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From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP):
58h Session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR 58)
(Geneva/hybrid, 14-17 December 2020)
- Statements by the EU and its Member States

**Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP)
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Agenda item 1: Adoption of the agenda

The EU and its Member States appreciate the efforts of the Bureau and the Convention Secretariat to organise meetings of the WGSR and of the EB despite the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We support holding the present meetings in a hybrid format in order to allow all Parties to participate while respecting hygienic and distancing requirements.

Nevertheless, the EU and its Member States are disappointed with the short duration and limited number of the meeting sessions. While we understand the limitations of the online platform, we call on the UNECE Secretariat to explore better solutions for future meetings, including alternative meeting options, to ensure that sufficient meeting time can be offered in case the current situation continues.

The EU and its Member States point out that the back-to-back session format creates challenges for EU coordination between WGSR and EB and requests that, should another such back-to-back meeting take place, there is at least one full day of break between the two meetings to allow sufficient time for our internal procedures; as always we hope for the understanding of other Parties on this. We also call on all Parties to ensure that the agreed contributions are paid in time and in full to ensure that financial aspects do not prevent us from holding more extensive meeting sessions.

We support the emphasis of the draft agenda on the Gothenburg Protocol review process as the legally and politically most important agenda item. We support the adoption of the proposed agenda.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the report of the fifty-seventh session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review

The report of the WGSR 57th session can be adopted as drafted.

Agenda item 3: Progress in the implementation of the 2020-2021 workplan

The EU and its Member States welcome the reports and take note of the progress as reported by TFTEI and TFRN (and TFIAM, as co-author of several documents discussed under this agenda item). The EU and its Member States submitted comments to the TFTEI and TFRN reports in June; no additional comments on those reports at this time.

On the draft Guidance on integrated sustainable nitrogen management:

We welcome the integration of most of our comments provided in June into the revised version of the document and have no additional comments on the draft document at this time. We encourage all Parties to make use of this guidance document and provide feedback to the TFRN and/or the WGSR on its application and possible needs for future review.

Agenda item 4: Hemispheric transport and control strategies for use in future scenarios

In line with the updated TFHTAP mandate, the task force should focus on all of the pollutants and precursors addressed by the Convention, particularly those with important transboundary influence at the global level, including persistent organic pollutants and mercury, with priority given to tropospheric ozone and aerosols. Methane and other ozone precursors were also specifically identified in the long-term strategy as a remaining challenge to be further addressed; information from TFHTAP to support policy-makers on this would be useful.

The EU and its Member States do not consider it possible to conclude the discussions on policy questions and policy guidance on the basis of the documents circulated before the WGSR 58 meeting; only initial discussions on these issues can take place until the previous work has been evaluated, in order to ensure that the next phase does not duplicate work already done and that resources are used in the most efficient way.

We nevertheless ask the TFHTAP to prioritise the Gothenburg Protocol review tasks first – noting that some review tasks overlap with the above mentioned policy questions development – and to please keep in mind our request for a more policy-oriented input to that process.

Agenda item 5: Review of sufficiency and effectiveness of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone

The EU and its Member States welcome the scope and procedure of the review of the Gothenburg Protocol (as amended) as outlined in the “Preparations...” document, noting that the indicated timing of the workplan might need some adjustments. The process is fully in line with the legal requirements of the Gothenburg Protocol and will facilitate a review, which moves the Convention at large forward.

There are some (few) additional items connected to the GP review that are not yet listed in the 2020-2021 workplan or covered by the mandates of task forces and centres. These items could be summarised in a new workplan item named “Carry out tasks to support the review of the Gothenburg Protocol”, to be based on the respective EB decision and financed via in-kind contributions and EMEP mandatory contributions. This proposal was submitted in writing as informal session document in advance of the session:

<i>Workplan item</i>	<i>Activity description/objective</i>	<i>Expected outcome/deliverable</i>	<i>Lead body(ies)</i>	<i>Resource requirements and/or funding source</i>
1.2.3 (new)	Carry out tasks to support the review of the Gothenburg Protocol	Input provided to support the review of the Gothenburg Protocol	All task forces, centres and ICPs under EMEP SB and WGE, in line with the review work programme	Within existing resources; or supplemented by voluntary additional in-kind/cash contributions from Parties

We thank the co-authors of the informal document on non-technical and structural measures, as they show cost-effective alternative means to abate air pollution which necessitates policy solutions different from technical measures. We would support the further exploration of the potential of emission reductions from structural changes as this could provide important input to the discussion on the Gothenburg Protocol review.

We thank the co-authors of the informal documents on ammonia and black carbon respectively, presented as input to the discussion on the Gothenburg Protocol review. We acknowledge that these informal documents on ammonia and black carbon provide a good starting point for the evaluations referred to in the Gothenburg Protocol, article 10 (paragraphs 3 and 4) without yet taking position on their content.

More detailed information and time for in-depth consideration is needed to conclude the full evaluation and for any final discussion on the possible need to revise Annex IX; this work should continue as part of the overall review of the protocol.

Agenda item 6: Reporting of the condensable part in emissions of particulate matter

The EU and its Member States would like to remind all Parties about our non-paper and proposal to establish a clear roadmap to advance the scientific work and the stepwise policy discussions on this complex issue. We acknowledge and appreciate the inclusion of several workplan items and several science questions on condensables by the review group (as discussed under agenda item 5); we stress the importance of solving these scientific issues to the extent possible for a better understanding to inform subsequent policy discussions.

The EU and its Member States welcome the offer by the EMEP SB Bureau to coordinate the science work on this by the EMEP SB task forces / centres and TFTEI; we urge the EMEP SB Bureau and its planned ad hoc group of experts to develop a roadmap proposal that could be presented to WGSR 59.

Agenda item 7: Election of officers

Our objective is to secure continuity and a fully functional WGSR Bureau.

We therefore support the proposal to defer elections of vice chairs of this group to its next session.

Agenda item 8: Other business

We would like to thank Markus Amann and those of his colleagues from the IIASA air pollution team who will leave IIASA/CIAM; we hope for continued high quality work and good cooperation with the IIASA team in the new constellation.
