



MINUTES OF BCOP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, July 20, 2020
Videoconference

Participated:

1. Marina Tikhonovich (Chair, Belarus)
2. Nikolay Begchin (Deputy Chair, Russian Federation)
3. Mladenka Karacic (Deputy Chair, Croatia)
4. Alija Aljovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
5. Emil Nurgaliev (Bulgaria)
6. Aynura Bakaybayeva (Uzbekistan)
7. Naida Carsimamovic (BCOP Resource Team)
8. Iryna Shcherbyna (BCOP Resource Team)

Observers:

9. Ksenia Malafeeva (Secretariat)

Minutes:

1. Opening

Ms. Marina Tikhonovich welcomed participants and gave an overview of the agenda for this meeting. The discussion was next held on the Executive Committee leadership, membership, and the new leadership of the BLTWG (due to departure of Ms. Anna Belenchuk, previous BLTWG Lead).

Conclusions:

- Ms. Mladenka Karacic and Mr. Nikolay Begchin are announced as Deputy Chairs, based on Chair's nomination.
- Ms. Aynura Bakaybaeva from Uzbekistan joined the Executive Committee based on the invitation extended by the BCOP Executive Committee.
- Ms. Marina Tikhonovich and Ms. Aynura Bakaybaeva will co-lead BLTWG.
- The minutes of the previous meetings held on February 6 and 28, 2020 via videoconference were adopted.

2. Update on the PEMPAL financing status, PEMPAL external evaluation and MTR, and current status of plans for face-to-face meetings in FY21

Ms. Iryna Shcherbyna reported that the final signatures for administrative framework for the EU's financial contribution to PEMPAL are expected this month. She explained that COP's budget allocation for FY21 remain unchanged for now. In terms of plans for face-to-face meetings in FY21, she reminded that BCOP has successfully managed to postpone the plenary in Brussels from March to November essentially without financial fees. The situation and travelling restrictions will be reassessed in early September to make the final decision whether the face to face event will take place or will have to be postponed again. The planned face-to-face cross-COP leadership meeting in Berne has been postponed from July 2020 to July 2021 and the final decision will be made closer to date based on travelling restrictions. Answering a



question by Mr. Nikolay Begchin, Ms. Shcherbyna explained that the final decision on OECD events (OECD SBO CESEE meeting in Sofia and OECD Performance and Results' Network meeting in Paris) have still not be made by the OECD.

Ms. Shcherbyna gave an overview of the current status and next steps on PEMPAL evaluation and Mid-Term Review (MTR). She reported that, given Covid-19 complications, the evaluation and the MTR timeline and methodology have been slightly adjusted. The draft evaluation report will be shared with COP leadership in December/January for comments and the final draft evaluation report will be presented in the SC meeting in February 2021. Based on the findings and recommendations from the external evaluation, an MTR report will be prepared, which will prioritize recommendations from the external evaluation and plan for ways to implement them. Evaluation methodology includes interviews with members, senior officials, and highest level officials from five selected countries for in depth country cases (Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan); interviews with senior officials and members from additional several countries; and an online survey of all BCOP members, which will be launched in September. In terms of status of BCOP interviews, all interviews have taken place or are scheduled. Interviews already held include interviews with BCOP Resource Team, interviews with Moldova, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Russia, Kyrgyz Republic, Belarus, and Uzbekistan.

Conclusions:

- The Executive Committee took note on the status and the revised timeline of PEMPAL external evaluation and MTR.
- The Executive Committee will make the decision on the next BCOP plenary meeting in September 2020, depending on Covid-19 situation and travelling restrictions.
- The Resource will inform the Executive Committee when information is received from the OECD on their FY21 events in which BCOP participates, as well as when the decision is made about the face-to-face cross-COP leadership meeting in Berne.

3. BCOP FY20 Budget Execution and subsequent needs for adjustments of BCOP FY21 Action Plan and Budget

Ms. Naida Carsimamovic reminded the Executive Committee about the planed FY20 budget and reported that the actual BCOP budget execution for FY20 is slightly higher compared to the plan. Specifically, prepaid costs for postponed plenary meeting and costs for VC meetings are higher by around 8,000 USD than previously planned due to additional air cancellation/postponement costs and the additional VC event that took place in June. This means that the carried over savings to FY21 will be 82,000 USD instead of previously planned 90,000 USD. Ms. Carsimamovic also reminded the Executive Committee of the structure of the BCOP's FY21 budget and action plan.

Conclusion:

- The Executive Committee took note on the status of the FY20 execution of BCOP budget and approved the revised planned Action Plan and Budget for FY21 taking into account somewhat lower carried over savings from FY20 than previously planned, including the reduction of planned costs of the 2021 plenary meeting.



4. Update on BCOP Working Groups activities and discussion on the approach of developing knowledge products of the BCOP working groups in FY21

Ms. Tikhonovich reminded about the discussions from the previous BCOP meetings in terms of developing the next knowledge products using a gradual approach. Specifically, instead of developing one large comprehensive analytical knowledge product on a broader topic that takes longer time such as the most recent knowledge products developed by the working groups), this would include developing multiple smaller knowledge notes on targeted subtopics that can be developed more quickly. She also reminded that both working groups have earlier already made some decisions on the overall topic of their next KP work – spending reviews for PPBWG and participatory budgeting mechanisms for BLTWG. The groups have also discussed and collected inputs from members on specific subtopics of their interest within their topics. Ms. Shcherbyna reminded about the specific subtopics proposed and previously discussed by each of the two working groups and she and Ms. Carsimamovic proposed that these subtopics identified by the working group members previously could be sent to all members of the working groups to select their priority subtopics for each group to examine in FY21.

Mr. Begchin, PPBWG Lead, provided an overview of the recent work of the PPBWG and proposed that the first subtopic for PPBWG to be examined in FY21 be Conducting Rapid Spending Review to Identify Measures for Budget Balancing. Given the budget cycle, a virtual workshop on this subtopic should be organized in late September or early October and the inputs should be collected from the working group members on their countries' plans in this area. The second topic to be examined in FY21 for PPBWG can be chosen by members among the subtopics previously identified by the PPBWG. Ms. Bakaybayeva and Ms. Tikhonovich discussed the specific subtopic for the BLTWG, proposing one additional subtopic related to impact of COVID-19 on the ways in which governments and Ministries of Finance communicate and engage with the public.

Conclusion:

- The Resource Team will draft and send to the working group leads for their review the draft two emails to subsequently be sent to each of the working groups to gather members' picks for the priority subtopics to be examined in FY21 and for collecting additional inputs.

5. Other business and scheduling the next BCOP Executive Committee VC meeting

The Executive Committee held a discussion on further expansion of the Executive Committee and scheduled the next Executive Committee meeting.

Conclusions:

- The Executive Committee made a decision to invite Mr. Ivan Rakovskiy from the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation to join the Executing Committee, noting that in line with the PEMPAL guidelines, the two Executive Committee members from Russia will have one vote.
- Given that there is one remaining empty space for one additional BCOP country to join the Executive Committee (in line with the PEMPAL guidelines that prescribe that up to 9 member

countries can be included in a COP Executive Committee), the Executive Committee will follow the level of participation in the BCOP activities by other countries to consider extending the invitation to one more member from one more country to join the Executive Committee in FY21, with specific attention given to members from Serbia, Albania, and Montenegro.

- The next BCOP Executive Committee meeting will be held in mid-September.