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Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Sixth meeting

The Hague, 8–10 November 2010

Report of the sixth meeting

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Introduction

1. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents was held from 8 to 10 November 2010 in The Hague.

2. The meeting was attended by delegations from the following 37 UNECE member States: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan. The European Union (EU) was also represented.

I. Adoption of the agenda

3. Mr. Chris Dijkens, Chair of the Conference of the Parties, opened the meeting and welcomed all delegates. Mr. Hugo von Meijenfeldt, Deputy Director General, speaking on behalf of Mr. Joop Atsma, State Secretary of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Netherlands, and Mr. Marco Keiner, Director of the Environment, Housing and Land Management Division of UNECE, addressed the meeting.

4. The Conference of the Parties adopted the agenda of the meeting as set out in document ECE/CP.TEIA/20, with an additional report on the recent accident that had occurred in Kolontar to be given by the delegation of Hungary under agenda item 9.

II. Representation and credentials

5. The secretariat reported on the status of ratification of the Convention and on the designation of competent authorities (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/1). As of the sixth meeting, 39 UNECE member States and the EU had become Parties to the Convention.

6. The Chair informed participants that 32 of the Convention's 40 Parties were represented at the meeting, and all except for Kazakhstan had submitted their credentials.

7. The Conference of the Parties took note of this information. Regret was expressed that Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, and Monaco were not represented at the meeting.

III. Report of the Bureau

8. The Chair presented the activities of the Bureau between the fifth and the sixth meetings of the Conference of the Parties (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/2).

9. The Conference of the Parties endorsed the Bureau's report. It invited the incoming Bureau to report in a similar form to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

IV. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau

10. The Conference of the Parties unanimously re-elected Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands) as its Chair and Mr. Bernard Gay (Switzerland) as its Vice-Chair. It also elected Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia) as its Vice-Chair.

11. Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic), Ms. Irma Gurguliani (Georgia), Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), Mr. Cristiano Piacente (Italy), Mr. Sergey Kozlenko (Russian Federation), Ms. Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia), and Mr. Tobias Biermann (EU) were elected as Bureau members.

V. Implementation of the Convention

A. Activities of the Working Group on Implementation and the fifth report on the Convention's implementation

12. Mr. Gunnar Hem (Norway), Chair of the Working Group on Implementation, reported on its activities and meetings since the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

13. The Chair of the Working Group informed participants about the revision of the reporting format, and the preparation of the reporting guidance that had been used in the fifth reporting round. Regarding the status of reporting on the Convention's implementation by Parties and other UNECE member countries within the fifth round of reporting, attention was drawn to the fact that no reports had been received from the Russian Federation, as a Party, and from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro and Uzbekistan, as recipient countries under the Assistance Programme.

14. Presenting the fifth report on implementation, the Chair of the Working Group highlighted its recommendation that the Conference of the Parties discourage the practices of providing unspecific information when reporting, in particular by the Western European Parties. Also, delayed reporting should be discouraged. The report suggested that the future focus under the Convention should be given to improving the enforcement of the legislation and safety policies in the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as to sustaining and strengthening the effectiveness of the policies in the Western and Central European countries.

15. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Conference of the Parties that its national report on the implementation of the Convention was under preparation and should be submitted to the secretariat in the beginning of 2011, at the latest. The delay had been caused by the reorganization of the competent authority. Future reports were expected to be submitted on time; the country was committed to a more active participation in the work under the Convention in the future.

16. The representative of the EU thanked the Working Group on Implementation for preparing a comprehensive report with clear conclusions and recommendations. The EU would, however, like the reporting to concentrate on progress achieved, instead of recollecting information submitted in the past. It was also hoped that the reporting guidance would be adjusted to provide greater clarity. The EU supported the recommendations of the Working Group regarding further work towards strengthening the implementation of the Convention.

17. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Welcomed the statement by the Russian Federation concerning the timely submission of implementation reports in the future and its active participation in the work of the Convention;

(b) Urged beneficiary countries within the Assistance Programme to comply with their commitment to report on implementation of the Convention;

(c) Took note of the advanced degree of implementation of the Convention in most Parties in Western and Central Europe, and encouraged them to continue working on the enforcement regime in order to sustain a high level of industrial safety by developing new, innovative solutions. It encouraged them to hold seminars, workshops and joint sessions through which they could continuously exchange good practices and experiences;

(d) Encouraged UNECE member countries that were not yet Parties to implement the Convention and to ratify it or accede to it as soon as possible;

(e) Invited the Working Group to review the reporting guidelines before the sixth round of reporting and adjust them as necessary to improve their clarity;

(f) Invited Parties and other UNECE countries that provided complete reports in the fifth reporting round to only report on the questions regarding further progress achieved and, for other questions, to provide only updates as necessary; and

(g) Adopted the fifth report on the implementation of the Convention as prepared by the Working Group (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/3).

