



**Governing Council
of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

Distr.: General
14 December 2006

English only



**Twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 5–9 February 2007

Items 4, 6 and 7 of the provisional agenda*

Policy issues

**Implementation of the programme of work of the
United Nations Environment Programme and the
relevant decisions of the Governing Council.**

**Budget and programme of work for the biennium
2008–2009, the Environment Fund and administrative
and other budgetary matters**

**Report on the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations Environment Programme**

Note by the Executive Director

Pursuant to paragraph (k) of decision 19/32 of 4 April 1997 on the governance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), a report on the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP since the conclusion of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to date is provided in the annex to the present note.

* UNEP/GC/24/1.

Annex

Report on the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

I. Minutes of the eighty-ninth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 7 December 2004, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Habeeb Mohamed Farook, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to UNEP.
2. The meeting was attended by 70 participants from 54 countries and one observer.
3. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. George Atkin, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Antonio Rezende de Castro, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, Mr. Uokko Tellervo Heikkinen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland, Mr. Mohammed Raeisi Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Satoru Miyamura, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan, Mrs. Elizabeth Astete, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Peru and Ms. Magdalene Virginia Williams, Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa (whose term of duty had been extended). He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Paul Comfort, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Joaquim A. Whitaker, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, Mr. Benjamin Concha, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile, Archbishop Giovanni Tonucci, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See, Mr. Makoto Asami, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan and Mr. Jorge Voto-Bernales, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Peru.
4. The Chair informed the Committee of the news of the death of the wife of Mr. Arcado Ntagazwa, the President of the Governing Council and Minister of State for Environment of the United Republic of Tanzania, and said that he would express the condolences and deepest sympathy of the members of the Committee to Mr. Ntagazwa. The Executive Director noted that Mr. Ntagazwa had heard of his wife's serious illness while chairing the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group meeting in Bali, Indonesia, from 2 to 4 December 2004. He joined the Chair in offering his sincere condolences. He then welcomed the new members of the Committee, and thanked the departing members for their cooperation, especially the many who had contributed to the work of the subcommittees during the current year.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

5. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/89/1 and UNEP/CPR/89/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Adoption of the minutes of the eighty-eighth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 1 September 2004

6. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the eighty-eighth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 1 September 2004.

Item 4: Report of the work of the subcommittees of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP

7. Mr. Andrew Kiptoon (Kenya), chair of Subcommittee I of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, gave a report on the work of the Subcommittee. Since the previous meeting of the Committee, Subcommittee I had held a total of four meetings during the month of November 2004. At its first meeting, on 2 November 2004, the Subcommittee had agreed on the modalities of its work, namely, to review the unedited advance copies of documents for the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, to consider the actions suggested in those documents and to finalize the relevant draft decisions for adoption by the main meetings of the Committee. In conclusion he thanked the members of Subcommittee I and the secretariat for their support in the work of the Subcommittee.

8. Mr. Frédéric Renard (Belgium), chair of Subcommittee II, gave a report on the work of that Subcommittee and on the work of joint Subcommittees I and II since the previous meeting of the Committee. Through a total of five meetings in the month of September 2004, the Subcommittee had considered the document entitled "Environment Fund budgets: proposed biennial programme and support budget for 2006–2007: report of the Executive Director". He recalled that the Committee had, at its eighty-eighth meeting on 1 September 2004, entrusted Subcommittee II with the task of considering and endorsing on its behalf, for the purpose of forwarding to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) the outcome of its work on the proposed programme budget document. In view of that, he had forwarded the outcome of the Subcommittee's discussions to the Executive Director, together with his transmittal letter, dated 30 September 2004.

9. Mr. Renard also reported on the work of joint Subcommittees I and II since the previous meeting of the Committee. Joint Subcommittees I and II had held two meetings, on 9 and 23 November 2004. Those joint meetings had considered the unedited advance copies of documents UNEP/GC23/3/Add.2 (on environmental emergencies) and UNEP/GC.23/3/Add.7 (on activities in the regions), and also the draft decisions on chemicals management and on strengthening the scientific base of UNEP.

10. He said that Subcommittee II and joint Subcommittees I and II would continue their work in preparation for the session/forum, in particular, preparation of draft decisions on international environmental governance, as well as reviewing other documents for submission to the session/forum. He expressed his appreciation of the work of all the members of Subcommittee II and the secretariat for their constructive contributions, and noted with appreciation the support provided by Ms. Magdalene Williams (South Africa), who acted as rapporteur of Subcommittee II.

11. The Executive Director said that the workload of the subcommittees had been extremely heavy and had been very well done. He sought the permission of the Chair to ask the Deputy Executive Director to report on the outcome of the budget submission to ACABQ.

12. The Deputy Executive Director recalled that in the first week of October 2004, the Executive Director had forwarded to ACABQ the document containing the work programme and budget, together with the transmittal letter of the chair of Subcommittee II, dated 30 September 2004. Subsequently, UNEP and UNON made presentations directly to the ACABQ meeting on 9 November 2004.

13. He noted that the ACABQ report would be circulated to the members of the Committee. In conclusion, he said that, echoing the sentiments of the Executive Director, he expressed his gratitude to the Committee for its work in finalizing the work programme and budget.

14. The Chair then sought and obtained the agreement of the Committee that the outcome of the work of the two Subcommittees would be presented to the extraordinary meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 1 February 2005, for adoption and onward transmission to the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. He also sought and obtained the endorsement of the Committee for the schedule of work for the Committee for the period December 2004–January 2005.

15. The Committee took note with appreciation and approved the reports of the chairs of Subcommittees I and II and of the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 5: Status of the preparation of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

16. Introducing the item, the Executive Director gave a brief overview of his recommendations on the structure and organization of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, to be held 21–25 February 2005.

17. In conclusion, he said he had decided that an “Environment Institute” should be held in conjunction with the twenty-third session/forum to facilitate substantive discussions and skill-enhancing training sessions at a practical level on the issues to be addressed during that session/forum. He also recommended that all side events should be included in the Environment Institute and it should encompass the various proposals that might be made by Governments, non-governmental organizations, UNEP and others. UNEP was exploring possible cooperation in the organization of that initiative with the Smithsonian Institute. He also informed the Committee that in Nairobi four pre-session events had been identified, namely, the round-table meeting on advancing the Millennium Development Goals through the Rule of Law, 16 and 17 February 2005, the Tunza Global Youth Retreat, 16–18 February 2005, as well as the Sixth Global Civil Society Forum and the Global Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Consultation on GEO-4, both of which would be held on 19 and 20 February 2005. Also planned for the afternoon of Thursday, 24 February 2005, was a meeting of the private sector of Africa, to discuss the contribution that could be made by the African private sector. Further information on the field excursion on Saturday, 26 February 2005, would be made available to the members of the Committee at their extraordinary meeting on 1 February 2005.

18. Several representatives wished to have copies of the outline and schematic programme for the session/forum and a representative of the secretariat said that copies would be distributed to members of the Committee a few days after the current meeting.

19. Several representatives wished to know how many draft decisions were being prepared. In response the Executive Director said that eight decisions were being prepared by the secretariat, of which two were omnibus decisions, the first on international environmental governance, dealing with, among other matters, the Bali strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building and the scientific backing for work on early warning systems, and the second on chemicals management, dealing with the strategic approach to international chemicals management, including heavy metals management. In reply to an additional query he said that it had not yet been decided whether mercury would be included in the section on heavy metals. He added that UNEP would like to be informed of any draft decisions being proposed by Member States.

20. One representative welcomed the planned meeting for the African private sector, and suggested that the participants in the African Business Roundtable organized by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) should also be invited to the meeting. The Executive Director thanked the representative for his suggestion.

21. Regarding the structure and programme for the ministerial consultations, several representatives expressed concern that the ministers attending might have left on Thursday, 24 February, before the end of the session/forum, especially considering the need for endorsement of the Bali strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building. The Executive Director, addressing those concerns, said that the ministers would be present for the finalization of the work programme and budget, and, if any matters remained over until Friday 25 February, the heads of delegations should have mandates to cover them. He agreed with the representative of China, who had said that it was important to have the ministers present at the beginning of the session to give policy guidance to the whole session. That same representative informed the Committee that his country was exploring the possibility of organizing a meeting between China and African States.

22. While welcoming the Bali strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building, several representatives wondered how the plan could be incorporated into the work programme and budget, and several hoped for its early implementation by the application intersessionally of funds from the Environment Fund. In reply, the Deputy Executive Director pointed out that the Environment Fund would not be the only source of financing for the strategic plan, but also the Global Environment Facility and private/public partnerships; besides that, the scientific initiatives planned for UNEP had a strong capacity-building orientation.

23. In response to a query from one representative about meeting the six-week rule about documentation for the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the Deputy Executive Director said that the secretariat hoped to be able to deliver all the documents by 10 January

2005, except for the policy statement by the Executive Director, which had to incorporate all emerging developments.

24. In reply to a query from one representative regarding a recommendation made by the Global Women's Assembly meeting in October 2004, that a presentation should be made to the forthcoming session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the Executive Director noted that one half-day ministerial discussion session would be on gender and the environment, and, also, a draft decision on the topic was being presented by a Member State.

25. In keeping with the customary practice, the Chair proceeded to choose by lot the country that would begin the seating arrangements for the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, and the lot fell to Morocco.

26. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report by the Executive Director.

Item 6: Implementation of the programme of work of UNEP and relevant decisions of the twenty-second session and the eighth special session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum

27. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred the Committee to the third quarter progress report (July–September 2004) on the status of implementation of the decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum adopted at its twenty-second session and its eighth special session, which had been circulated to the members of the Committee. The reports for the third quarter of 2004 concerning staffing, consultancies and institutional and corporate contracts had also been circulated to the members of the Committee. In the staffing report, a new item had been introduced in annex IV that showed staff members by gender and distribution of duty stations. He noted that with regard to staffing of the professional category, there were a total of 517 posts, 471 of which were occupied, giving a vacancy rate of 15.9 per cent.

28. One representative, referring to the GEF-financed workshop described in paragraph 29 of the third quarter progress report on the implementation of decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, said that the workshop, for the representatives of African regional economic commissions and national focal points of multilateral environmental agreements, dealing with the NEPAD environmental policy process and the mainstreaming of environment into national economic and development programmes, had been very successful and had had a specific impact.

29. One representative, thanking the secretariat for producing the report showing the gender distribution in staffing, said that she had one final request, namely, that the secretariat might also provide the gender distribution in the levels or scales of professional posts.

30. The Committee took note with appreciation of the reports submitted by the Executive Director and the secretariat.

Item 7: UNEP relations with the United Nations Office at Nairobi

31. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that he still intended to organize a special meeting of the Committee, jointly with UN-Habitat, to discuss matters related to the United Nations Office in Nairobi and to describe a number of new developments. The project for a new UNEP administrative service centre for Europe to be based in Geneva, to provide effective administrative services to the offices of the UNEP secretariat in Europe would be implemented in the near future. He noted that the United Nations Office at Nairobi received only 50 per cent of its funding from the United Nations regular budget, while the corresponding figure for the United Nations Office in Geneva was over 90 per cent.

32. The Committee took note with appreciation of the reports submitted by the Executive Director and the secretariat.

Item 8: Status of the Environment Fund

33. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the third quarter of 2004 had been circulated in October 2004. He gave an update on the current financial situation, reflected in the tables before the Committee.

34. The representative of Egypt said that his country's contribution for 2003 had not been reflected in the tables of the financial report for the third quarter. The Executive Director said in reply that he regretted the omission, which would be rectified.
35. The representative of France informed the Committee that his country's contribution for 2004 would be 3.6 million euros, which was 600,000 euros above its indicated scale of contributions.
36. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 9: Report of the Executive Director on recent and forthcoming activities

37. Introducing the item, the Executive Director gave a brief summary of recent activities undertaken by him, the Deputy Executive Director and the secretariat, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 1 September 2004.
38. He also briefly highlighted some activities of the Deputy Executive Director, which had included attendance at the inauguration ceremonies of the NOWPAP offices in Busan, held in Toyama on 1 November 2004 and participation in the sixteenth meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Prague, beginning on 18 November 2004.
39. One representative asked if the Executive Director or the secretariat could give any advance information on the meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Buenos Aires, 16–17 December 2004. The Executive Director replied that a delegation from UNEP would be attending the meeting, and that, having been asked by the Secretary-General to represent him, he would personally be attending the high-level segment on 14 December 2004 on the topic of adaptation to climate change, and would report on the outcome of the meeting at a later date.
40. One representative wished to have information on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council meeting held in mid-November 2004, particularly with regard to the consequences for UNEP of the different options discussed for the Resource Allocation Framework. The Executive Director said he had not attended the meeting personally, but UNEP had been represented, and the various options discussed at the meeting were currently being studied in UNEP. He said that the Committee would be informed about those options in due course, especially since the third GEF replenishment was due to start in the near future.
41. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 10: Other matters

42. The representative of France informed the members of the Committee of developments in regard to the French initiative for the possible establishment of a United Nations Environment Organization, which was being dealt with by some 25 countries and the European Commission.
43. One representative said that her country welcomed the outcome of the Bali meeting, and looked forward to the adoption at the forthcoming session of the Governing Council of the strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building. On a different topic, the same representative recalled that she had raised the issue of the UNEP web site at an earlier meeting of the subcommittee, and had suggested that it should be made more user-friendly. She wished to reiterate her suggestion to the secretariat that it might convene a special meeting of the Committee to discuss how the web site could be improved.
44. One representative wished to echo the request of the representative of Pakistan, representing the Group of 77 and China, that the secretariat might make available to the members of the Committee those sections of the report of the high-level panel on the reconstruction or reform of the United Nations that could have implications for UNEP.
45. One representative referred to the course organized jointly by UNEP and Finland on international environmental law, held in August 2004, which he believed had been very useful, and he appealed to the organizers to invite more members of the Committee to any such future course. The representative of Finland said that he would convey that message to his capital.
46. One representative, referring to the French initiative for a possible United Nations environment organization, said that his country welcomed the progress made, as well as France's statement that it was open to suggestions regarding the initiative, and that it planned to launch an awareness campaign specifically for regional groups.

