**MINUTES OF BCOP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING -**

**Yerevan, Armenia, Tuesday, February 10, 12, and 13, 2015**

**PRESENT AT THE MEETING:**

1. Konstantin Krityan (Armenia – Chair of BCOP Executive Committee)
2. Anna Belenchuk (Russian Federation – Deputy Chair of BCOP Executive Committee)
3. Kanat Asangulov (Kyrgyz Republic - Member of BCOP Executive Committee)
4. Mikhail Prokhorik (Belarus - Member of BCOP Executive Committee)
5. Mladenka Karacic (Croatia – Member of the BCoP Executive Committee, present at the parts of the meeting taking place on February 12 and 13)
6. Maya Gusarova (World Bank – Resource team)
7. Naida Čaršimamović Vukotić (World Bank – Resource team)
8. Deanna Aubrey (World Bank – Resource team)
9. Živa Lautar (CEF – PEM PAL Secretariat)

Interpreters:

Marina Lazo, Juliia Timotin (ENG-RUS translation)

Marina Čvorović, Nataša Ristić (ENG-BCS translation)

**AGENDA ITEMS (Meeting held in three parts):**

1. Welcome(BCOP Chair, Konstantin Krityan)
2. **Confirmation of membership in Executive Committee**, welcome to new members (All)
3. **Attendance at plenary meeting** – observers and international organizations (Maya Gusarova)
4. Report on **BCOP participation in OECD Performance Network** Meeting (Anna Belenchuk)
5. Review of the implementation and updated **budget realization for 2014/2015 Action Plan** (Maya Gusarova and Ziva Lautar)
6. Process to collect **general** **feedback during plenary meeting** – roles of Executive Committee members (Konstantin Krityan/All)
7. Revised **BCOP Action Plan 2015-16** (Deanna Aubrey/All)
   1. Review of current Draft Action Plan and Budget
   2. Suggestions from Executive Committee
   3. Decision on process to gain member input during the plenary meeting (Agenda item only for the part of the meeting taking place on February 10)
   4. Review of the inputs collected from the members during the plenary meeting and formulation of Executive Committee 2015/2016 priority proposals to the membership to be shared with members on the last day of the plenary meeting (Agenda item only for the part of the meeting taking place on February 12)
8. Input to the **Mid-Term Review of PEMPAL Strategy 2012-17** – BCOP’s draft response (Deanna Aubrey/All).
9. Progress on plans for Executive Committee **study visit to South Africa** (Anna Belenchuk/Deanna Aubrey/Ziva Lautar)
10. **Communication** **between Executive Committee** – frequency, approach, use of wiki – use of Google translate (Resource Team)
11. Other business? Next meeting?

Materials to be distributed to support this meeting:

1. PEMPAL Strategy Mid-Term Review concept note
2. BCOP draft response to PEMPAL Strategy MTR
3. BCOP Action Plan 2015-16
4. Collated list of suggestions from Executive Committee

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1. **Welcome**

Mr. Konstantin Krityan, Chair of BCOP, welcomed participants to the Executive Committee meeting. He emphasized that he is very pleased to welcome PEMPAL to Yerevan, noting that this is first BCOP event there. He expressed regret that not all of the members could come to Armenia.

1. **Confirmation of membership in Executive Committee**

Ms. Naida Čaršimamović Vukotić conveyed the message to the Executive Committee from the newly appointed member of the BCOP Executive Committee, who was absent at the meeting due to inevitable personal obligations. Mr. Aljović, Assistant Minister for the Budget in Federal Ministry of Finance in Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed gratitude to the Executive Committee for accepting him to the Committee and his excitement about working together with them in future.

1. **Attendance at plenary meeting**

Ms. Maya Gusarova briefed the present attendees about participation of international organizations and countries that are not regular members of PEMPAL at this year’s plenary meeting. The meeting is attended by senior-level representatives from the World Bank (in addition to the regular resource team members from the World Bank) and the IMF. The OECD representative was supposed to join the meeting and was on the agenda until the last moment, but unfortunately, they had to cancel their participation due to unforeseen, urgent work obligations.