B. Election of members of the Working Group on Implementation for 2011–2012

18. The Conference of the Parties re-elected the following nine persons to serve as members for the Working Group on Implementation for the term lasting until its seventh meeting: Ms. Anahit Aleksandryan (Armenia); Mr. Vadim Lozheczko (Belarus); Mr. Hrvoje Buljan (Croatia); Mr. Massimo Cozzone (Italy); Mr. Gunnar Hem (Norway); Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova); Mr. Francisc Senzaconi (Romania); Mr. Tomas Trcka (Slovakia); and Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom). It also elected Ms. Ann-Sofie Eriksson (Sweden) as a new member.

VI. Long-term Strategy for the Convention

19. The Chair recalled that at its fifth meeting the Conference of the Parties requested the Bureau to revise the long-term programme of work for the Convention. As a result of that revision, a draft long-term strategy under the Convention had been drawn up to replace the long-term programme of work.

20. The Chair introduced the draft document (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/4) containing the strategic directions for the following five priority areas for the Convention: involvement of Parties and stakeholders; exchange of information; the Assistance Programme; strategic partnerships; and financing. He invited the Conference of the Parties to adopt and implement the strategy in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the work done under the Convention. The strategy was intended to help prevent complacency and to facilitate further improvement for countries with a high level of industrial safety and to continue providing support to countries less advanced in implementing the Convention.

21. The Chair explained that the sustainable financial mechanism mentioned in the draft long-term strategy meant a sustainable but voluntary approach, and invited the Conference of the Parties to request the Bureau to elaborate the details for such a mechanism to be presented at the seventh meeting.

22. The EU expressed the support for the strategy and appreciated the clear directions it gave for continuing the work on industrial safety. However, the scope of activities to be undertaken in that framework should always be tailored to the available resources.

23. The delegate of Armenia supported the draft strategy and said that, while the countries with the economies in transition would contribute to the Convention's activities in kind, they would need financial support in particular for projects aimed at further strengthening the implementation of the Convention. To that end, in the elaboration of the sustainable financial mechanism the possibilities for using public-private partnerships and joint applications for projects should be explored.

24. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Adopted the Long-term Strategy for the Convention (see annex I); and

(b) Entrusted the Bureau to elaborate the details of the sustainable financial mechanism and to present it at the seventh meeting.

VII. Assistance Programme

A. Progress report on the activities carried out within the preparatory and implementation phases

25. The secretariat introduced the progress report on the Assistance Programme (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/5), in particular the main accomplishments under the preparatory phase in the years 2009–2010, including the outcome of awareness-raising missions and the high-level visits undertaken to encourage Central Asian countries to finalize the implementation of the basic tasks. Key outcomes of the numerous capacity-building activities organized within the implementation phase of the Programme during 2009–2010 were also presented.

26. The representative of Belgium, speaking on behalf of the EU, welcomed the numerous and highly results-oriented assistance activities undertaken under the Assistance Programme. It was appreciated that the safety reporting requirement of the EU Seveso II Directive had been promoted within some assistance projects.

27. The delegate of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed appreciation for the support received during an awareness-raising mission to his country. A national action plan for implementing the Convention had been prepared, together with a bill for its ratification. Ratification would be crucial for implementation of the basic tasks, as it would set the basis for cooperation between the different Ministries at the federal and entity levels. Upon ratification, the Ministry of Security would be nominated as the point of contact.

28. The representative of Kyrgyzstan observed that industrial safety was an important issue for her country and, although the Government was not ready to ratify the Convention, it was keen to work towards strengthening industrial safety in the country under the Assistance Programme. Kyrgyzstan had made progress in implementing the basic tasks since the visit of the Bureau members in February 2010, including in establishing the authority for coordinating the work under the Convention, and had submitted its written notification.

29. The delegate from Tajikistan reported that his country was committed to working under the Assistance Programme to strengthen its implementation of the Convention; the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence would be coordinating that work. A written notification had been submitted in that regard. Assistance activities to address Tajikistan's needs should start with a training on identification of hazardous activities.