Item 11: Closure of the meeting

47. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the eighty-ninth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.45 p.m. on Tuesday, 1 December 2004.

II. Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

48. The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 1 February 2005, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Habeeb Mohamed Farook, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to UNEP.

49. The meeting was attended by 74 participants from 52 countries and one observer.

50. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Roland Hauser, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria, Mr. Enrico Gerardo de Maio, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy, Mr. Afzaal Mahmood, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Mr. Ivan Zivkovic, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Serbia and Montenegro, Ms. Petra Menander, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden and Mr. Hamisi A. Msumi, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Klaus Derkowitsch, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria, Mr. Carlo Calia, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy, Mr. Jamil Ahmed, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Mr. Stefan Moravek, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Slovakia and Mr. Per Lindgarde, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden

51. The Executive Director welcomed the new members of the Committee, and thanked the departing members for their cooperation, especially to the many who had contributed to the work of the subcommittees during the current year.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

52. The provisional agenda submitted by the secretariat was adopted.

Item 3: Report of the work of the relevant subcommittees concerning the preparation of the draft decisions for the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

53. Mr. Andrew Kiptoon (Kenya), chair of Subcommittee I of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, gave a report on the work of the subcommittee. Since the previous meeting of the Committee on 7 December 2004, Subcommittee I had held two meetings, on 8 December 2004 and 11 January 2005. At its first meeting it had continued its consideration of the updated water policy and strategy and the relevant draft decision. Discussions on that draft decision had later continued at the meetings of joint Subcommittees I and II. At its meeting on 11 January 2005, Subcommittee I had considered the advance unedited copy of the background paper for the ministerial consultations of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. That paper had covered three areas, namely, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability; water, sanitation and human settlements; and gender and the environment. The subcommittee had had active and constructive discussions, which had been taken into account by the secretariat when finalizing the background paper. In conclusion, he thanked the members of Subcommittee I and the secretariat for their support in the work of the subcommittee.

54. Mr. Frédéric Renard (Belgium), the chair of Subcommittee II, gave a report on the work of that subcommittee and on the work of joint Subcommittees I and II since the eighty-ninth meeting of the Committee. Subcommittee II had held two meetings, on 14 December 2004 and 13 January 2005, respectively, and had considered the document on administrative and other budgetary questions and the

proposed biennial programme and support budget for 2006–2007, as well as the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The consideration of the draft decisions resulting from the subcommittee's discussions had continued at the meetings of joint Subcommittees I and II.

55. Mr. Renard also reported on the work of joint Subcommittees I and II since the previous meeting of the Committee. Joint Subcommittees I and II had held five meetings, on 16 December 2004 and on 18, 20, 25, and 27 January 2005, at which they had considered a total of seven draft decisions and the result of the work in that regard was before the meeting. The draft decision on keeping the world environmental situation under review had been tabled but not yet considered. Similarly, the consideration of the internal environmental governance omnibus decision had not yet been completed. In addition, the draft decision on the date, place and time and provisional agenda of the ninth special session and that of the twenty-fourth regular session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, and that of the draft decision on the tsunami disaster were yet to be considered by joint Subcommittees I and II, which were ready and willing to continue their work.

56. He noted that, with regard to the impact of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building on the programme of work and budget, some members of the joint subcommittees I and II would have preferred initial adjustments to have been made to the programme of work and budget for presentation to the Governing Council at its forthcoming session. The secretariat had tabled an additional paragraph to the suggested action to the effect that a flexible procedure should be followed after that session, in which both the secretariat and the Committee would have to play a role. Several delegations had indicated that they were planning to propose alternative paragraphs to the one presented by the secretariat. Since the joint Subcommittees I and II would have to meet again to discuss the draft decision on programme of work and budget, it would seem useful if a "road map" to provide justification for the additional paragraph proposed by the secretariat could be made available to members prior to that meeting.

57. He expressed his appreciation of the work of all the members of the relevant subcommittees and the secretariat for their constructive contributions, and noted with appreciation the support provided by Ms. Margarita Dieguez (Mexico) and Ms. Magdalene Williams (South Africa), who had acted as rapporteurs, respectively, of joint Subcommittees I and II and Subcommittee II.

58. The Chair sought and obtained the approval of the Committee to adopt the reports of the subcommittees and also to entrust the finalization of the draft decisions to joint Subcommittees I and II on behalf of the Committee.

59. The chair of joint Subcommittees I and II said the draft decisions on budget and international environmental governance would each require one meeting of the joint subcommittees, while possibly two further meetings would be required to deal with the remaining draft decisions.

60. One representative wished to know if any information was available about draft decisions which might be presented by countries, in particular a draft decision possibly being prepared by Morocco on waste management. Another representative asked for information about the outcome of the Kobe conference in connection with the recent tsunami disaster. In reply, the Executive Director said that the secretariat had no further information on draft decisions from countries, and he added, with regard to the Kobe conference, that the outcome and assessment would be distributed to the Committee and integrated into the draft tsunami decision to be submitted to the Governing Council.

Item 4: Status of the preparation of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

61. Introducing the item, the Executive Director tabled a document dated 1 February 2005, giving his recommendations for the provisional timetable of the meetings and events of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, to be held from 21 to 25 February 2005. He informed the Committee that, as of 31 January 2005, 72 countries had responded positively to the invitation to participate, of which 49 had indicated their participation at the ministerial level. Some 35 developing countries and countries with economies in transition had requested financial assistance. He expressed his gratitude to Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which had pledged approximately \$96,000 and \$37,580 respectively as contributions to assist those countries. He then gave an overview of the daily timetables and events of the session.

62. One representative said that it would be useful to have an exchange of views at a Committee meeting before the session regarding the functions of the various working groups to be appointed in the

course of the twenty-third session. The Deputy Executive Director replied that the issue could be dealt with in the subcommittees.

63. Another representative wished to know which regional group would nominate the candidate for the Presidency of the Governing Council. The Executive Director said in reply that it would be the turn of the Asian group of countries, and he had been informed that the group would present as candidate the Minister of Environment of Indonesia.

64. In response to several queries by representatives, the Executive Director clarified that participation for each country in the ministerial consultations would be restricted to one minister plus one other, while, at the working dinner planned for the evening of Wednesday, 23 February, only ministers and heads of delegations would be invited to attend.

65. Several representatives wished to have further information about participation in the African private sector meeting. In reply, the Executive Director said that he would see to it that permanent representatives were informed. He added that the suggestion made at the previous meeting of the Committee, that participants in the African Business Round Table organized by the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should also be invited, had been passed on to the responsible office.

66. Several representatives had queries about the meeting of judges on the rule of law, and the Executive Director noted that invitations had been sent to the chairs or moderators of the judges' regional meetings, but, if any country wished to nominate further judges, he asked for the secretariat to be informed and consideration would be given to those suggestions.

67. The observer for the European Commission informed the Committee that the Commission had proposed a comprehensive strategy on mercury and intended to take steps to reduce the global pool of mercury as well as mercury production.

68. One representative asked if the secretariat could clarify the relevant roles and working arrangements of the European Union and the European Community vis-à-vis the Committee.

69. The representative of Kenya, the host country of the forthcoming session of the Governing Council, said his Government would like to be kept informed and updated on the delegates and other persons who had been invited to participate in the session, to enable it to ensure that the necessary logistical arrangements were made.

70. The representative of China informed the Committee that his Government would be sending a high-level delegation to the Governing Council session, headed by Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. On the evening of Monday, 21 February 2005, China would be organizing a joint meeting with UNEP and the African group of countries on possible Chinese-African cooperation on environmental issues, to which other delegates would be welcome as observers. He noted that the UNEP secretariat would coordinate the meeting, and provide interpretation in Chinese, English and French. The meeting would show the commitment and responsible attitude of his Government towards environmental issues.

71. Several representatives expressed the hope that the secretariat would be able to solve the difficult logistical problems for all the various regional group meetings during the week of the Governing Council session.

72. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report by the Executive Director.

Item 5: Other matters

73. Several representatives raised the issue of security problems in Nairobi, which, they said, affected everybody, and which had been raised at several previous meetings of the Committee. Replying to those concerns, the representative of Kenya said that, as the host country, Kenya was taking security problems very seriously and, as well as establishing a diplomatic police, it was attending to the issue and making every possible effort to address it.

74. One representative noted that the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cuba had been nominated as the Chair of the Group of 77 and China and expressed the gratitude of that group to the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, who had previously held the position.

75. The representative of Nigeria informed the Committee that his Government had decided to donate \$1,000,000 to the United Nations Tsunami Appeal Fund and had also constituted a national committee to assist victims of that natural disaster.

76. Several representatives referred to the topics to be considered at the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in particular to the need to consider, in that session, the issue of chemicals management. The Executive Director replied that the theme of chemicals management would be included on the agenda of the 2006 special session.

Item 6: Closure of the meeting

77. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.35 p.m. on Tuesday, 1 February 2005.

III. Minutes of the ninetieth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

78. The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 15 March 2005, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Habeeb Mohamed Farook, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to UNEP.

79. The meeting was attended by 66 participants from 50 countries and one observer.

80. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Lorenz Barth, Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany, Mr. John E. Aggrey, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ghana, Mr. Polydore Kokonas, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Greece and Mr. Andre-Thomas Eid, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway. He also bade farewell to the following representative who had recently left the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Atle Fretheim, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway. The Executive Director joined the Chair in welcoming the new members of the Committee, and made special mention of the permanent representatives not stationed in Nairobi but in Addis Ababa or other places who were attending the current meeting of the Committee

81. The Executive Director said that he wished to inform the Committee of the sad news of the death of Mr. Reuben Olembo on the previous day, 14 March 2005. Mr. Olembo, a distinguished geneticist and environmentalist, had joined UNEP as a senior programme officer in 1974. He had been Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and United Nations Assistant Secretary-General from 1994 to 1998. Many of the existing UNEP programmes, strategies and action plans bore his imprint. UNEP would long remember his distinguished, dedicated and loyal service over a period of almost 25 years. The Executive Director said that he was sure the Committee would like to join him in extending to Mr. Olembo's wife and family heartfelt condolences in their great loss. He invited the members of the Committee to stand and observe a moment of silence in honour of Mr. Olembo.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

82. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/90/1 and UNEP/CPR/90/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Adoption of the minutes of the eighty-ninth and extraordinary meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 7 December 2004 and 1 February 2005, respectively

83. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the eighty-ninth and the extraordinary meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 7 December 2004 and 1 February 2005, respectively

Item 4: Review of the outcome of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

84. The Executive Director reported to the Committee on the outcome of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, highlighting the ministerial consultations as recorded in the President's summary and the special references made in the session to the need to give priority to the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

85. Several representatives took the floor to express their congratulations to the Executive Director and the secretariat for the very successful outcome of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment. The contribution made by the Group of 77 and China was acknowledged by several representatives. Several representatives also expressed the hope that the President's summary mentioned by the Executive Director would prove to be useful for the discussions of the thirteenth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development and for September Summit on the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

86. One representative, joining in the congratulations to the secretariat, said that the session had been better organized and noted that there had been a reduction in the number of draft decisions. She suggested that the President's summary, not being a negotiated document, should refer not to "recommendations" but rather to "options". The other representative commended the role the Committee of Permanent Representatives had played in the preparation of the budget and the programme of work. He stated that increased attention should be paid by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to emerging issues. He further stated that it would have been better if a separate group were established to address international environmental governance, and if appropriate measures were taken to improve the conference facilities, particularly those related to information technology and interpretation equipment.

87. The Executive Director, responding to the comments made, thanked the members of the Committee for their important contribution to the success of the Governing Council session and the suggestions made for the improvement of the future sessions of the Council/Forum, and reiterated that one of the main interests of the various divisions of UNEP was to implement the Bali Strategic Plan in their day-to-day activities in favour of capacity-building. In conclusion, he thanked the Government of Kenya for its hospitality and for its contribution to the success of the Governing Council session.

88. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 5: Implementation of the relevant decisions of the twenty-second session and the eighth special session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum

89. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that information concerning the implementation of decisions adopted at the twenty-second session and the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, covering the third and fourth quarters of 2004, had been provided to Governments through the pre-session documentation of the twenty-third session. The executive summary report in that regard, for the fourth quarter of 2004, would be provided to the members of the Committee, together with the report for the first quarter of 2005, prior to the following meeting of the Committee, to be held in June 2005.

90. Reports for the fourth quarter of 2004 concerning staffing, consultancies and institutional and corporate contracts had been circulated to the members of the Committee. In the staffing report, a new item had been introduced in annex IV that showed staff members by gender and distribution of duty stations. He noted that, with regard to staffing of the professional category, there was a total of 569 posts, 487 of which were occupied, giving a vacancy rate of 14.4 per cent. In general service posts, there was a total of 464 posts, of which 415 were occupied, giving a vacancy rate of 10.6 per cent.

91. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report by the Executive Director.

Item 6: Status of the Environment Fund

92. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the fourth quarter of 2004 had been circulated in February 2005. He gave an update on the current financial situation, reflected in the tables before the Committee.

93. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland informed the Committee that his Government had decided to make a contribution to the Environment Fund in 2005 of £4.2 million. With regard to the financial report, in annex III, with reference to column E for subprogramme 4, uncommitted funds were stated to be \$1,501,700, which seemed to be rather high, and he wished to know the reasons behind that. In response, the Executive Director stated that UNEP had become increasingly concerned by the strengthening euro, which, if the current parity remained, could increase expenditures in the United States dollar terms on staff post adjustment, rent, utilities and local running costs, and other euro-related costs by more than \$1 million in 2005 in the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics in Paris. He said that, accordingly, UNEP had frozen recruitment and suspended certain activities while reviewing the situation and that the available funds therefore arose from this precautionary action. He also stated that the secretariat was very much aware of this issue and was closely monitoring the situation as it developed in 2005.

94. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director and the secretariat.

Item 7: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities

95. Introducing the item, the Executive Director gave a brief summary of recent activities undertaken by him, the Deputy Executive Director and the secretariat, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 7 December 2004.

96. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 8: Other matters

97. The Chair, Mr. Habeeb Mohamed Farook, informed the Committee that his tour of duty in Nairobi had come to an end and he would be leaving to return to Sri Lanka to take up a new appointment. The Asian group of countries would nominate the replacing chair for the remainder of his term as Chair, from March to June 2005. At the following meeting of the Committee, a new Chair would be elected for the period July 2005 to June 2007. He paid tribute to the cooperation and positive contributions of all the members of the Committee during his period as Chair, and also thanked the Executive Director and the secretariat for the full support and guidance that they had given to him at all times.

98. Many representatives took the floor to pay tribute to the departing Chair, and the Executive Director joined them, saying that Mr. Farook in his term as Chair of the Committee had been clear-minded, pragmatic and always concerned to build consensus, and as a token of the gratitude of UNEP and the Committee, he made a presentation of a small gift to Mr. Farook.

Item 9: Closure of the meeting

99. The Chair declared the ninetieth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.05 p.m. on Tuesday, 15 March 2005.

IV. Minutes of the ninety-first meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

100. The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 9 June 2005, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Suk Jo Lee, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to UNEP.

101. The meeting was attended by 64 participants from 54 countries and one observer.
102. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Pedro de Castro da Cunha e Menezes, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil, Sir Pedro Undurraga Mackenna, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile, Archbishop Alain Paul Lebeaupin, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See, Mr. Tatsuo Seino, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. Tony Steven Msimanga, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of South Africa and Mr. Leon Jordaan, Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa, Mr. M.K.. Meelaud Keeran, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, Mr. Dhanatpongse Smitabhindu, Minister Counsellor of Thailand and Mr. Adam Wood, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Frédéric Renard, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belgium, Mr. Abraham Quesada, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Chile, Mr. Thomas Tewelde, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Eritrea, Mr. Atsuhiko Yoshinaka, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. L.M. Makhubela, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of South Africa and Ms. M.V. Williams, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa, Mr. Solomon M. N. Dlamini, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Swaziland, Mr. Niyom Wathamawut, Minister Counsellor of Thailand and Mr. Edward Clay, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
103. The Executive Director joined the Chair in welcoming the new members of the Committee, and in saying farewell to those members who had left or were leaving, who, he said, had made great contributions to the work of UNEP. He made special mention of the exceptional contribution of Mr. Frédéric Renard, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belgium, especially for his work in chairing Subcommittee II and co-chairing joint Subcommittees I and II, as well as various other working groups of the Committee and of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. He thanked Mr. Renard for his highly esteemed work for UNEP, and wished him every success in his future endeavours.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

104. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/91/1 and UNEP/CPR/91/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Adoption of the minutes of the ninetieth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 15 March 2005

105. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the ninetieth ordinary meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 15 March 2005.

Item 4: Schedule of the main meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP for the remainder of 2005

106. The Chair informed the meeting that the Bureau of the Committee had considered the tentative schedule of main meetings of the Committee in 2005 at its meeting on 26 April 2005. The schedule showed that the ninety-second meeting of the Committee would be held on 12 September, prior to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly in New York, which would undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The ninety-third meeting of the Committee had been scheduled for 7 December 2005. Regarding the tentative schedule of meetings of subcommittees, the Bureau had been informed that the conference rooms had been booked for those meetings.
107. The Committee approved the schedule of the main meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP as stated by the Chair.

Item 5: UNEP relations with the United Nations Office at Nairobi

108. Introducing the item, the Executive Director described the organization and common services provided by the United Nations Office at Nairobi. He explained the functions of the United Nations Office at Nairobi Client Advisory Committee, which monitored the budget, and the memorandum of

understanding between UNEP, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), signed in April 2004. All of the structure was in line with the Secretary-General's guidelines for the United Nations offices in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, dated 22 September 2000. After the attack on the United Nations offices in Iraq, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi had become responsible for security.

109. One representative wished to know the outcome of the recent meeting on security that the Executive Director had had with the President of Kenya. The Executive Director said that he had discussed security in detail with the President, who had stated that improvement of the quality and size of the Diplomatic Police Unit was proceeding. He had singled out specific needs in security, and the Host Country Liaison Committee was meeting to discuss implementation of those specific needs. He cautioned that the United Nations security service were not entitled to operate beyond the confines of the Gigiri compound, and, lastly, said that he would keep the members of the Committee fully informed of all developments.

110. One representative, referring to the cooperation between UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi, asked whether there were plans to provide more services to the convention secretariats. The Executive Director replied that the conventions dealing with chemicals had requested UNEP to consider them as a cluster in all discussions, while the Geneva Administrative Service Centre established by UNEP would aim at providing services to the conventions based in Europe.

111. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report by the Executive Director.

Item 6: Report on “Our Common Interest”, report of the Commission for Africa

112. Introducing the item, the Executive Director noted that the United Kingdom would be occupying a double presidency in 2005, namely, of the European Union and of the G8 group of countries, and Mr. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, had declared his interest in putting forward, during that double presidency, the issues of aid to Africa and climate change. In regard to Africa, he had brought together a team of individuals to form a “Commission for Africa”, to define the challenges facing Africa and to make clear recommendations on how to support the changes needed to reduce poverty in that continent. The Commission had produced a report, entitled “Our Common Interest”, which was intended to serve as a basis for rallying the support of the international community for Africa. He then detailed some of the points of the report, which included possible ways of increasing economic growth, increasing external aid, strengthening governance and proposing innovative ways of mobilizing the necessary resources.

113. He went on to say that the report was consistent with the UNEP programme of work, as it had addressed some of the pertinent environmental issues of concern to Africa and had laid emphasis on the need to encourage environmental sustainability in African Governments' poverty reduction strategies and in climate change. It was also consistent with the involvement of UNEP in various international processes that were of crucial importance to the environment of Africa, such as the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, African Ministers' Council on Water, New Partners for African Development (NEPAD) and the African Union programmes. The report also called on the international community to support the environment initiative of NEPAD, which has been extensively supported by UNEP, and emphasized the importance of capacity building. Lastly, he noted that the UNEP Regional Office for Africa had been strengthened as the crucial link between the global programmes and Africa.

114. The representative of Uganda commended UNEP on its attention to Africa and referred to UNEP co-sponsoring the recent joint NEPAD-African Ministers' Council on Water workshop, which had dealt with aspects of the Blair Commission report. As Uganda occupied the chair of the Council, it would see to it that the recommendations of that report continued to be assessed and explored. She wished to encourage UNEP to work in environmental governance at a subregional level. She commended the UNEP Regional Office for Africa on its role in taking forward the institutionalization of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) within the African Union. Regarding the issue of capacity-building as mentioned in the Blair Commission Report, she suggested that the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building should be the main framework for carrying this issue forward. Other representatives also made mention of the Bali Strategic Plan in connection with capacity-building needs in Africa referred in the report.

115. One representative referred to the need for cleaner technology and the corresponding need for UNEP to link development partners with African countries, to identify programmes to be implemented on the ground. With regard to resources that might accrue from debt cancellation, the representative hoped that these resources could be channelled into specific programmes.

116. Another representative, referring to those freed resources, wished to know if they could be channelled through UNEP. He also wondered what the implications of the Blair Commission report would be for subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and also for the strengthening of centres of excellence in Africa.

117. One representative spoke of the initial scepticism with which the Commission for Africa had been first viewed by several countries, but noted that at the recent NEPAD summit in Egypt, many such reservations had been allayed, because of awareness campaigns conducted by representatives of the United Kingdom in African countries; it was clear that African initiatives would be encouraged. He regretted, however, that the Commission for Africa seemed to be perpetuating the artificial differences between sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of Africa. Regarding conflicts and their effects on aid and development, he said that peace was not a *sine qua non*, and the international community could not wait for all problems to be resolved before taking action. The last remaining fears and doubts would be allayed by co-management of development aid, which would ensure that assistance was channelled to where countries needed it.

118. One representative said that he had seen many reports, but few results. Funds mentioned in reports rarely reached the grassroots. It was essential, he said, that capacity building was attached to means of production, and he called for more capacity building at village level and for cooperatives. He believed, however, that assistance should be tied to good governance at all levels. He also dwelt on the so-called "brain drain" suffered by African countries.

119. The representative of the United Kingdom said that his Government hoped, through its joint presidency of the European Union and the G8 group of countries, to galvanize political commitment in the areas of aid to Africa and climate change, and was fully committed to taking forward the recommendations of the Commission for Africa.

120. Replying to some points raised in the discussion, the Executive Director said that it was necessary to study exactly how debt cancellation could be used to reduce poverty, and, in that regard, capacity-building activities should always be focused on the demand at country levels. He agreed fully that good governance was needed to make funds available for capacity building, and said that good governance might also help to reverse the "brain drain" suffered by African countries.

121. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 7: Preparations of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

122. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director said he was pleased to provide the Committee with some initial points on the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, to be held in Dubai from 7 to 9 February 2006. According to the provisional agenda adopted by the twenty-third session of the Governing Council, the Ministerial consultations would address the following themes: energy and the environment, chemicals management, tourism and the environment and the issue of universal membership of the Governing Council. In addition, the session/forum would consider the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building, the proposal of an Environment Watch framework, the strengthening of the financing of UNEP, updated water policy and strategy and the strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM). Of associated events, he made special mention of the SAICM International Conference on Chemicals Management, to be held from 4 to 6 February 2006.

123. Several representatives spoke of the need to address the issue of cleaner technology, including the issue of lead-free gasoline. Others stressed the importance of touching on renewable energy technology, and one representative drew attention to the planned Technology Fair, a parallel side event. Several representatives stressed the need to have documentation for the session/forum as early as possible.

124. One representative hoped that the discussions on energy would provide a productive input to the energy cycle to be dealt with by the Commission on Sustainable Development. She requested detailed proposals and updates on the Bali Strategic Plan, the Environment Watch framework, the financial strengthening of UNEP and the medium and long-term engagement of young people.

125. One representative said that his Government looked forward to receiving results from the SAICM meeting on the first day of the session/forum, and added that preparations for the special session should be started well in advance of the session.

126. One representative suggested that ministers should be given assignments, so that they came with specific programmes and plans of action, rather than just taking part in discussions.

127. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 8: Status of the Environment Fund

128. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the first quarter of 2005 had been circulated in May 2005. He then gave an update on the current financial situation, reflected in the tables before the Committee.

129. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Deputy Executive Director

Item 9: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

130. Introducing the item, the Executive Director gave a brief summary of recent activities undertaken by him, the Deputy Executive Director and the secretariat, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 15 March 2005.

131. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 10: Election of the officers of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2007

132. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Governing Council and the established pattern of rotation among the various regional groups of posts in the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the following officers were elected by acclamation for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2007, after nomination by their respective regional groups:

133. Chair: Mr. Emilian Ion (Romania)

134. Vice-Chair: Mr. Mohammad Raeisi (Iran)

135. Rapporteur: Ms. Barbara Richardson (Canada)

136. Two further vice-chairs, to be nominated by the African Group and the Latin American and Caribbean group respectively, would be elected at the ninety-second meeting of the Committee, to be held on 12 September 2005.

137. The outgoing Chair of the Bureau, Mr. Suk Jo Lee (Republic of Korea) made a brief statement before vacating the chair in favour of Mr. Emilian Ion, the incoming Chair. He thanked his colleagues from the Asian group, the members of the Bureau and the secretariat for the cooperation that they had shown him during his brief term of office after taking over from Mr. Habeeb Mohamed Farook (Sri Lanka), who had succeeded Mr. Hameed Kidwai (Pakistan).

138. The Executive Director paid tribute to the outgoing members of the Bureau and, congratulating the new members, thanked them for accepting the arduous task of serving on the Bureau of the Committee.

Item 11: Other matters

139. The representative of Germany informed the Committee that on 27 May 2005, a conference had been held in Berlin entitled "Form follows function", on the initiative to upgrade the status of UNEP and to transform it into a United Nations Environment Organization, an initiative started by France and now supported by the European Union and a number of countries. The representative of France also took the floor on the same topic and expressed the hope that the analysis and recommendations produced by the Berlin conference would help to make progress towards that thinking process at the 2005 World Summit of the United Nations, due to be held in New York in September 2005.

140. The representative of Uganda commended UNEP on the launch of the poverty and environment project in her country, with financial assistance from the Belgian and Norwegian Governments. She suggested that UNEP should put into practice its memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a wider scale.

Item 12: Closure of the meeting

141. The Chair declared the ninety-first meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 1.05 p.m. on Thursday, 9 June 2005.

V. Minutes of the ninety-second meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

142. The meeting was opened at 9.50 a.m. on Monday, 12 September 2005, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Emilian Ion, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to UNEP.