In terms of non-PEMPAL member countries, the Czech Republic was invited to contribute to the plenary meeting (as per earlier decision of the Executive Committee), but there was no response from their side. It was decided that for future events, the BCOP Resource Team will get in touch with IACOP to possibly get new contact information, as the Czech Republic is actively involved in IACOP. Eurasian Commission is represented by two participants.

1. **BCOP participation in OECD Performance Network**

Ms. Anna Belenchuk attended the 10th annual meeting of the OECD Working Group on Performance-Based Budgeting in Paris, November 24-25, 2014 on behalf of BCoP. She briefed the Executive Committee members about the meeting. The purpose of this OECD Working Group is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of resource allocation and management in the public sector through the promotion of the participating countries in the development of implementation of Performance-Based Budgeting and PFM reforms. Ms. Anna Belenchuk pointed out interesting presentation from US representative and stressed that participation in such events is very useful for BCoP members, both from the perspective of gaining new insights about trends in developed countries, as well for the perspective of PEMPAL and BCoP visibility.

1. **Budget Realization for 2014/2015 Action Plan**

Ms. Gusarova briefed the members of Executive Committee on the status of budget realization for 2014/15, pointing out the current balance, which shows approximately 15.000 USD of savings. The budget for study visit to South Africa amounts to 65.000 USD. Action plan 2014/15 predicts 90.000 USD to be spent for working group meetings/knowledge product development, which has not been spent, since the process of creation of the new BCoP Working Groups has been somewhat longer than anticipated. The Executive Committee discussed the options of spending part of these funds for an event of Working Group for Budget Literacy in June, and requesting transferring the remaining funds for the same Working Group to the 2015/2016 budget from the Steering Committee.

1. **Process to collect general membership feedback during plenary meeting**

The Executive Committee, based on the experience from previous plenary meetings, decided to use three mechanisms to collect feedback from members:

1. Action planning, in which detailed feedback of country priorities for BCoP Action Plan 2015/2016 will be collected in writing.
2. Collecting positive and negative comments about the format and content of the current plenary meeting on white boards in the meeting’s conference room.
3. Social reporting would be done by the Secretariat, while all members to be encouraged to also take photos and contribute to social reporting.

Mr. Konstantin Krityan suggested that ExCom members should all be actively involved in encouraging membership to give feedback, and he appointed Anna Belenchuk and Kanat Asangulov to make a short presentation on feedback collection mechanisms to the participants during the plenary meeting.

1. **BCOP Action Plan 2015-16**
   1. **Review of current Draft Action Plan and Budget**

Ms. Deanna Aubrey explained the draft proposed 2015/2016 BCoP budget distribution, based on the overall budget limit of 330.000 USD, which is the limit of the budget funds for the 2015/2016 for each of the COPs, as advised by the Steering Committee. The draft envisages distributing this amount into 150.000 USD for plenary meeting, 45.000 USD for OECD/SBO meeting, and 90.000 USD for study visits and 45.000 USD on working groups.

* 1. **Suggestions from Executive Committee**

Overall, the Executive Committee members agreed with the general proposed draft distribution of the 2015/2016 budget, while the detailed Action Plan will be prepared after this plenary meeting, based on the feedback from the membership and initial research of possible locations and format of the proposed events by the Resource Team and Executive Committee. It was also concluded that the final proposal of the BCoP 2015/2016 budget and Action Plan will be sent to the Steering Committee in a more elaborate format to include identification of BCoP objectives, as they are connected to the the PEMPAL Strategy objectives, with textual explanation of BCoP planned activities (and past activities where relevant) for each objective. The TCOP plan will be used as a basis to adopt this new format, as advised by the Steering Committee.

