



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 April 2019

Original: English

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

Compliance Committee

Seventh meeting

Geneva, 1 and 2 April 2019

Report of the Compliance Committee on its seventh meeting

Introduction

1. The seventh meeting of the Compliance Committee under 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 (Aarhus Convention) took place in Geneva, on 1 and 2 April 2019. All nine Committee members were present at the meeting: Mr. Merab Barbakadze (Georgia); Mr. Nicolas Encausse (France); Mr. Akos Fehervary (Hungary); Ms. Nataša Kacic-Bartulovic (Croatia); Mr. Fritz Kroiss (Austria); Mr. Juan Luis Martin Ortega (Spain) (Chair); Mr. Gor Movsisyan (Armenia) (Vice-Chair); Ms. Azemine Shakiri (North Macedonia) and Mr. Dmytro Skrylnikov (Ukraine). The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Juan Luis Martin Ortega and Mr. Gor Movsisyan.

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

2. Mr. Gor Movsisyan (Vice-Chair) opened the meeting.
3. Three members of the Committee elected for the first time at the third session of the Meeting of the Parties (Budva, Montenegro, 15 September 2017), Mr. Nicolas Encausse, Ms. Azemine Shakiri and Mr. Juan Luis Martin Ortega, signed solemn declarations pursuant to paragraph 10 of the annex to decision I/2 (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add.1)¹ that they would perform their functions as members impartially and conscientiously.
4. The Compliance Committee adopted its agenda, as set out in document ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2019/1.

¹ Available at <http://unece.org/env/pp/mopp1.html#/>.



II. Election of Officers

5. The Compliance Committee elected Mr. Juan Luis Martin Ortega as Chair and re-elected Mr. Gor Movsisyan as Vice-Chair, by consensus, from among the members of the Committee, in accordance with paragraph 8 of the annex to decision I/2.

III. Submissions, referrals and communications

6. The secretariat reported that there had been no submissions, referrals or communications since the Committee's sixth meeting. The Committee took note of the information provided by the secretariat.

IV. National pollutant release and transfer registers in the European Union member States

7. The Committee considered a report by Mr. Nicolas Encausse, the rapporteur appointed by the Committee at its sixth meeting to further explore the issue of whether European Union member States that were Parties to the Protocol were required under the Protocol to introduce their own national pollutant release and transfer registers to supplement what was done at the European Union level.

8. Pursuant to the Committee's mandate under paragraph 14 (b) of the annex to decision I/2 of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add.1) to examine compliance issues not referred to in paragraph 13 of decision I/2, the Committee considered the matter and agreed, on a preliminary basis, that the above-mentioned issue might lead to potential non-compliance by Parties concerned and agreed to continue its deliberations with a view to completing its draft findings and, as appropriate, recommendations. Mr. Dmytro Skrylnikov was appointed as curator for the case to prepare draft findings for the Committee's consideration.

V. Development of the Protocol

9. Pursuant to the decision regarding the development of the Protocol taken by the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties at its sixth meeting (Geneva, 9 November 2018), the Committee discussed the revised draft text of the Protocol prepared by the secretariat on the basis of comments provided through recent consultations carried out by the Bureau with interested countries and organizations. The Committee suggested a number of textual amendments and provided comments on the document. It was agreed that the Committee would provide any additional comments to the secretariat before 11 April 2019.

10. The Committee noted that the following two issues should be taken into consideration in the work on the development of the Protocol: (a) new technological and other relevant advancements within the lengthy time frame foreseen for completing the work; and (b) ensuring high standards, but at the same time, sufficient flexibility, so that the Protocol's provisions could be implemented by countries with different national circumstances, such as, for example, specificity of institutional frameworks and technical systems. The Committee also agreed that the work on the development of the Protocol, initiated by the Working Group of the Parties, constituted a necessary and timely approach to the implementation of article 6 (2) of the Protocol.

VI. Reporting format

11. The Committee considered the issue of facilitating preparation of national reports on the implementation of the Protocol by Parties, based on a proposal prepared by the secretariat. It was agreed that the Committee would provide possible additional comments on the matter to the secretariat before 15 May 2019. The Committee requested the secretariat, when finalized, to use explanatory notes for the questions for reporting in the

online reporting tool, as relevant, in order to improve visualization of those questions, thus assisting Parties in preparing more comprehensive reports for the next reporting cycle.

VII. Other business

12. The Committee discussed the status of efforts to establish pollutant release and transfer registers in different Parties and opportunities for Parties to seek the advice of the Compliance Committee regarding the development of such registers. The Committee reconfirmed its commitment to continue supporting Parties in their efforts to establish pollutant release and transfer registers.

VIII. Adoption of the outcomes of the meeting

13. The Committee adopted the outcomes presented by the Chair at the meeting and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to finalize the report and incorporate the adopted outcomes.