143. The meeting was attended by 73 participants from 50 countries and one observer.

144. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Manpreet Vohra, Deputy High Commissioner and Deputy Permanent Representative of India, Mr. Chong-Yul Kim, Minister Counsellor and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Igor Liška, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic, Mrs. J.A.D.S. Priyangika Wjegunasekera, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka and Ms. Jacqueline Mendoza, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Venezuela. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Mohammed-Hacene Echarif, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Algeria, Mr. José Luis Casal, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina, Mr. Carlos Gamba, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Mr. Finn Thilsted, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark, Mr. Gilad Millo, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel, Mr. Kjell Harald Dalen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway, Mrs. Rosalinda Valenton-Tirona, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines, Mr. Byung-Kook Rhee, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Alexander A. Ignatiev, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. W.M.S. Bandara, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, Mr. Noel Dario Quintero L., Permanent Representative of Venezuela and Mr. Elisha Muzonzini, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe.

145. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director said that in the previous weeks and months, numerous people had lost their lives in natural disasters and he especially wished to offer his condolences to the Government of the United States of America on account of the loss of lives and property as a consequence of hurricane Katrina. He joined the Chair in welcoming the new members of the Committee, and in saying farewell to those members who had left or were leaving. As some twelve members of the Committee were leaving, and five new members had arrived, he said that that constituted a broad change in the membership of the Committee, but he felt certain that the Committee would make the best use of the knowledge of the new members, and he was also sure that those leaving would be good ambassadors for UNEP and he wished them every success in their new responsibilities.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

146. Introducing the item, the Chair drew the attention of the Committee to the omission of three standing items from the agenda, "Implementation of the programme of work of UNEP and relevant decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum", "Status of the Environment Fund" and "UNEP relations with UNON", and said that the Committee had been provided with reports on those items in advance of the present meeting, and any questions in their regard could be raised under item 9 (Other matters).

147. One representative, speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed concern that matters concerning the work programme and the Environment Fund, which constituted the core business of the Committee according to its mandate should no longer be substantive items of the agenda. Several other representatives expressed a similar view. The Chair said in response that the omitted items would be included in the agenda of the following meeting of the Committee. That was corroborated by the Executive Director, who, with regard to relations with UNON, clarified the point that UNON was a service provider to UNEP, and also provided a service to other United Nations agencies based in Gigiri; questions concerning the current construction works belonged to the latter category, and in that regard he recommended that a specific meeting should be held to explain the current construction plans.

148. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/92/1 and UNEP/CPR/92/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Elections of the Vice-Chairs of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2005

149. Following the election of the Chair, one of the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur at the ninety-second meeting, and in accordance with rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council and the established pattern of rotation among the various regional groups of posts in the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the following officers were elected by acclamation for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2007, after nomination by their respective regional groups, which completed the Bureau of the Committee:

150. Vice-Chair: Mr. Wilson K. Mazimra (Zambia)

151. Vice-Chair: Mr. Antonio José Rezende de Castro (Brazil).

Item 4: Adoption of the minutes of the ninety-first meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 9 June 2005

152. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the ninety-first ordinary meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 9 June 2005.

Item 5: Schedule of the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP

153. Introducing the item, the Chair referred to the schedule of work of the Committee for the period ending 28 February 2006, as agreed by the Bureau on 13 July and previously circulated to the members of the Committee. He drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the rescheduling of the date of the ninety-third meeting of the Committee from 7 December 2005 to 28 November 2005, to allow the interpreters to service the meetings of the Montreal Protocol and the Vienna Convention, to be held in Dakar, 12–16 December 2005. Some subcommittee meetings would also have to be rescheduled accordingly.

154. Several representatives expressed their concern that the current schedule of Subcommittee I meetings, starting on 22 November 2005, might not give enough time for the review of documentation for the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, bearing in mind the timeframe for document distribution. In response, the Executive Director said that the secretariat did not intend to submit any draft decisions, and the documentation involved consisted of reports and background papers, which were not negotiated documents. Nevertheless, he recommended that the Bureau might reconsider the programme and reschedule subcommittee meetings. With that provision, the Chair said that the schedule of work was approved.

155. The Chair reported that the Bureau had met earlier that day and had decided to appoint the following chairs for the subcommittees:

156. Subcommittee I: Mr. Mohammad Raeisi (Iran)

157. Subcommittee II: Mr. Antonio José Rezende de Castro (Brazil).

158. Joint subcommittees I and II: the Chair of the Committee, with help from the Rapporteur.

159. The Executive Director paid tribute to the hard work and valuable contributions of the outgoing chairs of subcommittees.

Item 6: Status of the preparations of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

160. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the document entitled "Preliminary recommendations of the Executive Director on the structure and organization of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum", previously circulated to the members of the Committee, and highlighted its main contents. He recalled that the ninth special session would be held in Dubai from 7 to 9 February 2006, and would be preceded by the International Conference of Chemicals Management and the seventh Global Civil Society Forum, also to be held in Dubai, from 4 to 6 February and 5 to 6 February, respectively. He informed the Committee that, as in previous special sessions, no negotiated summary was anticipated at the end of the session/forum, but only a Chair's summary, which would be discussed but not negotiated.

161. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 7: Preparations for the 2005 World Summit

162. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that the main contribution of UNEP to the World Summit on the goals of the Millennium Declaration had been its input from the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in the shape of the ministerial consultations, as recorded in the President's summary.

163. He described in detail the special side event in which UNEP would play a part, namely a Policy Dialogue, to be held on 14 September 2005, featuring a discussion and debate of key findings on the economic case for the link between environment and poverty reduction. The Dialogue, entitled "Environment for the Millennium Development Goals: investment priorities to achieve poverty reduction", would build on the collective experience and recent analytical work of the Poverty-Environment Partnership, a network of more than 30 international development and environment agencies, including UNEP, convened to address poverty-environment linkages within the framework of the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Another side event would be the Head of State Dinner, to be held on the same day, to provide a forum for the announcement of major new commitments and initiatives related to the environment and the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

164. Several representatives said they would have welcomed more information on the environmental content of the final paper by the Secretary-General to be presented to the Summit; the Executive Director replied that no final information had been made available on that, as it was being negotiated.

165. One representative said that his Government hoped for a successful outcome, and believed that sustainable development priorities would be key to successful outcomes to the Summit. UNEP should start thinking about the process to follow up and take forward the outcomes.

166. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 8: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

167. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the written notes previously circulated to the members of the Committee on recent activities undertaken by him, the Deputy Executive Director and the secretariat, including the UNEP regional offices, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 9 June 2005. He gave a brief summary of those activities as well as of major forthcoming activities.

168. He noted that UNEP had continued its work on capacity building under the Bali Strategic Plan, and said he was pleased to report that China had made a significant earmarked contribution of \$500,000 to facilitate the implementation of that Plan and South-South cooperation, which had included an amount of \$300,000 in support of tsunami relief operations in Asia and \$200,000 for strengthening the capacity of African countries in disaster prevention.

169. One representative expressed interest in having information on the outcome of the high-level brainstorming workshop for secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, held in Nairobi in July 2005. The Executive Director said in reply that the responsible UNEP division would be pleased to

provide such information, and details of the final outcome would be distributed to the members of the Committee.

170. The representative of Nigeria expressed his thanks to UNEP for the holding of a training workshop on the Global Environment Facility in Abuja in July 2005, and added that he was encouraged by the positive response from the Division of Policy Development and Law with regard to the training of judges, as capacity building in that respect was vital for his country.

171. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 9: Other matters

172. Introducing the topic of the status of the Environment Fund, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the second quarter of 2005 had been circulated in August 2005. He then gave an update on the current financial situation, reflected in the tables before the Committee. He noted that further contributions had been received since that status report had been prepared and he had issued 100 per cent of the annual appropriations of the 2005 allocations approved by the Governing Council.

173. One representative observed that although the amount of contributions to the Environment Fund has increased, the number of countries pledging contributions had decreased. Responding to that comment, the Executive Director said that UNEP was aware that it was necessary to address this point, and he had in mind a benchmark figure of 100 countries.

174. The representative of China said that his Government had been pleased to make the contribution of \$500,000, mentioned earlier by the Executive Director, and he was pleased to note that the method of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions had resulted in an increase in contributions to the Environment Fund.

175. On organizational matters, one representative said that he had received a new organization chart for UNEP and he would like to have a concise explanation as to which positions were new and which had changed. He said he would be pleased if the secretariat could organize a special meeting to explain the administrative structure of UNEP.

176. One representative said that the periodic reports prepared by the secretariat on the implementation of the work programme and relevant decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum did not give readers a clear grasp of outcomes and of what had been achieved, and he believed that both the content and presentation of those reports for the coming year, with a new work programme and budget, could be improved. The Executive Director said that UNEP wished to improve with respect to results-based reporting, and the matter could be brought up in more detail in subcommittee meetings.

Item 10: Closure of the meeting

177. The Chair declared the ninety-second meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.05 p.m. on Monday, 12 September 2005.

VI. Minutes of the ninety-third meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

178. The meeting was opened at 9.55 a.m. on Monday, 28 November 2005, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Emilian Ion, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to UNEP.

179. The meeting was attended by 64 participants from 47 countries and one observer.

180. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Ali Benzerga, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Algeria, Ms. Cristina Funes-Noppen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belgium, Mr. Jaime Giron Duarte, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Mr. Frantisek Drozdek, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, Mr. Bo Jensen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark, Mr. Eric van der

Linden, Head of Delegation and Permanent Representative of the European Commission, Mr. András Kocsis, Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Hungary, Mr. Shahar Azani, Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel, Mr. Masahiro Omura, Minister and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. Luís João de Sousa Lorvão, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Portugal, Mr. Yum Ki-Syub, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Ms. Elisabeth Jacobsen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway, Mr. Valerly E. Egoskin, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. Amadou Kebe, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Senegal, Ms. Katarina Leligdonova, Deputy Permanent Representative of Slovakia, Mr. Gerardo Carrillo, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al Tashi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Yemen and Mr. Solomon L. Mumbi, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Zambia. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Ms. Barbara Richardson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada, Mr. Takuji Hanatani, Minister and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. J.F. de Sales Mascarenhas, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Portugal, Mr. Suk Jo Lee, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Alexander Micovcin, Deputy Permanent Representative of Slovakia, Ms. Ballo Sy, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Senegal, Mr. Ali Abdillah O. Atef, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Yemen, Mr. Enoch Yotam Chikamba, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Zambia and Mr. Elisha Muzonzini, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe.

181. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director said that he wished those representatives who were leaving or had left the Nairobi duty station every success in their new responsibilities.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

182. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/93/1 and UNEP/CPR/93/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Election of the Rapporteur

183. Following the election of the Chair, one of the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur at the ninety-second meeting, and in accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Governing Council and the established pattern of rotation among the various regional groups of posts in the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the following officer was elected by acclamation for the period up to 30 June 2007, after nomination by the Western European and Others group, to fill the vacancy left by the departure of Ms. Barbara Richardson (Canada):

184. Rapporteur: Mr. Jan Bauer (Netherlands).

Item 4: Adoption of the minutes of the ninety-second meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 12 September 2005

185. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the ninety-second ordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 12 September 2005.

Item 5: Report of the work of the relevant subcommittees

186. Introducing the item, Mr. Mohammed Raeisi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Chair of Subcommittee I, reported on the work of Subcommittee I since the ninety-second meeting of the Committee. He said the Subcommittee had held three meetings in that period. At its first meeting, it had elected Mr. Jan Bauer (Netherlands) as Rapporteur by acclamation and had thereafter and in subsequent meetings reviewed the unedited advance copies of documents for the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The meetings had been provided with comments on those documents by accredited international non-governmental organizations. The meetings had had extensive, constructive and fruitful discussions, with a variety of comments provided to improve the documents, as well as substantive presentations by the secretariat. Subcommittee I would continue its work of reviewing the other official documents being submitted to the Council/Forum, including the

reports on the state of the environment and the outcomes of major intergovernmental meetings of relevance to UNEP. Lastly, he thanked the members of Subcommittee I and the Rapporteur for their support in the conduct of its work.

187. The Chair, in his capacity as chair of Joint Subcommittees I and II, reported on the work of the Joint Subcommittees since the previous meeting of the Committee. The Joint Subcommittees had held one meeting, on 6 October 2005, in which they discussed reporting of the implementation of the UNEP programme of work and the status of the implementation of the Governing Council decisions. Divergent views had been expressed as to the merging of those two reports, and the meeting had requested the secretariat to provide information on reporting obligations of UNEP to the General Assembly, to help determine the appropriateness of the current reporting. Joint subcommittees I and II would continue their work, especially in respect of documents of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in the areas of international environmental governance. He thanked all the members of Joint Subcommittees I and II for their constructive contributions, and paid tribute to Ms. Barbara Richardson, the departing Rapporteur of the Committee.

188. Several representatives referred to the planned briefing on the United Nations Office at Nairobi, which had been cancelled at short notice, and wished to know when that meeting would be held. The Chair replied that it would be held early in the new year, on a date to be confirmed.

189. The Committee noted and endorsed the reports of the chairs of Subcommittee I and Joint Subcommittees I and II.

Item 6: Status of the preparations of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

190. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the document entitled "Recommendations of the Executive Director on the structure and organization of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum", previously circulated to the members of the Committee, and highlighted its main contents. He recalled that the ninth special session would be held in Dubai from 7 to 9 February 2006; it would be preceded by the International Conference on Chemicals Management and the seventh Global Civil Society Forum, also to be held in Dubai, from 4 to 6 February and 5 to 6 February, respectively. The outcomes and products of those two meetings would provide inputs to the ninth special session. He informed the Committee that, as in previous sessions, no negotiated summary was anticipated at the end of the session, but only a President's summary, which would be discussed but not negotiated. He then gave details of the substantive structure of the special session, and a day-by-day breakdown of the timetable.

