; national action programmes that reduce air pollution; improvement of public awareness; and capacity-building and technical support.

14. Participants gave examples of their experiences with the BACA initiative. The participant from Germany highlighted the country's experience with bilateral projects on best available techniques under the BACA initiative. She highlighted that approaches were always tailored to the requirements of the partner countries. The participant from Georgia reported on the commitments in the areas of monitoring, public transport, access to data, electronic reporting for stationary sources, fuel transport and electric vehicles. The participant from the European Investment Bank highlighted opportunities to finance projects in the areas of sustainable transport and renewable energy that could tie in with the objectives in the BACA initiatives. Participants agreed that voluntary approaches were effective in stimulating actions to reduce air pollution. They also confirmed that the BACA initiative had helped raise awareness among policymakers.

#### **D. The way forward: how to organize international cooperation?**

15. Participants discussed how to move forward on international cooperation to reduce air pollution. They also discussed aspects of a forum for cooperation at the global level. Participants agreed that cooperation on science should build on the existing knowledge base and make use of regional centres and networks (e.g. the centers of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions). Concretely, participants encouraged scientists from other regions to participate in the Convention's scientific groups.

16. Participants pointed out that guidelines of the Air Convention could be used as a reference for developing mechanisms and tools in other regions. As a practical step, documents and tools of the Convention could be translated into other languages, such as, Spanish. Participants highlighted that while the diversity of approaches in different regions could be challenging in building up the forum, it could also be an asset. In this context, the idea of a global framework convention was also discussed.

17. Participants considered that a forum for cooperation at the global level could be steered by the Air Convention in cooperation with other key stakeholders. Specifically, the forum should coordinate with UNEP to link to the platform referenced in resolution 3/8 on preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally. Participants pointed out that several activities could be organized jointly, specifically on science, the cost of measures to reduce air pollution and a global assessment.

18. In terms of concrete next steps, participants suggested to reach out to countries and organizations not present at the session and to receive political buy-in for the proposal on the forum. The forum could begin with information and knowledge-sharing and use existing experiences and structures. It would need to link air pollution to the topics of climate change, biodiversity and ecosystems. Specifically, a global forum for cooperation would need to closely involve the climate change community and work on the one atmosphere approach. Participants considered that thematic sessions and workshops on energy and agriculture could be useful to raise awareness beyond the air community.

19. It was also highlighted that all dimensions of the globality of the air pollution problem should be considered at the same time, i.e. that there are similar problems in different countries that can be solved using the same measures; that the long-range transport of air pollution emitted in one country can affect another country; and that the implementation of national policies will have implications for other countries in so far as they can lead to shifting environmental problems to another country.

20. Participants agreed that the forum could spur regional action and cooperation globally, promote science and technical cooperation and a data driven approach to air quality management.

---