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To: Heads of Delegation of the Working Group on Strategies and Review

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the fifty-sixth session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review that will take place from Tuesday, May 22 to Friday, May 25, 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland. The session will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday and is scheduled to conclude on Friday at 6:00 p.m. Official documents are available on the following website:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45535>

As has been done in the past, I am writing to provide information as to how the session will unfold and to bring to your attention a few key issues for this session, for which you should be prepared. I apologize for not getting this letter out sooner, but trust it will still inform your preparations.

As an overview, the key task of the Working Group is to provide recommendations to the Executive Body (EB) related to the proposed updated long-term strategy for the Convention (LTS). We will also discuss progress related to the implementation of the 2018-2019 workplan as well as updated mandates for the Task Forces on Techno-Economic Issues and Reactive Nitrogen. Finally, we will share information on the implementation of the Convention, including in a special thematic session on residential wood and solid fuel combustion and air pollution, focusing on particulate matter and black carbon.

Item 3: Progress in the implementation of the 2018-2019 workplan

Under this agenda item, we will get a report from the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (TFRN) and the Task Force on Techno-Economic Issues (TFTEI) on their progress in implementing the 2018-2019 workplan. In preparation, please review the reports from the task forces contained in ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2018/2 and ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2018/1. Under this agenda item, the Working Group will also consider draft updated mandates for the task forces (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2018/4), which reflect their main areas of activity, taking into account the recommendations of the ad hoc policy review group of experts (the PRG) on the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention.

The Working Group should also discuss progress in implementing the policy-related items of the workplan that have been tasked to the WGSR, in particular items 2.1.3 and 2.2.1 that relate to policy discussions in the framework of the WGSR in preparation for a future review of the Gothenburg Protocol and a workshop to foster increased collaboration on air pollution with partners beyond the ECE region.

Item 4: Update of the long-term strategy for the Convention

As you know, the PRG was mandated at EB37 to update the LTS, in consultation with the EB Bureau, based on guidance provided by the EB at that session as well as comments by Parties at the session (ECE/EB.AIR/140 and its annex III).

The Working Group is to consider the updated LTS (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2018/3), and make recommendations to the EB for consideration and adoption at its 38th session as appropriate. Please come prepared to come to agreement as the Working Group on recommendations to EB38, including specific text changes.

Item 6: Information sharing by Parties on the implementation of the Convention

This agenda item is organized into two sub-items. Under (a), the Working Group will be invited to exchange information on national, subregional and regional policies and strategies for the control of major air pollutants in accordance with article 8 of the Convention.

May 24th is devoted entirely to sub-item (b), which is the special thematic session on residential wood and solid fuel combustion and air pollution, focusing on particulate matter and black carbon. This looks to be an informative and exciting day that includes information from Parties, stakeholders, and other relevant international organizations about experiences, good practices, technological solutions, and challenges/opportunities.

This session may also serve to highlight where further consideration of action by the Convention may be needed, such as possible mechanisms for Parties to prioritize addressing source categories known to emit high amounts of black carbon. A Chair's summary of the thematic session will also be prepared and annexed to the report of the WGSR56, and if appropriate, the Working Group can include conclusions of the session in its report.

A concept note on the thematic session and a draft programme have been sent out by the secretariat. The final programme will be available on the website in the near future.

Other issues

Election of Officers

The Working Group is expected to elect its vice-chairs for 2019-2020. I ask that you nominate a delegate for these roles before 15 May.

Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)

As agreed at the last session, Parties will be invited to update on progress in implementing their BACA commitments and/or provide information on new commitments they may have undertaken.

Saltsjöbaden VI

The outcomes and recommendations of the Saltsjöbaden VI workshop held in Gothenburg, Sweden, on March 19-21, 2018 will be presented. Delegates may also wish to consider the outcomes of this forward-looking workshop as they prepare their comments on the LTS. The summary is available as an informal document here:

<http://saltsjobaden6.ivl.se/download/18.2aa2697816097278807f025/1524748535332/Main%20recommendations%20Saltsj%C3%B6baden%20VI%2026%20April.pdf>

As always, I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting and to productive and engaging discussions during the session.

Yours truly,



Jennifer Kerr