191. With regard to logistics, he said that 1,500 hotel rooms would be available for the participants, and a large conference centre. All matters of visas and other arrangements had been fully discussed and agreed.

192. One representative wished to have further information about the youth and civil society meetings, so that members of the Committee could inform their capitals. The Executive Director said that all the available information had been circulated, but that it might be useful if two responsible UNEP staff-members were to be invited to brief one of the subcommittees on these meetings.

193. One representative welcomed the choice of themes for the ninth special session, namely, energy, tourism and chemicals management. He suggested that the topic for the working dinner on 8 February 2005 should be broadened to the outcome of the World Summit and entitled "Environmental outcomes of the World Summit". It would be useful if the secretariat could prepare a background document for the working dinner. The Executive Director said in reply that it had been a decision of the Governing Council to discuss environmental governance, but that that could be brought up in a broad discussion of the outcome of the World Summit, and he stated that those issues were addressed in the relevant official documents being submitted to the Council/Forum.

194. Regarding the agenda for the ninth special session, one representative said that he was fully satisfied with the agenda, particularly as he believed sustainable energy to be a key topic. For that reason, he hoped that the discussion on it would be a detailed one, and he appealed to countries to include energy specialists in their delegations.

195. One representative asked if countries could suggest persons who could make keynote addresses. The Executive Director advised that any such proposals should be addressed to the Bureau of the Committee and to the Bureau of the Governing Council.

196. One representative sought clarification concerning the social event planned for Thursday, 9 February, which had been planned to be about sustainable tourism. He wished to know if that event would be informal, or if a minister would be reporting, or if it would be in a round-robin format. The Executive Director replied that it would be a discussion meeting, but would have introductory remarks by experts.

197. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 7: Implementation of the Programme of Work of UNEP and relevant decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

198. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the progress report for the third quarter of 2005, entitled "Status of implementation of decisions of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum adopted at the twenty-second session, the eighth special session and the twenty-third session", which had been previously circulated to the Committee. The report had also highlighted the implementation status of the relevant Governing Council decisions in three selected areas, namely, poverty and the environment, preparation of the manual on compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements, and activities of UNEP as an implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

199. Reports had also been circulated to the members of the Committee on staffing, consultancies and institutional and corporate contracts.

200. The representative of Uganda commended UNEP on the workshop held in South Africa on ecosystems and poverty reduction, and said that her country had benefitted from the poverty and environment project. She wondered how collaboration between that project and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) could be enhanced. She also asked how UNEP could support the least developed countries to participate in GEF projects. The Executive Director replied that UNEP was pleased to receive recent funding for this cooperation with UNDP; with regard to GEF and participation in its projects by the least developed countries, UNEP had been particularly active in stimulating such participation and currently had placed a UNEP staff member with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) specifically for liaison with GEF.

201. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 8: Status of the Environment Fund

202. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the third quarter of 2005 had been circulated in November 2005. He then gave an update on the current financial situation, reflected in the tables before the Committee. He noted that further contributions had been received since that status report had been prepared and he had earlier issued 100 per cent of the annual appropriations of the 2005 allocations approved by the Governing Council. He said that it had been a long time since UNEP had been able to do so at such an early date.

203. Regarding the decrease in the number of countries pledging contributions to the Environment Fund, he said that he was convinced that that was not a trend.

204. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 9: Outcomes of recently held major meetings of relevance to UNEP

205. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director said that a number of important meetings of great interest to UNEP had been held since the previous meeting of the Committee. He then gave some brief summaries of matters of interest of those meetings:

206. The high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly had adopted the 2005 World Summit Outcome on 16 September 2005. He believed that the document constituted a powerful authoritative endorsement of UNEP and its work. It had emphasized environmental sustainability as a pre-condition for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and the section dealing with sustainable development had included specific references to a number of key environmental issues. The document had also

contained other references to areas of direct concern to UNEP, especially in relation to capacity development. The Summit had also adopted a paragraph on environmental governance, expressing the need for better environmental management and the need to explore the possibility of a more coherent structure to address that need. The General Assembly President had indicated that a working group would meet early in 2006 to consider that challenging task;

207. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification had taken place at the United Nations Office at Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005. While the outcomes of the session had not met countries' expectations, nevertheless both non-governmental organizations and Governments had stressed the importance of small-scale projects and community action. In the high-level special segment, a major initiative entitled "The New Alliance to Combat Land Degradation in Africa (TerrAfrica)" had been launched;

208. The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals had been held in Nairobi from 21 to 25 November 2005. The meeting had adopted a number of decisions on various species to be added to the appendix I and II listings, and had also adopted a budget for the coming triennium, as well as a new strategic plan for the period 2006–2011. In that regard, as a demonstration of its good will, UNEP had agreed to support the work of the Convention with a total of \$145,000 in the current year, and he hoped that this would encourage Parties and other partners to provide sufficient voluntary contributions to the Convention to enable it to implement current and future activities, as outlined in the new strategic plan.

209. Lastly, he said that the Executive Director had asked him to speak about the earthquake disaster in Pakistan, which had claimed the lives of over 80,000 people and displaced some 3 million people from their homes. He said that UNEP had immediately offered its assistance to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and was in the course of preparing the environmental chapter of the system-wide reconstruction efforts, including the problems of removing thousands of tons of debris, and water and sanitation problems, as well as addressing issues of possible deforestation following the urgent need for fuel on the part of the survivors. He added that the Government of Pakistan had expressed its gratitude to UNEP for its help.

210. One representative wished to have further information on the role of UNEP in connection with measures to monitor and control avian influenza and the relevant early warning system that had been established in that regard. The Deputy Executive Director replied that, in the wake of a resolution on avian influenza adopted during the third session of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Waterbirds (AEWA), held in Dakar, 23–27 October 2005, measures were being taken to set up an early warning system. UNEP was collaborating with the World Health Organization on the health aspects of the issue, and had designated a special envoy on avian influenza, but had no further current involvement.

211. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 10: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

212. Introducing the item, the Executive Director outlined recent activities undertaken by him and by the secretariat, including the UNEP regional offices, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 12 September 2005. He gave a brief summary of those activities as well as of major forthcoming activities. He made special mention of the memorandum of understanding signed with the organizers of the Beijing Olympic Games regarding assistance in environmental issues arising out of the event.

213. The representative of China said that he congratulated UNEP on its activities in new areas such as sport and the environment, and thanked UNEP for agreeing to help the organizers of the Beijing Olympics to care for the environment. He recalled that in his country a recent explosion at a chemical plant had caused toxic pollution in the adjacent river and had caused great damage to the ecosystem along the river and possibly downriver into territory of the Russian Federation. He said UNEP could help greatly by carrying out an environmental assessment of the situation to assist in mitigating the disaster. The Executive Director said in reply that the Chinese Embassy in Nairobi had been informing UNEP of the day-to-day situation following that toxic river disaster, and UNEP had been monitoring the situation.

214. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed his country's sympathy to China and the people affected by the toxic pollution and said his country would be pleased to cooperate to mitigate the disaster.

215. The representative of Germany drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the forthcoming Third International Conference on Early Warning, to be held in Bonn, 27–29 March 2006, and thanked UNEP for its help in preparing the Conference and for its participation in a number of early warning projects worldwide.

216. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 11. Other matters

217. The representative of Pakistan thanked the Executive Director for his commitment to send a UNEP delegation to donor meetings in Geneva and Islamabad, following the earthquake disaster in his country.

218. One representative wished to be informed about the procedure for the selection of a new Executive Director. In reply the Executive Director said that the General Assembly had decided to extend his mandate until the end of March, and the appointment of a new Executive Director was in the hands of the Secretary-General, who would present the name of the selected candidate to the General Assembly in due course.

Item 12. Closure of the meeting

219. The Chair declared the ninety-third meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.10 p.m. on Monday, 28 November 2005

VII. Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

220. The meeting was opened at 9.40 a.m. on Thursday, 19 January 2006, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Emilian Ion, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to UNEP.

221. The meeting was attended by 79 participants from 53 countries.

222. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Bhupinder Liddar Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada, Mr Sasa Mart, Deputy Permanent Representative of Serbia and Montenegro, Ms. Silvia Cosano Nuno, Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain and Mr. Kelebert Nkomani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Syed Zahid Hussain, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Mr. Yousef Rajab Raddi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Palestine, Mr. Djura Likar, Deputy Permanent Representative of Serbia and Montenegro and Mr. Luis Mateos Paramio, Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain. He also welcomed the delegation from the United Arab Emirates, the host country of the forthcoming ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and its associated meetings, to be held in Dubai from 4 to 10 February 2006.

223. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director said that, in the first meeting of the Committee of 2006, he wished all its members a successful and peaceful year. He joined the Chair in welcoming the new members of the Committee and in saying farewell to those representatives leaving or who had left the Nairobi duty station. He said that the current extraordinary meeting of the Committee provided an opportunity to resolve any pending logistical or substantive issues with regard to the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

224. The provisional agenda submitted by the secretariat was adopted.

Item 3: Report of the work of the relevant subcommittees

225.

226. Introducing the item, Mr. Mohammed Raeisi (Islamic Republic of Iran), the Chair of Subcommittee I, reported on the work of Subcommittee I since the ninety-third meeting of the Committee, held on 28 November 2005. He said that the subcommittee had held three meetings in that period and had continued its work of reviewing the unedited advance copies of documents for the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The meetings had also been provided with comments on those documents by accredited international non-governmental organizations. The meetings had had extensive, constructive and fruitful discussions, with a variety of comments provided to improve the documents. Lastly, he thanked the members of Subcommittee I and the Rapporteur for their support in the conduct of its work.

227. The Chair, in his capacity as chair of Joint Subcommittees I and II, reported on the work of the Joint Subcommittees since the previous meeting of the Committee. It had continued the task of reviewing documents for the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in the areas of international environmental governance. In the meeting of 17 January 2006, the Joint Subcommittees had been provided with a briefing on the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, particularly on the pilot projects in Africa involving six countries, as well as the input of the United Nations Development Programme. He thanked all the members of Joint Subcommittees I and II for their constructive contributions, and paid tribute to the Rapporteur of the Committee.

228. The Committee noted and endorsed the reports of the chairs of Subcommittee I and Joint Subcommittees I and II.

Item 4: Status of the preparations of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

229. In introducing the item, the Chair invited Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Bin Fahad, the head of the delegation from the United Arab Emirates and Chair of the Zayed Prize Committee, to come to the podium.

230. The Executive Director expressed his gratitude to the United Arab Emirates for hosting the special session, especially in view of its decision to go ahead with the special session and the Zayed International Prize Award as scheduled, despite the recent loss of its ruler, Shaikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai. He then referred to and commented in detail on the updated provisional timetable of meetings and events of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. He recalled that the ninth special session would be held in Dubai from 7 to 9 February 2006; and would be preceded by the International Conference on Chemicals Management and the seventh Global Civil Society Forum, also to be held in Dubai, from 4 to 6 February and on 5 and 6 February, respectively. The outcomes and products of those two meetings would provide inputs to the ninth special session. He recalled that the secretariat did not intend to present any draft decisions, and added that no Government to date had presented any such draft decision. With regard to the ministerial discussions, those would be held in what had come to be called the "Jeju setting", namely, roundtable discussions moderated by ministers, in which each minister would be invited to contribute to interactive discussions of the topics of energy and tourism, rather than giving speeches prepared in advance. With the agreement of the Chair, he then invited Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Bin Fahad, the head of the United Arab Emirates delegation and Chair of the Zayed Prize Committee, to address the Committee.

231. Mr. Fahad said that the United Arab Emirates and the Zayed Prize Committee were pleased to be able to cooperate with UNEP and the international community in promoting sustainable development in different parts of the world and showing the commitment of his country to the environment. He said that the preparations for the ninth special session and its associated meetings were on schedule, and his country was ready to make available an international conference centre and to provide world-class service for the session. He wished UNEP and the Committee every success in their deliberations. With the permission of the Chair, he invited Ms. Habiba Al Marashi, a member of his delegation, to give a

slide presentation describing the conference centre and logistics for the special session. In the course of a detailed presentation, she noted that the Zayed Prize web site contained detailed logistical information concerning the conference centre facilities and the range of hotel accommodation available.

232. One representative requested the intervention of UNEP to resolve some problems with regard to obtaining visas and the need to prepay for hotel reservations, and in reply Mr. Fahad and the Executive Director undertook to assist in resolving those problems without delay. The Executive Director said he would give the members of the Committee the names of UNEP liaison officials who could be contacted in the first instance either by embassies or by officials of Governments when issues needing solutions emerged.

233. Several representatives requested further information on the structure and topics for the working dinner to be held during the special session on the evening of Wednesday, 8 February 2006. In reply the Executive Director said that participation in that dinner would be restricted to ministers and heads of delegations, according to the recommendation of the Bureau of the Governing Council and the topics to be discussed would be the outcome of the World Summit and international environmental governance, particularly the issue of universal membership of the UNEP Governing Council. The secretariat would provide technical information on the relevant parts of the outcome of the Summit. The discussion, which would be opened by an introductory speech by the French Minister of the Environment, would not lead to any declaration or negotiated document.

234. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 5: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

235. Introducing the item, the Executive Director gave a brief summary of recent activities undertaken by the secretariat as well as of major forthcoming activities. He highlighted the following activities which he had attended: the Global Compact Summit Plenary, held in Shanghai on 30 November 2005; the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Montreal from 5 to 7 December 2005, during which he had met with Ms. Sommerstad, Minister of Environment of Sweden, for the signing ceremony of the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Adaptation to Climate Change; the opening of the fourth Global Meeting of the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, held in Nairobi on 14 December 2005; the seventh session of the Council of Arab Ministers responsible for the Environment (CAMRE), held in Cairo on 20 December 2005, and the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment, held in Nairobi on 15 January 2006. He informed the Committee that the Deputy Executive Director had attended various meetings and events, including the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza, held in Beijing, on 17 and 18 January 2006.

