

**Proposals by Parties for amendments to the rules of procedure for sessions of the Executive Body for the Convention (compilation by the secretariat)**

**Proposal by the European Union**

The Rules of Procedure (RoP) for sessions of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) were adopted by Decision 2010/19 and amended by Decision 2013/1 by the Executive Body (EB).

The EB discussed during its 39<sup>th</sup> session a proposal by the EU and its Member States as well as inputs presented orally by Canada. Based on this, the EB referred further discussion to WGSR 58<sup>th</sup> session and requested the WGSR to report back at 40<sup>th</sup> session of the EB. All Parties were invited to submit their proposals for amendments to the RoP by 15 March 2020 to the UNECE Secretariat.

In reply to this call, the EU and its Member States hereby submit the following **proposals for amendments of Rules 17 and 28**:

**Rule 17:**

1. The Executive Body shall have a chair and three vice-chairs elected by the representatives of the Parties present at a session. The term of office for a chair or vice-chair shall be ~~two~~ three years, commencing at the end of the session at which the officer is elected, ~~except that the first term of office for the first vice-chairs elected under these rules shall be three years.~~ Officers shall be eligible for re-election, but may not serve more than two consecutive terms unless the Executive Body decides otherwise.

**Rule 28:**

1. Without prejudice to paragraph 2 of this rule, proposals and amendments to proposals shall normally be presented in writing and handed to the secretariat, which shall circulate copies to the Parties. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any session unless copies of it have been circulated to delegations not later than 24 hours in advance. The Executive Body may, however, on a proposal from the Chair, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments to proposals or of procedural motions even though those amendments or motions have not been circulated or have been circulated only the same day.
2. Proposals for amending the Convention or its Protocols shall be submitted to the secretariat at least four months before the session at which they are proposed for discussion and possible adoption so that the secretariat can communicate them to the Parties in the official languages of the UNECE at least ninety days before the session, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention and the relevant articles of its Protocols.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, proposals for amending the Convention or its Protocols that are accompanied by an unofficial translation into the other two working languages of the UNECE may be submitted to the secretariat after the four-month deadline provided that the secretariat can communicate them to the Parties at least ninety days before the session, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention or the relevant article of the appropriate protocol.

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**Proposal by Switzerland**

With regard to possible amendments of the rules of procedure, Switzerland supports the proposal to extend the mandate for chairmanship to 3 years with a possible re-election for a second round. The major arguments in favour of this extension are the need of a certain experience for chairing the discussions on the highly technical and scientific matters as well as the difficulty to find available candidates among the 51 Parties to the Convention. Indeed, besides personal commitment chairmanship requires provision of additional resources which are always sparse and difficult to get approved. A 2x2 years turn is too short when a good chairperson willing to stay is supported by its country.

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**Proposal by Canada**

The Executive Body, at its 39th session, invited Parties to submit views and proposals to the Working Group on Strategies and Review on possible amendments to the Rules of Procedure (RoP). Canada is pleased to submit its views.

Canada will be prepared for a preliminary discussion of this issue at the next meeting of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in December 2020, as recommended by the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and decided by the Executive Body Bureau.

Canada also looks forward to detailed consideration of this issue by the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its 59th session and decision by the Executive Body at its 41st session, both to take place in 2021.

Canada is primarily interested in potential amendments to the RoP that would help clarify the roles of the policy bureaux of the Convention, including the scope of their responsibilities and the roles of their members and vice-chairs.

### *Scope of the responsibilities of the bureaux*

In the 10 years that the RoP have been in effect, the activities of the Convention have evolved in line with the ambition of the Convention and its new Long-term Strategy for 2020-2030, with considerable work being undertaken to drive concrete improvements in air quality. As a result of our ambitious agenda, ad hoc groups, such as the Policy Review Group created to develop a policy response to the 2016 Scientific Assessment Report, have been put in place to help advance the substantive work. Furthermore, significant tasks, such as developing the Forum for International Cooperation on Air Pollution and elaborating a proposal for the scope and work schedule of the review of the Gothenburg Protocol, have been assigned to the bureaux of the Executive Body and Working Group on Strategies and Review. This is an innovative and effective way to advance the work, and Canada views it as appropriate.

These increased responsibilities could be reflected in the RoP to ensure efficient and clear functioning of all the bureaux, in particular since the RoP will remain in place long after the tenure of the current chairs and co-chairs who have devised and supported these flexible ways of working.

### *Roles of bureaux members/vice-chairs*

In addition, Canada would like to discuss the roles of the bureaux vice-chairs and members, in order to reach a common understanding of these roles. Canada views the role of the bureaux members/vice-chairs as critical to moving pieces of work forward and taking decisions on issues that will help ensure the smooth functioning of meetings of the Parties and the timely adoption of decisions. This is best accomplished if the full range of views of the various Parties to the Convention are taken into account. This could be accomplished by electing members/vice-chairs according to the principle of equitable geographical representation so that members/vice-chairs can bring forward the views of these geographic areas. Alternatively, it is also possible to conceive of the roles of the bureaux members/vice-chairs as knowledgeable experts who support and advance the work of the Convention by providing objective advice based on their own expertise and knowledge of the Convention.

Canada is open to having discussions with other Parties on the most appropriate and acceptable way to clarify the roles of bureaux members/vice-chairs without limiting the flexibility and adaptability of the Convention, which has always been one of its strengths.

### *Other issues*

Canada is also open to discussing other issues related to the RoP that have been raised by other Parties, such as amending the length of terms for chairs of various Convention bodies to potentially extend them, as well as intersessional decision-making due to new working arrangements triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.