30. The delegate from Uzbekistan presented his country's progress in implementing the Convention, among others, new legislation aimed at strengthening safety measures and the establishment of a national system for notification. He reiterated his country's interest in participating in the Convention's Assistance Programme. Further improvements to the legal framework, drawing up criteria for hazard identification and improvements in the notification system — including the application of up-to-date technology — were among the priorities. Uzbekistan was also interested in organizing a bilateral working group, supported by international experts to discuss the risks associated with a Tajik aluminium plant located near the border with Uzbekistan.

31. The representative of the Republic of Moldova presented an assistance project, to be initiated in early 2011, aimed at improving hazard and crisis management in the region of the Danube Delta. The Republic of Moldova, together with Ukraine, reiterated their interest and commitment to that project. The delegation of Romania also expressed interest in being involved in the project, and Romania's desire to support it by contributing knowledge and experience gained in an earlier Danube project that had been implemented jointly with Bulgaria and Serbia under the Assistance Programme in 2009.

32. The Chair stressed the visible progress achieved by countries participating in the Assistance Programme. The hard work carried out by the countries to implement the basic tasks in the preparatory phase and to further strengthen industrial safety through projects within the implementation phase was appreciated. The Conference of the Parties was invited to continue delivering the requested assistance, also to those countries, even if only a few, that still needed assistance on the basic tasks.

33. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Took note of the Bureau's decision to invite Albania and Uzbekistan to the implementation phase of the Assistance Programme;

(b) Invited Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to join the implementation phase of the Assistance Programme;

(c) Encouraged Bosnia and Herzegovina to finalize the report on the implementation of basic tasks and to submit it to the Bureau;

(d) Invited the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation, in cooperation with the secretariat, to continue delivering needs-driven guidance on strengthening the capacities of those countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe that still had to implement the basic tasks under the Convention, and to organize relevant visits or awareness-raising missions, as necessary, and to report on them at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and

(e) Endorsed the progress report on the Assistance Programme as contained in ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/5.

B. Indicators and criteria for the Strategic Approach for the implementation phase

34. The Chair recalled that the Conference of the Parties, at its fifth meeting, had requested the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation to support the

beneficiaries of the Assistance Programme's implementation phase in applying the cyclic mechanism of the Strategic Approach, through elaboration of a form for data collection and the development of performance indicators and criteria for self-assessment of progress made in the implementation of the Convention.

35. Ms. Jasmina Karba, Chair of the Task Force on Indicators and Criteria, presented the work to develop the indicators and criteria and the form for data collection within the cyclic mechanism, including tables for: (a) collecting results of analysis; (b) listing necessary activities (national action plan); and (c) recording progress achieved, as contained in document ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/6.

36. The Republic of Moldova and Romania stressed that the document on indicators and criteria would help to make the self-assessment and better identify the way forward. The EU welcomed the document, as it would help to better monitor progress, and fully supported its obligatory use by the Assistance Programme beneficiary countries. It was suggested that the indicators and criteria should also be used by the Working Group on Implementation in its review of the reporting guidance.

37. The delegate from Armenia suggested that the beneficiary countries give their draft action plans to the Bureau for review, and only once reviewed would they be submitted for formal approval to their respective Governments for formal approval.

38. Ms. Karba explained that the form for the data collection, including the national action plan, although to be mandated by the Conference of the Parties, was a document that was to be drafted by the beneficiary countries themselves on the basis of self-assessment. Countries were invited to manage their forms as living documents that would be updated as often as necessary to reflect the actions taken and the results achieved. At the same time, in order to give to the process more political importance, the beneficiary countries were encouraged to formally approve the action plans.

39. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Adopted the instruments for applying the cyclic mechanism of the Strategic Approach, including (i) the form for data collection within the cyclic mechanism; and (ii) the performance indicators and criteria for self-assessment on progress made in the implementation of the Convention, as contained in the document ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/6;

(b) Obligated the Assistance Programme beneficiary countries to apply the indicators and criteria, and to:

(i) Provide a self-evaluation of progress in implementing the Convention for each of the working areas by September 2011 and to continuously update it;

(ii) Prepare a national action plan based on the results of their initial self-evaluation not later than February 2012 and subsequently, when relevant, to update it; and

(iii) Provide, together with a project proposal for assistance activities when submitting it before February 2012, the self-evaluation and the action plan for the working area concerned by the project proposal;

(c) Requested the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation to ensure that the Strategic Approach was implemented, and to:

(i) Approve activities to be executed under the Assistance Programme based on the national action plans managed by the beneficiary countries;

(ii) Monitor the application of the Strategic Approach for each country participating in the Assistance Programme;

- (iii) Monitor the progress achieved by each country and the progress achieved with activities of Assistance Programme on the whole;
- (d) Invited Parties and other UNECE member countries not participating in the Assistance Programme to use the indicators and criteria in their work aimed at further strengthening the implementation of the Convention;
- (e) Requested the Working Group on Implementation, when reviewing the reporting guidelines, to provide, where appropriate, references to indicators and criteria in the reporting guidelines; and
- (f) Requested the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation to report on progress achieved under the Assistance Programme to the Conference of the Parties at its next meeting.