236. The representative of China said that the Beijing Pledging Conference mentioned by the Executive Director had achieved the result of raising an amount of \$1.9 billion to combat avian influenza, of which his Government had pledged an amount of \$10 million. The Conference had been jointly organized by the Government of China, the World Bank and the European Commission. The presence of a UNEP representative at the Conference had been highly appreciated by his Government.

237. One representative noted that resolution 205/60 of the latest meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had contained a number of requests to UNEP, while several multilateral agreements from time to time had drawn the attention of UNEP to certain issues or requested UNEP or its Governing Council to take note of environment-related issues. He wished to suggest that the secretariat might consider providing the Committee with a matrix of such requests by United Nations bodies and multilateral agreements and circulating the relevant texts to members. In reply, the Executive Director said that thought would be given to that suggestion.

238. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director.

Item 6: Other matters

239. One representative wished to have confirmation that the "Jeju setting" mentioned earlier by the Executive Director under item 4 of the agenda meant that each country would have a minister and one other person taking part in the discussions. The Executive Director confirmed that that was the case.

240. The same representative referred to the parking arrangements at Gigiri and requested that the Diplomatic car park should be reserved exclusively for diplomatic vehicles. The Executive Director undertook to speak to the appropriate authorities in the United Nations Office at Nairobi about the issue.

Item 7: Closure of the meeting

241. The Chair declared the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.15 p.m. on Thursday, 19 January 2006.

VIII. Minutes of the ninety-fourth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

242. The meeting was opened at 9.55 a.m. on Tuesday, 14 March 2006, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Emilian Ion, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to UNEP.

243. The meeting was attended by 82 participants from 60 countries and one observer.

244. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Ms. María Victoria Díaz de Suárez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Mr. Walter Johannes Lindner, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany and Mr. Selwyn Das, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Malaysia. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Jaime Girón Duarte, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia, Mr. Bernd Braun, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany, Mr. Mohammed Amar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Morocco and Mr. Pierre Combernous, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland. He also extended a special welcome to Mr. Donald Cooper, Undersecretary, Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission, Ministry of Health and Environment, and Rapporteur of the Governing Council.

245. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director joined the Chair in welcoming the new members of the Committee, said that he was sure that they would bring with them a great deal of knowledge and dedication. He also thanked those representatives who were leaving or had left the Nairobi duty station for their valuable contribution to the work of the Committee. He welcomed Mr. Donald Cooper, the Rapporteur of the Governing Council, who had come to work with the Committee to help finalize the report of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

246. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/94/1 and UNEP/CPR/94/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Adoption of the minutes of the ninety-third and the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 28 November 2005 and 19 January 2006, respectively

247. The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the ninety-third ordinary meeting and the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 28 November 2005 and 19 January 2006, respectively.

Item 4: Outcome of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

248. Introducing the item, the Executive Director noted the record number of 151 Member States that had participated in the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Dubai, 7 to 9 February 2006. Two important events had preceded the special session,

namely the International Conference on Chemicals Management and the seventh Global Civil Society Forum, held from 4 to 6 February 2006 and 5 and 6 February 2006, respectively. The Conference on Chemicals Management had adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), thus completing a four-year development process. The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum had, at its ninth special session, endorsed that outcome, and it was to be hoped that other international partners would do the same. The Global Civil Society Forum had focused discussions on tourism, energy, international environment governance and chemicals management, and participants had circulated written statements summarizing their positions on those topics, while their views on chemicals management had been circulated in the International Conference on Chemicals Management. Civil Society would convey the views expressed at the Forum to the civil society forum of the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

249. He then highlighted the deliberations of the Committee of the Whole and those of the Ministerial Consultations. The outcome of the Consultations on the themes of energy and the environment, and tourism and the environment was summarized in the President's summary report, which, on a proposal by the President in the closing plenary session, would be called the "United Arab Emirates Initiative", in honour of the commitment to the environment of the host country, the United Arab Emirates. That summary would be delivered to the President of the General Assembly and the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, to be held 1 to 12 May 2006 in New York.

250. He expressed his gratitude to the keynote speakers and moderators of the Ministerial Consultations, as well as to the members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for their valuable preparatory work before the special session.

251. Several representatives said that they believed that in future special sessions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should be held in Nairobi rather than in different countries, from the viewpoints of cost and efficiency. Several, including a representative speaking on behalf of the European Union, also said that there was a need to review the future role of those special sessions. The Executive Director said that he would recommend to his successor that discussions on a review of the role of special sessions should be held as soon as possible. He added, however, that most of the extra cost of holding the sessions outside of Nairobi was borne by the host countries.

252. One representative pointed out that there was no consensus on three issues, namely, universal membership of the Governing Council, voluntary indicative scale of contributions and the world environment organization; he said that further discussion of those issues could possibly split UNEP, and he suggested that further discussion on them should be deferred until the United Nations reform process was complete.

253. Several representatives, referring to the report of the proceedings of the special session, requested that the wording should make it clear that the statement by the French Minister of the Environment on international environmental governance did not represent a consensus or a negotiated statement. The Executive Director agreed that the statement in question had indeed been a contribution by the French Minister herself and did not represent a consensus or negotiated position.

254. The Executive Director, with the agreement of the Chair, then invited Mr. Donald Cooper, the Rapporteur of the Governing Council, to present to the Committee the relevant texts of the proceedings of the special session needing finalization, and to preside over that finalization with the advice of the members of the Committee.

255. Mr. Cooper recalled that, at its sixth plenary meeting on Thursday, 9 February 2006, the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum had agreed that the secretariat and the Rapporteur would work with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to finalize sections of the proceedings that had not been completed, so as to reflect the views expressed by the delegates during the session.

256. He then went through the relevant excerpts from the proceedings one by one, and arrived at their final form after an extended point-by-point discussion with the members of the Committee, based on suggestions made in writing by the members of the Committee. In that way, the Committee agreed on the final text as modified, and the Rapporteur declared the proceedings of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum finalized.

257. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director, together with the contribution of the Rapporteur in finalizing the proceedings of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

Item 5: Preparation of the Secretary-General's Strategic Framework and the programme of work of UNEP for the biennium 2008–2009

258. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director confirmed that UNEP had taken note of the comments made by delegates in the meetings of the Committee of the Whole of the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum concerning the Strategic Framework and the work programme and budget, Environment Watch proposal and the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan. The secretariat was working on new documents on those issues for the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council, and would consult with the Committee once those documents were ready. With regard to the biennium 2008–2009, the planning was caught up with the United Nations reform process, and with the review of mandates. While the secretariat had the intention of preparing the part of the Strategic Framework affecting UNEP, the review of mandates might lead to changes in the Framework for the 2008–2009 biennium.

259. One representative recalled that the Committee had been told that, following the Dubai special session, it would be considering the Bali Strategic Plan in further meetings.

260. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 6: Implementation of the programme of work of UNEP and the relevant decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

261. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the progress report for the fourth quarter of 2005, on the status of implementation of Governing Council decisions, staffing and consultancies, which had been circulated to the members of the Committee. He said that there was a relatively high vacancy rate of 14.8 per cent in professional posts, because in deference to his successor, and to allow the latter to make senior staff appointments as he might see fit for the organization, he had made no appointments for some time. He informed the Committee that because of that, senior staff managers had had to work double to cover the many vacant positions.

262. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Executive Director.

Item 7: Status of the Environment Fund

263. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the fourth quarter of 2005 had been circulated as part of the special session documentation in January 2006. He said he was pleased to inform the Committee that, as at 9 March 2006, there had been further improvements in the status of contributions for the 2004–2005 biennium; 129 countries had pledged contributions of \$118.5 million, and a total of \$117.4 million, namely 99 per cent of the pledged amount, had been paid, leaving an unpaid balance of \$1.1 million. He noted that when the 2004–2005 budget had been prepared, the figure of \$115 million had been considered optimistic. He highlighted the fact that the magic target of 100 countries contributing to the Environment Fund had been surpassed, with 129 countries now contributing. Finally, he gave details of the status of Trust Funds and earmarked contributions, as set out in table 4, summarizing the more detailed information presented in annexes 4 and 5 of the status report circulated in January 2006.

264. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 8: Outcomes of recently held major meetings of relevance to UNEP

265. Introducing the item, the Executive Director highlighted three meetings of great interest to UNEP that had been held since the previous meeting of the Committee: the International Conference on Chemicals Management, held just before the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which as stated earlier, had adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM); the seventh Global Civil Society Forum, held for two days prior to the ninth special session, also mentioned earlier, and the second meeting of the Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention, held in Geneva, 13–17 February 2006. He then gave brief summaries of some matters of interest of those meetings.

266. Several representatives took the floor to offer congratulations to UNEP on the successful conclusion of the SAICM process, stressing the importance of the Quick Start Programme. The Executive Director said that the Quick Start Programme and the creation of the secretariat for SAICM

were under way, and expressed his thanks to those who had already contributed to the Quick Start Programme. He said that SAICM had to form part of the UNEP budget in the future, as it was closely linked with the Bali Strategic Plan on capacity building.

267. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 9: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

268. Introducing the item, the Executive Director outlined recent activities undertaken by him and by the secretariat, including the UNEP regional offices, since the previous meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 19 January 2006. He said he did not wish to deal with forthcoming activities as those would fall within the province of his successor.

269. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 10: Other matters

270. The Executive Director said he wished to correct an omission on his part, in not having mentioned the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister of Spain, Ms. Maria de la Vega, and the pledge by Spain to increase its contribution to the Environment Fund from \$1.3 million to \$7 million.

271. One representative wished to have information on the ongoing management review of UNEP. The Executive Director said that the final review assessment, being carried out by a consulting company, would be completed at the end of March and would be distributed to the members of the Committee.

272. The Executive Director reported to the Committee that a memorandum of understanding had been signed with a private company, Standard Chrysler, on bio-fuel, linked to the production of biomass.

273. The Chair, speaking on behalf of the Bureau and on his own behalf, referred to the imminent end of the mandate of Mr. Klaus Töpfer as Executive Director. He praised the role the Executive Director had played in UNEP, making it a unique institution with higher visibility than before and with closer links with other programmes and agencies. He had enabled UNEP to improve its finances, since his strategy had proved to be acceptable and worthy of the trust of Governments throughout the world. He said that the Executive Director's mandate had been remarkable, and the latter had notably accorded a higher worth to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and had succeeded in having excellent coordination with other organizations. Many representatives, including those speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Group of 77 and China and regional groupings, joined the Chair in paying tribute to the work of the Executive Director over the eight years of his mandate. The representative of China said that the Chinese Government had always attached great importance to the contribution of the Executive Director, and as a token of their regard, the Tsinghua University in Beijing had conferred an Honorary Professorship on him. All concurred in saying that UNEP had changed significantly for the better under his guidance, and he had promoted the incorporation of environmental planning into development planning, perhaps his greatest achievement.

274. The Executive Director said that he simply wished to thank sincerely the members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for their good wishes and cooperation and stressed how much he had learned from them. He also expressed his particular thanks to Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel, the Deputy Executive Director, to Mr. Amadeo Buonajuti, head of the Office of the Executive Director, and Ms. Beverly Miller, Secretary, Governing Council, for their assistance to him during the eight years of his mandate. The Committee expressed its appreciation with a standing ovation for the retiring Executive Director.

Item 11. Closure of the meeting

275. The Chair declared the ninety-fourth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 1.35 p.m. on Tuesday, 14 March 2006

IX. Minutes of the ninety-fifth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

276. The meeting was opened at 9.45 a.m. on Thursday, 29 June 2006, by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Emilian Ion, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to UNEP.

277. The meeting was attended by 71 participants from 53 countries and one observer.

278. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Peter Hunter, Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Disasa Dirribsa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, Mr. Agustaviano Sofjan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia, Mr. Amro Al-Hourani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to Zimbabwe (pending the appointment of a new permanent representative), Mr. Nicolas Martín Cinto, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Spain, Mr. Georges Martin, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland and Mr. Jon Geddes, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Brett Aldam, Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Syeed Ahmed, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ms. Tebogo Nkwe, Consul General and Permanent Representative of Botswana, Mr. Murad Mussa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, Mr. Janos Budai, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary, Mr. S. Sayoga Kadarisman, Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia, Mr. Anibal Julio Jimenez y Abascal, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Spain, Mr. Akrasid Amatayakul, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand and Mr. John Virgoe, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

279. The Chair gave the floor to Mr. Saša Mart, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Deputy Representative of the Republic of Serbia to UNEP, who wished to make a statement. Mr. Mart said that he had the honour to inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives that following the Declaration of Independence adopted by the National Assembly of Montenegro on 3 June 2006, the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Boris Tadić, had, on 3 June 2006, notified the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the membership of Serbia and Montenegro in the United Nations, including all the organs and organizations of the United Nations system, would be continued by the Republic of Serbia, on the basis of Article 60 of the Constitutional Charter of Serbia and Montenegro. He said that consequently the name "Republic of Serbia" should be henceforth used in UNEP instead of the name "Serbia and Montenegro".

280. In his opening remarks, the Chair, welcoming the new members of the Committee, said that he looked forward to working closely with them. He also thanked those representatives who were leaving or had left the Nairobi duty station for their valuable contribution to the work of the Committee.