* 1. **Decision on process to gain member input during the plenary meeting (Agenda item only for the part of the meeting taking place on February 12)**

The Executive Committee decided to follow the same approach of collecting members’ feedback about the Action Plan 2015/2016 as was used in the previous plenary meeting for the Action Plan 2014/2015. The questionnaire was prepared and handed out to the members, requiring each country to fill out information on county priorities and suggestions for the topics for the next plenary meeting and for possible study visits, as well as information on which topics their country could host a study visit on, availability to host next plenary meeting, expression of interest in participating in the two currently established BCoP Working Groups (on wage bill management and on budget literacy), and suggestion of development of knowledge products. It was decided that the questionnaires will be handed out on the beginning of Day 1 of the plenary and the members will be asked to turn in the filled out forms on Day 2, after which the Executive Committee and Resource Team will analyze the results and the results will be presented to the plenary on Day 3.

* 1. Review of the inputs collected from the members during the plenary meeting and formulation of Executive Committee 2015/2016 priority proposals to the membership to be shared with members on the last day of the plenary meeting (Agenda item only for the part of the meeting taking place on February 12)

1. The Executive Committee met to discuss the results of the survey of the members on their country priorities for 2015/2016. The most frequent country priorities included the area of fiscal risks and long-term budgeting, while program budgeting was also frequently mentioned as a continued priority. Based on these results, the Executive Committee decided to propose to the membership (during the presentation on Day 3 of the plenary meeting) to hold the 2016 BCoP plenary meeting on fiscal risks and long-term budgeting, while the program budgeting will be a subject of a small group study visit/workshop**Mid-Term Review of PEMPAL Strategy 2012-17**

In the first part of the meeting held on February 10th, Ms. Aubrey outlined the progress on mid-term review (MTR) activities, asking the members of the committee to review the draft document which they received for the purpose of this meeting. Ms. Aubrey also briefed the members that currently the MTR activities include membership analysis.

The discussion on MTR continued on February 13th, during which the Executive Committee jointly went in detail through the proposed BCoP input, adding additional quotes and information as appropriate, thus finalizing the document.

Ms. Aubrey advised that this document would be submitted to the review, along with submissions from the other two COPs. A member survey was also being issued. She would then prepare a report, in her role as Strategic Adviser to PEMPAL, which would be discussed by the three COP Executive Committees, and the Steering Committee, in the face-to-face Executive meeting, proposed for July.

1. **Study visit to South Africa**

Ms. Aubrey briefed the committee on the status of preparations for the study visit to South Africa. Draft agenda has been prepared. The visa process is highly complex and requires a lot of planning, including trips to embassies in other countries for some participants. Ms. Živa Lautar added that procedures for obtaining visas differ from embassy to embassy in each country and that active involvement of participants needing visa would be much appreciated. Executive Committee members noted that they will also check on an individual basis, the visa processes in respective embassies and seek for possibility to avoid travelling to another country (where this is the case). Mr Konstantin Krityan noted that in his case travelling to Ukraine is not necessary as Ministry of Foreign affairs will help him using diplomatic channels.

1. **Communication** **between Executive Committee**

Ms. Gusarova announced that OECD invited BCOP to next SBO event, which will be held in Warsaw in May 2015. OECD has sent the early working agenda of the meeting to the BCoP Executive Committee and expressed that they would like BCOP’s active involvement in this event. The Executive Committee went through the draft Agenda of the OECD meeting jointly and identified the topics their countries could contribute to. It was decided that Croatia would hold a presentation on spending reviews and Russia would hold a presentation on budget literacy.

Having linguistically heterogeneous group of people representing BCOP ExCom, it was jointly agreed to use *google translate* tool in daily email correspondence when needed.

Ms. Carsimamovic-Vukotic informed the Executive Committee that the WIKI account was extended for two years. BCOP WIKI contains a number of documents, which are otherwise not publicly accessible. The members are encouraged to register, and to promote WIKI among other participants. Mr. Mikhail Prokhorik added, that when something new would be published on WIKI, they could be informing the participants via emails about this. Mr. Kanat Asangulov agreed that informing people about novelties on WIKI through mailing list would raise the number of WIKI users. He explained in turn, that the training centers of Ministry of Finance in Kyrgyzstan often search for new findings, new things in the field and WIKI represents very good potential source of information. Ms. Maya Gusarova stressed, that WIKI should still serve as internal source of information and it’s not for broader public.

1. **Next meeting**

The next meeting would be held in May, either before or after the OECD SBO meeting.