

SUBMISSION BY THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

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Subject: Views on issues relating to the modalities and procedures for the operation and use of the public registry referred to in Article 4(12), of the Paris Agreement

I. Introduction

1. Paragraph 29 of Decision 1/CP.21 mandates the SBI to develop modalities and procedures for the operation and use of the public registry referred to in Article 4(12), of the Agreement, for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its first session. With this in mind, the EU and its Member States welcome the opportunity to submit their views on the issues identified by the SBI during its forty-sixth session.
2. The EU sees the modalities and procedures for the public registry as formalising certain key aspects of the public registry. The existing interim registry has been created at the request of the COP, with its attributes developed at the discretion of the Secretariat. Parties may wish to reflect some of these existing attributes, as well as new ones, in the modalities and procedures to be developed under this agenda item.
3. The constructive discussions and issues identified at the forty-sixth session of the SBI provide a useful starting point for the development of these modalities and procedures. The EU provides its views on these issues in the following sections.

II. Experience and lessons learned in using the interim registry for the nationally determined contributions relevant to developing the public registry

4. The EU appreciates the efforts made by the Secretariat in providing the interim public registry (as mandated in paragraph 30 of Decision 1/CP.21), as well as the INDC submission portal (as mandated in paragraph 16a of Decision 1/CP.20). Both products were developed by the Secretariat at the request of the COP¹, and each one has a number of useful attributes which could be captured in the modalities and procedures for operation and use of the public registry for NDCs being developed by Parties under this agenda item. Following the experience of the EU and its Member States as users of these products, we reflect upon these attributes in the following sections.

¹ Paragraph 30 of Decision 1/CP.21 and Paragraph 16a of Decision 1/CP.20.

III. The functions of the public registry

5. The fundamental function of the public registry, as stated in Article 4(12) of the Agreement is the recording of Parties' NDCs. In fulfilling this function, the public registry should provide public visibility to each Party's series of nationally determined contributions in an accessible and user-friendly way.

IV. The structure and design elements of the public registry

6. The structure and design of the public registry should record the NDCs communicated by Parties, in a way that is accessible to users. With this in mind, the structure and design elements of the public registry should include the following:
 - The public registry should record the NDCs communicated by Parties on a web-based platform and ensure that the NDCs are visible and accessible to the public
 - Each Party should have a dedicated space in the public registry that houses its NDCs, as well as other information that Parties may communicate voluntarily at any time (for example translations of the NDCs, or annexes with additional or complementary information).
 - For ease of access and user-friendliness, the public registry should enable users to list NDCs in both alphabetical and chronological order, as well as through a search function (options that are already available on the INDC submission portal). The homepage could also contain a box that displays the most recent updates.
 - An additional RSS-feed (Really Simple Syndication) on the UNFCCC website (similar to the one related to the submission of new National Communications) could be helpful informing users that new content has been uploaded on the public registry.
 - Furthermore, in order to view more than one NDC, users of the interim public registry are required to open the dedicated country pages one-by-one, which is a time consuming process. The accessibility and user-friendliness of the public registry would therefore be improved by enabling users to see what documents are available for multiple countries at a single glance (this is already possible on the INDC submission portal).
 - The public registry should list the date of submission for all NDCs, as well as for accompanying documents that Parties may choose to communicate. When new, updated or adjusted versions of these documents are submitted by Parties, the public registry should continue to display all previous versions as a matter of public record. Previous versions may be labelled in the public registry with language to indicate that they are no longer up-to-date (for example through use of terms such as "Archived" or "previous submission").

VI. Possible ways to enhance the security, accessibility and user-friendliness of, and support in, using the public registry

7. The suggestions made in this section refer to the security, accessibility and user-friendliness of the public registry from the point of view of the Parties (in particular the focal points) who submit documents and interact with the managers of the registry. Considerations related to accessibility and user-friendliness from a public point of view are contained in the previous section.
8. In matters of security, the EU considers the current practice of allowing submission of NDCs only by national focal points to be adequate. While Parties themselves are ultimately responsible for the content of the NDCs recorded in the public registry, the Secretariat has a responsibility to ensure this information is accurate. Steps that should be taken to ensure this could include continuing the current practice of checking for obvious mistakes (such as a blank or incomplete document) at the point of submission.

Furthermore, the Secretariat should take precautions to avoid any unauthorized access to the registry or alteration of its contents, as well as informing focal points when it has reason to believe a security breach may have occurred.

VII. Possible linkages

9. While negotiations are ongoing on several agenda items that may have conceptual linkages to the development of modalities and procedures for the public registry (for example APA agenda item 3 on further guidance in relation to NDCs), the purpose of this agenda item is to discuss modalities and procedures for the public registry, without prejudice to the outcome of other agenda items.

VIII. Next Steps

10. The EU looks forward to hearing Parties' views on key aspects of the public registry for NDCs, such as those mentioned above, and also looks forward to continuing the constructive discussions on the registry's modalities and procedures.