281. The Chair then welcomed Mr. Achim Steiner, the new Executive Director of UNEP, saying that it had been a very promising appointment by the General Assembly. He said that the Committee of Permanent Representatives was like a family, and as such it welcomed the Executive Director in its midst. He said that as partners, the members of the Committee were ready to help the Executive Director in his task and to contribute to his successfully carrying out his role. He said that UNEP was at a crossroads, having to bring the environmental dimension to development in a changing situation of system-wide reform of the United Nations. On behalf of the Committee and on his own behalf he congratulated Mr. Steiner on his appointment and said that he could count on the full support of the Committee.

282. The Executive Director thanked the Chair for his warm welcoming remarks, and said that his election by the General Assembly had been for him a humbling experience. He said that becoming the Executive Director of UNEP at the present point in time was not only exciting but also an extremely challenging task in the context of international development and international cooperation towards sustainable development. The international community was faced with the recognition that not enough had been done in the decade after the Rio Conference to protect the environment.

283. His participation some days before in the release of the publication entitled "African Environmental Outlook 2" had highlighted for him the continuing great concern for the natural

resources of Africa and their management, and the link with development. In addition, the current debate taking place concerning the reform of the United Nations itself provided an opportunity for the environment to take centre stage in the processes following upon the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel addressing the environment, humanitarian and development activities in the United Nations system, as well as the dialogues taking place on environmental governance in the General Assembly. Regarding UNEP itself, he noted that its mandate was as relevant as ever, and it faced the challenge of being able to leverage the notion of environmental leadership for the entire United Nations family, as a fundamental part of the way it works. He referred to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and said that he was committed to take it to the next stage, the one of implementation, taking into account its implications for the programme of work. He said that his predecessor had circulated to the committees a report on the operations and management of UNEP as an institution, called the Dalberg Report. He had taken that Report very seriously, and had already organized a senior management retreat to consider the main issues raised in it. He thanked the Deputy Executive Director and the staff of UNEP for steering the institution well, with great loyalty and commitment, through the three months of transition before his arrival in Nairobi, which demonstrated the calibre and strength of UNEP staff. He looked forward with great optimism to working closely with the Committee of Permanent Representatives as part of the family.

284. Representatives speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Group of 77 and China, the various regional groupings and individual Governments took the floor to welcome the new Executive Director, and to express their readiness to cooperate fully with him in fulfilling his mandate.

285. Among the points raised in their statements, representatives highlighted what each considered to be the main challenges faced by the new Executive Director; those included the need to consider the geographical distribution of appointments to senior management posts in UNEP, the need in general for a clear personnel policy, more dialogue and interactive debate with regional groupings, the need to proceed to the implementation stage of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, and the strengthening of the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi and its regional offices to achieve further decentralization.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

286. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/95/1 and UNEP/CPR/95/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Adoption of the minutes of the ninety-fourth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 14 March 2006

287. The Committee approved and adopted as amended the minutes of the ninety-fourth ordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 14 March 2006.

Item 4: Report of the work of Subcommittee II

288. Mr. Antonio José Rezende de Castro (Brazil), the chair of Subcommittee II, reported on the work of that Subcommittee since the previous meeting of the Committee on 14 March 2006. He said that Subcommittee II had held a total of five meetings in April and May 2006, and had undertaken intensive consultations on the proposed Strategic Framework for the period 2008–2009: part two: Biennial Programme Plan 2008–2009: programme 11: Environment. The outcome of that work had been reflected in the chair's transmittal note to the Deputy Executive Director, dated 11 May 2006. He had been informed by the secretariat that the proposed Strategic Framework document containing the inputs of the Committee had been transmitted on 12 May to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (OPPBA), for its subsequent submission to and consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC). He thanked all members of Subcommittee II and the secretariat for their support to him in conducting the work of Subcommittee II, and he expressed his appreciation to Ms. Petra Menander Ahman (Sweden) for her support as rapporteur of the Subcommittee.

289. The Committee took note with appreciation and endorsed the report submitted by the chair of Subcommittee II.

Item 5: Preparation of the work of the Committee for the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

290. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that the major issues to be addressed by the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum would be the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, the ongoing work of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian and environmental activities, the UNEP budget and work programme for 2008–2009, and the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242, bearing on the issue of universal membership of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, participation by all Member States and the heads of relevant United Nations agencies in the ministerial consultations and the means to facilitate maximum review by Governments at the ministerial consultations of important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment. He confirmed that the secretariat would, on the basis of decisions adopted by the twenty-third session and the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, as well as the standing items to be reported upon, prepare a total of 11 working documents for submission to the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. It would also prepare suggested actions for the consideration by the Committee on three substantive areas, as mandated by decisions of the twenty-third session, namely, an omnibus decision on international environmental governance (which should touch upon financing of UNEP, universal membership, environment watch, the Environmental Management Group and the Bali Strategic Plan), the updated water policy and strategy of UNEP, and on the budget and work programme for 2008–2009, and thereafter the Committee would prepare the relevant draft decisions. He then proposed a timeframe for the preparation and distribution of documents. He noted that the Bureau of the Committee had agreed on a table indicating the relevant operative paragraphs of Governing Council decisions adopted by its twenty-third session and the ninth special session. That table was currently before the Committee, with information on the proposed apportionment among the relevant subcommittees of the Committee, as well as on the legislative working documents to be prepared in response to those decisions.

291. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Executive Director.

Item 6: Implementation of the programme of work of UNEP and the relevant decisions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

292. Introducing the item, the Executive Director referred to the progress report for the first quarter of 2006, on the status of implementation of Governing Council decisions, and on staffing and consultancies, which had been circulated to the members of the Committee. He said that there was a high vacancy rate of 17.9 per cent in professional posts, and 10.4 per cent in general service posts. He said that if the figures seemed high it was because his predecessor had not wished UNEP to proceed with appointments during the transitional stage. He said he had noted the point made about the geographical distribution of staff appointments and he hoped to provide the Committee with a briefing on a clear plan for the future at its following meeting.

293. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Executive Director.

Item 7: Status of the Environment Fund

294. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the status report of the Environment Fund for the first quarter of 2006 had been circulated to the members of the Committee. He said he was pleased to inform the Committee that, as at 20 June 2006, there had been further improvements in the status of contributions for the 2006–2007 biennium; 66 countries had pledged contributions of \$46.5 million, and a total of \$19.2 million had been paid, leaving an unpaid balance of \$27.3 million. The projected amount for 2006 came to \$64.3 million, and for 2007 \$64 million, totalling \$128.3 million for the biennium. That was lower than the estimated \$135 million in the budget presentation in February 2005 to the UNEP Governing Council. He said that there was a need for Member States to make additional pledges, urging countries to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund for the biennium 2006–2007, and he reminded those who had made pledges to make their contributions as soon as possible. Finally, he gave details of the status of trust funds and earmarked contributions, as set out in table 4, summarizing the more detailed information presented in annexes 5 to 7 of the status report circulated in May 2006.

295. Several representatives voiced their concern at the apparent shortfall in Environment Fund contributions, while one asked if more might be expected from the regular United Nations budget, in the context of the current United Nations system-wide review. In reply, the Executive Director informed the Committee that he would give due consideration to the financial situation of UNEP. Responding to a question by one of the representatives as to the reasons and the potential consequences for the implementation of the programme in the year 2007, the Executive Director said he would come back on this issue at a later stage.

296. The Committee took note with appreciation the report submitted by the Executive Director.

Item 8: Report of the Executive Director on recent activities and major forthcoming activities

297. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director outlined recent activities undertaken by him during the previous three months while he was Officer-in-Charge of UNEP, since the previous regular meeting of the Committee, held on 14 March 2006.

298. Among forthcoming activities, he mentioned the Third Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly, to be held in Cape Town, 29–30 August 2006. This would mark a significant point in the history of GEF, as it coincided with the start of the fourth phase of the Facility, following the agreement of donors to a fourth replenishment of the Trust Fund, and it also coincided with new developments in the way of allocating funds through a framework (RAF) adopted by the GEF Council in September 2005, as well as with the start in office of Ms. Monique Barbut, the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer. The Executive Director of UNEP was expected to attend the Assembly.

299. Several representatives took the floor to refer to Global Environment Facility funding, expressing their concern about the consequences of the application of the resource allocation framework, as well as the need for capacity-building on how to proceed to access funds from the Facility, as had been stressed in the eleventh regular session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), held in Brazzaville from 22 to 26 May 2006

300. The Executive Director responded by saying that the situation of GEF was becoming more complex, and access to funding more difficult. He offered to organize a briefing at the following meeting of the Committee on the GEF replenishment, on an analysis of the GEF portfolio and how UNEP should position itself with GEF.

301. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report submitted by the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 9: Other matters

302. There were no other matters.

Item 10: Closure of the meeting

303. The Chair declared the ninety-fifth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 12.05 p.m. on Thursday, 29 June 2006.

Minutes of the ninety-sixth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

304. The meeting was opened at 9.45 a.m. on Wednesday, 27 September 2006, by the Acting Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Mohammed Raeisi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to UNEP.

305. The meeting was attended by 78 participants from 49 countries and one observer.

306. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Mustapha Seddiki, Deputy Permanent Representative of Algeria, Mr. Daniel Chuburu, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina, Mr. A.M. Yakub Ali, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Mr. Zhang Ming, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of China, Mr. Rodrigo Gaete, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile, Mr. Jeremie Robert, Deputy Permanent Representative of France, Mr. Emmanuel Isoze Ngondet, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Gabon, Mr. Gabor Sagi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary, Mr. Wellington Pakia Godo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya, Mr. Ahmed Bader Mahmoud Al-Razouqi, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative of Kuwait, Mr. Hesham Ali Sherif, Chargé d'Affaires and Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mr. Juan Carlos Cué Vega, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico, Mr. Abdelilah Benryane, Chargé d'Affaires (Head of Mission) and Permanent Representative of Morocco, Ms. Laetitia van den Assum, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, Mr. Iftikhar A. Arain, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Mr. Gye-Yeong, First Secretary and Focal Point to UNEP of the Republic of Korea, Ms. Mary Issa Mushi, Deputy High Commissioner and Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, and Mr. James Stewart, Permanent Representative of the United States of America. He also bade farewell to the following representatives who had recently left or were leaving the Nairobi duty station: Mr. Abdelhakim Mihoubi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Algeria, Mr. Jim Wall, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Canada, Mr. Pedro Undurraga Mackenna, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile, Mr. Guo Chongli, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of China, Mr. Constantinos Eliades, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Cyprus, Mr. Laurent Viguie, Deputy Permanent Representative of France, Mr. Andrew Kiptoon, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya, Mr. Adel Mohammad, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative of Kuwait, Mr. Taher Ali Marwan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Ms. Margarita Dieguez Armas, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico, Ms. M.W. J. A. (Tanya) van Gool, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, Mr. Sang-Pal Lee, Focal Point to UNEP of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Emilian Ion, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative of Romania, Mr. Melvin H. Chalobah, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, Ms. Karen Levine, Permanent Representative of the United States of America and Ms. Maya Han, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America.

307. In his opening remarks, the Acting Chair, welcomed the new members of the Committee and thanked those representatives who were leaving or had left the Nairobi duty station for their valuable contribution to the work of the Committee.

308. Mr. Achim Steiner, the Executive Director of UNEP, said that, on his own behalf and on behalf of the secretariat, it was a great pleasure to welcome the new members of the Committee to the UNEP family, and to thank those who had left or were leaving soon. He also thanked the Acting Chair for having steered the Committee through the weeks since the departure of Mr. Emilian Ion, the outgoing Chair of the Committee.

309. Mr. Stewart, the new Permanent Representative of the United States of America, said that it was a great honour for him to work with the Committee, and to extend his personal welcome to the Executive Director.

310. The representative of Finland, speaking on behalf of the European Union, of which her country held the current Presidency, also welcomed the appointment of the Executive Director and said that she was looking forward to working with him.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

311. The provisional agenda, as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/96/1 and UNEP/CPR/96/1/Add.1, was adopted.

Item 3: Election of the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP

312. The Acting Chair recalled that the office of the Chair of the Committee had become vacant through the departure of Mr. Emilian Ion from the Nairobi duty station on 1 September 2006, and that, in accordance with the relevant Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, the meeting should elect a new Chair for the period up to June 2007. He was pleased to inform the Committee that the Eastern

European Group had met and agreed to nominate Mr. Igor Liška (Slovak Republic) as Chair of the Committee. The Acting Chair placed this nomination before the Committee, whereupon Mr Liška was elected by acclamation. The Acting Chair then invited Mr. Liška to come to the podium and take over the Chair.

313. The Chair thanked the members of the Committee for electing him as Chair and Mr. Mohammed Raeisi for his contribution as Acting Chair.

314. The Executive Director said that on behalf of the secretariat he wished to offer his congratulations and best wishes to the Chair on his election and he was joined in those sentiments by representatives speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Group of 77 and China, and the various regional groupings, respectively.

Item 4: Adoption of the minutes of the ninety-fifth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 29 June 2006

315. The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the ninety-fifth ordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 29 June 2006.

316. The Executive Director was invited by the Chair to make a statement to the Committee.

317. The Executive Director recalled that almost three months had passed since he had taken up his appointment as Executive Director of UNEP, and he thanked the members of the Committee for welcoming him with open arms and for all their support and advice during these busy three months; the deep commitment of the secretariat and of the Committee had made his task much easier than he had been led to believe.

