The main issue discussed at the meeting was the financial arrangements of the MEAs.

The meeting was opened by a short introduction by Mr. Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary of UNECE. He emphasized the importance of the MEAs in delivering on the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs. In order to strengthen the work of the secretariat in support of the MEAs and to respond to increased needs, a more predictable and equitable funding mechanism needs to be shaped, while at the same time increasing the efficiency of the secretariat. For this purpose a paper had been developed and was the subject of ongoing discussion within the Secretariat. It would also be presented to the EXCOM and would be a living document developed on the basis of these discussion and inputs from the Conventions.

Mr. Marco Keiner, Director of the UNECE Environment Division, underlined that the aim of the paper was to reach a common understanding, and, eventually a solid system of funding. The next step would be to define core and non-core activities. Among the comments raised by the participants were that the introduction of mandatory contributions, as well as the use of the UN Scale of Assessment, may be difficult, and that as the Conventions seem to function differently, the definition of core and non-core activities might not be the same across the MEAs. Some of the MEAs have already considered the distribution of tasks, other are about to start their consideration.

The possible involvement of the MEAs in the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference next year, was also discussed, and the participants updated each other on the opening of the MEAs to countries beyond the UNECE region.

As requested by the Bureau, I proposed to allow observers to the informal meetings of the MEAs Chairs. The proposal was accepted by the Chairs of the other MEAs, and an invitation to the European ECO-Forum as a network of environmental NGOs in the region, should have received an invitation to nominate a representative to attend the informal meetings as an observer.