

**Statement by the representative of the Russian Federation at the 43rd session of the Executive Body of the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
Agenda item 6. Financial requirements – Meteorological Synthesizing Center “East”
(December 13, 2023)**

Thank you, Madam Chair,

We would like to make a statement in explanation of vote.

Next year marks the 45th anniversary of the Convention, the creation of which was initiated by the Scandinavian countries and the USSR. At that time there was a completely different era associated with detente in the confrontation between two military-political blocs. It is the issues of air pollution prevention that turned to be a vital area of interaction and cooperation between countries in a divided Europe.

Over the past decades, significant progress has been achieved; the Convention has become the most successful instrument for international regional cooperation between countries in the field of air pollution prevention.

Unfortunately, a year ago, the majority of the Parties to the Convention set a course for the practical dismantling of cooperation and the existing scientific infrastructure of the Convention. Evidence of this is the decision of the 42nd session of the Convention's Executive Body to terminate funding for MSC-E, taken in violation of the provisions of the 1984 Protocol on the financing of EMEP. The decision is strange in its logic, because it actually leads to the liquidation of a well-functioning scientific center created by the decision of the Parties to the Convention. It should be noted that the majority of the Parties to the Convention have been beneficiaries of the work of this center for more than 40 years.

The question is for which exact reason is the scientific center of the Convention being destroyed? Moreover, the decision on its actual liquidation is made by voting, as they say, “breaking over the knee” the existing system of decision-making by consensus. The answer is simple: for the reason of

achieving dubious political goals. But what MSC-E has to do with it is completely unclear.

After all, the Parties to the Convention, on the one hand, recognized the highly effective and professional work of MSC-E for more than 40 years, and on the other hand, they actually deprived its employees of their jobs, and at the same time liquidated their own scientific center. This underlines the unacceptable politicization of the work of the Convention and the absurdity of the decisions made, which are based on discrimination against Russian scientists based on nationality.

Against this background, it is impossible to talk about the continuation of cooperation in the Convention in the “business as usual” mode.

Therefore, if a decision is made on the relocation of MSC-E, the Government of the Russian Federation, in the current conditions of unprecedented politicization of the Convention and the refusal of the majority of Parties to the Convention to cooperate with Russia, cannot agree with the decision to relocate MSC-E from Moscow to another country. In this regard, we declare that in January 2024, a national procedure will be initiated to decide on the withdrawal of the Russian Federation from the 1984 Protocol to the Convention concerning the long-term financing of a joint program for monitoring and assessing the long-range spread of air pollutants in Europe.

The activities of MSC-E as an EMEP international scientific center will be discontinued from January 2024, with all the ensuing consequences for the beneficiary countries.

We especially note that the EMEP budget for 2024 should not include the assessed contribution of the Russian Federation, since the denunciation of the Protocol releases Russia from its EMEP budget commitments.

However, you still have the opportunity not to make such a destructive decision and agree to the resumption of funding for MSC-E in Moscow from January 2024.

The political problem will someday end, but you are unlikely to be able to create a scientific center to replace the Moscow one in the near future.

I would like to request you to attach this statement to the meeting report.