318. When he had first spoken to the Committee, he had outlined four areas to which he believed particular attention should be paid, which were relevant to the programme of work for the current meeting. Those were:

(a) Consideration of the question of economy and environment and the inextricable links between them in the context of sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) The need to emphasize anew the role of UNEP as first and foremost the environment programme for the entire United Nations family, given that environmental sustainability had repercussions for every single body of that family. In fulfilling that role, he noted, UNEP did not impose its views, but rather through the Environment Management group sought to help the entire United Nations to perform in regard to environmental questions. In that spirit, he had invested time in opening up a new and forward-looking relationship with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), noting that UNEP and UNDP each programme had a distinct role to play and could be truly complementary. UNDP had responded in a very positive manner, an example of which was a joint commitment to establish a joint poverty and environment centre through which UNEP and UNDP would provide advice to Governments through the UNEP regional offices and the UNDP country offices, respectively;

(c) The need to give strategic priority to relationships with civil society, including the private sector, viewing its members not merely as external stakeholders and approaching them institutionally and in a more explicit manner aimed at investing in focused partnerships;

(d) The need, with regard to the effectiveness of UNEP management, for a review of managerial practices, particularly because integration is lacking and in recognition of the fact that with the right conditions in place UNEP staff could do their jobs better.

319. He also noted that he had chosen to follow a route that had proved to be very productive: he had invited staff from middle management to form four task forces, in order to capture the understanding of staff members and plan a road map to show the way forward, with clear terms of reference and deadlines, as follows:

(a) **Task force I: Programme** To deal with the incorporation of the Bali Strategic Plan into the 2008–2009 programme of work, as a key commitment; a paper would later be circulated to put forward measures for the implementation of that programme of work, as well as steps to incorporate the Bali plan, at least in part, within the current 2006–2007 biennium. With the cooperation of the secretariat and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, he hoped to report back on the

implementation of the Bali Plan for the 2006–2007 biennium to a subcommittee meeting on 23 November 2006;

(b) **Task force II: Management** To make recommendations on the effectiveness and efficiency of UNEP managerial processes, and the relationship between UNEP and UNON. Here the focus was on business processes and strategies for finance, human resources, and administrative support systems;

(c) **Task force III: Human resources and recruitment** To deal with human resources issues and to formulate an articulated human resources strategy, including the modalities of the filling of vacancies and clearing the backlog of new appointments. Any new posts would be filled by drawing on the existing system, through redeployment: he wished to stress that the current short-term adjustments would not entail making anyone redundant;

(d) **Task force IV: Information and communication technology** To deal with information technology and address knowledge management support systems. The task team would begin its work in two weeks time.

320. At a recent senior management meeting, he had presented proposals for a 3–12–24 framework for change and improvement; the task forces were to have three months (currently nearly over) to make specific recommendations; the following 12 months would constitute a time period for making directional, programmatic and infrastructural changes; after the following 24 months of working with these changes incorporated, some key indicators and monitoring would test the credibility and public reception of those changes and enable an examination of any signs of improvement in the system..

321. The participants at the senior management retreat had proposed a number of changes, some of which the Executive Director had already implemented. The proposed changes included the following:

(a) The Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director needed to be one team representing UNEP, and he had decided to merge their separate staffs into one executive office. He took the opportunity to thank Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel, the Deputy Executive Director, for the work that he had done and continued to do, especially in making the transitional period and his arrival as Executive Director as smooth and as easy as possible;

(b) In the face of the challenge of a divisionally focused institution that lacked integration to facilitate rapid change and results and a strategic focus, he would establish an implementation team to bring to divisional implementation a focus and horizon under a common mandate. Among other things, the programme of work would be made to reflect the Bali Strategic Plan in full, and the Plan would not be a separate reporting item;

(c) A senior adviser would be appointed to coordinate information technology support planning;

(d) One further area still being examined was gender mainstreaming in UNEP; while the issue could not be forced, a new gender action plan had been agreed upon some weeks earlier;

(e) Another major decision made had been to consolidate the programme by moving the branches under the Division of Policy Development and Law to other divisions; for example, the legal and environmental law team would be moved to the Division of Environmental Conventions. A new capacity for policy guidance and strategy would be created within the Executive Director's office;

(f) A senior adviser on resource mobilization and management would be appointed as well and would deal also with UNON.

322. With regard to the financial situation of UNEP, he stated that it remained sub-optimal: current estimates showed an income of \$61 million for 2006 and \$64 million for 2007; together these added up to a figure which was \$9.4 million lower than the original budget approved for the biennium. On that basis, he had had no choice but to continue to hold to the current allocation of 88.5 per cent to each division as a holding resolution and limit on spending. In these circumstances, it might be necessary to ask the forthcoming session of the Governing Council for authority to drop some activities of those planned.

323. As the Committee was aware, the Secretary General was due to report on a planned reform of the United Nations in early November 2006. His understanding was that the outcome would be positive in terms of the role of UNEP, and it would likely be calling for a more focused and strengthened role for UNEP in the future; such a result would remain at the level of an abstract appeal if funding for it were

not made available. He hoped therefore that signals could be sent back to show how the strengthening of UNEP could be done in practical terms.

324. Finally, he stressed that while the UNEP secretariat could do a lot inside the organization to improve the programme and its impact, it would be the means and resources coming from outside that would determine whether it could succeed in moving UNEP close to the high level of success that was expected of it.

325. Many representatives took the floor to commend the Executive Director on his statement and to welcome his initiative and the steps he had taken, and to assure the Executive Director on their cooperation. Several representatives reiterated the need to strike a balance in making appointments, from the viewpoint of equitable geographical representation. Some also expressed their concern that new appointment of senior advisers might create a new layer of bureaucracy within the organization.

326. In response, the Executive Director assured members that no new layer of bureaucracy would be created with the appointment of senior advisers, but simply the Executive Director's office capability would be strengthened.

327. The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the Executive Director.

Item 5: Report of the work of subcommittees

328. Mr. Mohammad Raeisi (Islamic Republic of Iran), the chair of Subcommittee I and joint Subcommittees I and II, reported on the work carried out since the previous meeting of the Committee on 29 June 2006. He said that Subcommittee I had held one meeting on 31 August 2006. At that meeting Subcommittee I had considered the document on the updated water policy and strategy of UNEP. A variety of specific comments had been made and the document, as revised based on those discussions, would be circulated as a final draft of the water policy and strategy of UNEP, no later than September 2006, for presentation to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session. During the following months, Subcommittee I would undertake further preparatory work for the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council, including the consideration of documents on programmatic matters and relevant draft decisions.

329. He said that joint Subcommittees I and II had held two meetings, on 12 September and 14 September, since the previous meeting of the Committee on 29 June 2006. The meeting on 12 September had considered five mandatory reports covering the second quarter of 2006, namely, on the status of the Environment Fund, on the staffing of UNEP, on consultancies, on the institutional and corporate contracts and on the status of the implementation of Governing Council decisions. He noted that it had been agreed by the Bureau that the purpose of addressing these reports at the Subcommittee level was to enable the main Committee meeting to become more of a forum for strategic policy decisions, while maximizing the use of Subcommittees. At the opening of the meeting, the Executive Director had taken the opportunity to apprise the Committee of ongoing changes in the institution, progress in the preparation of the programme of work as well as decisions reached at the Senior Management Retreat held earlier in the month. The meeting held on 14 September 2006 had undertaken discussion on the structures and organization of sessions of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. After a presentation by the Deputy Executive Director, relevant questions to improve the organization of the ministerial consultations had been tabled, and members had been asked to communicate with their capitals to provide responses to the questions, as revised by discussions at the meeting, by 6 October 2006. That would enable the secretariat to prepare a summary document for further consideration by Joint Subcommittees. In the following months, the Joint Subcommittees would discuss the participation in and structure of the ministerial consultations of the forthcoming session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, as well as further preparations for that session. In closing he expressed his appreciation to all members of the Subcommittees for their constructive contributions.

330. Mr. Jan Bauer (Netherlands), the Acting Chair of Subcommittee II gave a brief report on the work of that Subcommittee since the previous meeting of the Committee on 29 June 2006. The Subcommittee had held a total of six meetings during September 2006, and had considered the draft proposed programme of work and support budget of UNEP for 2008–2009, and had also considered changes suggested by the United Nations Committee for Programme and Coordination to Programme 11: Environment, of the Secretary-General's proposed strategic framework for the period 2008–2009, as contained in the document transmitted by that Committee and distributed by the secretariat on 14 September 2006. In the course of its deliberations on the programme of work, the

Subcommittee had provided inputs for the improvement of the relevant document, including the need for the full integration of the strategic framework, including benchmarks and the financial framework components, into the proposed programme of work, which would also have a clear reflection of gender issues, as well as the shifts and differences from the current 2006–2007 programme of work. It was expected that Subcommittee II would meet on 4 October 2006 for the final review of the proposed programme of work, including the proposed budget, and it was also expected that at the present meeting the Committee would empower Subcommittee II to consider and approve on its behalf the outcome of the Committee's consideration of the draft proposed budget and programme of work, prior to its submission to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). Finally, he expressed his appreciation all members of the Subcommittee and to the secretariat for their constructive contributions.

331. Several representatives took the floor to stress the need for the earliest possible distribution of information on the budget in order to enable them to share the outcomes with their capitals in good time.

332. The Committee approved and adopted the reports of the chairs of the Subcommittees, and agreed to entrust Subcommittee II with the task of approving the draft proposed budget and programme of work on its behalf.

Item 6: Schedule of work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives for the period up to February 2997

333. Introducing the item, Chair referred to the proposed schedule of work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a document on which had been tabled before the Committee.

334. Several representatives took the floor to question the advisability of considering, in a brainstorming session on 19 October 2006, a document to be circulated on 16 October on improving the organization of the ministerial consultations, and said that their capitals might wish to contribute to the brainstorming session, whereas, as the dates currently stood, that would not be possible. In response, the Executive Director said the brainstorming session had been intended to be an informal process rather than a consultative process; he said that nevertheless the secretariat would try to deliver the document in question a week earlier than planned.

335. The Committee agreed to approve the proposed schedule of work

Item 7: Status of the preparation for the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

336. Introducing the item, the Deputy Executive Director conveyed thanks on behalf of the Executive Director and on his own behalf to the chairs of the Subcommittees for helping to prepare the ground in regard to consultations on efforts to enhance the role of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. He recalled that during his presentation to Subcommittee I, a deadline for comments and answers to the questions he had posed had been set at 5 October 2006. Once those replies were received, there was need to compile them and prepare a summary for consideration the planned brainstorming session on 19 October 2006; given the wishes of members of the Committee concerning the very tight schedule, the secretariat would try to complete the compilation and summary a week earlier than planned, i.e. on 9 October instead of 16 October. As well as that, additional Subcommittee meetings could be scheduled, and the topic could also be brought to the ministerial consultations at the forthcoming session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, but in any case the secretariat would be guided by the Bureau of the Governing Council in regard to the best way to record the consensus on how to improve the role of the Governing Council.

337. He said that the forthcoming session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum would be preceded by the Civil Society Forum, itself preceded by regional civil society forums. In the ministerial consultations, the two main themes would be environment and globalization, touching on ecosystem services and human well being, and, a discussion on reform in general and the role of UNEP in the larger context of the United Nations reform. Regarding draft decisions, the secretariat was preparing some four decisions, namely, on the work plan and budget, an "omnibus" decision on international environmental governance (which should touch upon financing of UNEP, universal membership, environment watch, the Environmental Management Group and the Bali Strategic Plan), a decision on water policy and strategy and lastly a draft decision on an updating amendment to the

Global Environment Facility. It was his understanding that Morocco would be proposing a draft decision on waste, and he recalled that member States were sovereign and might wish to propose other draft decisions. He confirmed that the secretariat would, on the basis of decisions adopted by the twenty-third session and the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, as well as the standing items to be reported upon, prepare a total of 11 working documents, a schedule of which had been issued, for submission to the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council.

338. The representative of Finland, speaking on behalf of the European Union, suggested that a critical path analysis would be useful in planning the preparations for the forthcoming Governing Council session. Several representatives agreed and supported that suggestion.

339. The representative of Uganda, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, called for adequate discussions with the Committee, given that developing and developed countries had different perspectives on the theme of globalization and environment. Regarding the United Nations reform and its possible impact on UNEP, she said that a scenario should be put in place so that the Governing Council session could give the question due consideration. She also suggested that the Committee should begin soon to consider the draft decisions. The representative of Sweden said that her Government would be making a proposal regarding the outcome of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum sessions, while another representative said that in his view, the Global Ministerial Environment Forum should not be taking decisions, but simply have an honest exchange of opinions. The same representative added that he would like to stress the need for time to consult with capitals and called for those Governments intending to put forward draft decisions should give adequate notice in their regard.

340. The Committee took note with appreciation the report submitted by the Deputy Executive Director.

Item 8: Other matters

341. Introducing the item, the Chair called on Mr. George Krhoda, Permanent Secretary of the Kenya Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, to brief the meeting on preparations for the forthcoming twelfth session of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to be hosted in Gigiri by the Kenya Government, from 6 to 17 November 2006.

342. Mr. Krhoda briefly outlined the logistical issues connected with the state of preparedness of the Kenya Government for hosting the session, the side events associated with the session, and the resource gap existing on the financial side, with a current shortfall of \$1.2 million: he appealed to countries to assist in closing that gap. Regarding the technical output of the session, he listed adaptation issues, technology transfer, market mechanisms and the Protocol and the future of the Convention.

343. The Chair informed the Committee that on the day following the present meeting of the Committee, Ms. Anna Tibaijuka, the Director-General of UNON, would brief the members of the Committee on preparations for the Convention session.

344. The Executive Director noted the vital importance of the twelfth session of the Convention, and said that on the following day he would join Ms. Tibaijuka in the briefing to the members of the committee.

Item 9: Closure of the meeting

345. The Chair declared the ninety-sixth meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives closed at 1.35 p.m. on Wednesday, 27 September 2006.

_____ -