VIII. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Industrial Accident Notification System

40. Mr. Eric Philip (France) reported on the outcome of the fourth consultation for points of contact for the purpose of accident notification, at which the results of the communication tests and analytical exercises had been reviewed, and discussions had been held on how to use the UNECE Industrial Accident Notification (IAN) System more effectively alongside other systems (see ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/7). That discussion had emerged further to the request from the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to compare the IAN System with the EU Common Emergency Communication and Information (CECIS) System, to verify that there was no redundancy between them.

41. Mr. Philip presented some suggestions for modifying the UNECE IAN Web-based application, observing at the same time that the points of contact saw the need for a higher number of analytical exercises before concretizing any recommendations for decision by the Conference of the Parties. To that end, the points of contact agreed that tests and exercises with the use of IAN System should continue and recommended that, when possible, drills should be carried out exercising the mutual-assistance aspects.

42. With regard to the effective use of the IAN System alongside other systems, Mr. Philip said the points of contact had concluded that each system was best adopted for its particular purpose, and therefore there was no redundancy between them. At the same time, recognizing the difficulty with many systems in use, the points of contact further recommended that a common standard for exchanging well-defined sets of data between the systems operated through the Web should be developed, and thus a process of standardization between the systems should be initiated.

43. The Chair presented the considerations of the outgoing Bureau on the issue of standardization. While the Bureau appreciated a clear justification for the standardization process, it agreed that the Convention was not the right framework to lead such a process. The Bureau recommended the continuation of the tests and analytical exercises.

44. The representative of Belgium, speaking on behalf of the EU, expressed full support for the Bureau's position on the standardization process.

45. The delegation of the Russian Federation agreed with the suggestion that the testing of the IAN System, as well as the work aimed at further strengthening the System's effectiveness, should be continued. As to the standardization process, the Conference of the Parties might wish to return to that issue in the future.

46. The representative of the Russian Federation also made a presentation on the Russian Centre for Crisis Management.

47. The Conference of the Parties:

- (a) Acknowledged the efforts of the points of contact aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the UNECE IAN System, and of notification in general;
- (b) Requested the points of contact to perform the recommended testing and exercises, and to discuss their results at the next consultation; and
- (c) Invited the points of contact to report on their work at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

IX. Prevention of accidental water pollution

A. Technical workshop on joint management of transboundary emergencies involving international waterways

48. Mr. Pawel Dadasiewicz and Pawel Janik (Poland) presented the transboundary exercise held at the Odra River between Germany and Poland, as well as the outcome of a technical workshop in Slubice on joint management of transboundary emergencies involving international waterways that had been held back to back with that exercise, on 8–10 September 2009 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/8). Workshop participants had drawn important conclusions in view of establishing effective cooperation for prevention, preparedness and response to accidents on transboundary rivers, including a recommendation to develop a sound methodology for building-up such cooperation.

49. The representative of Germany stressed the importance of cooperation between countries on prevention, preparedness and response. Effective cooperation took time, especially to build trust between the Parties; however, once established, such cooperation was very rewarding.

50. Mr. Gay appreciated that the workshop reflected not only on preparedness and response, but that it also promoted the prevention of accidents.

51. The Conference of the Parties thanked Germany and Poland for organizing the exercise and the workshop and invited other Parties to take such initiatives in the future.

B. Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

52. Mr. Massimo Cozzone reported on the joint work with the Bureau to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) to develop a strategy for the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents. He presented the strategy, which had been adopted by the Bureau at its fifteenth meeting as well as endorsed by the fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention.

53. Mr. Cozzone also informed about the work of both Bureaux towards the identification of demands of the Parties to both Conventions in the area of accidental water pollution. Both Bureaux had worked separately in identifying the demand: the Industrial Accidents Bureau through the workshop in Slubice; and the Water Bureau through carrying out a survey. As a result, the two Bureaux agreed that the demand existed for a development of a checklist/methodology for harmonized contingency planning for accidents with a potential impact on transboundary watercourses. They had agreed upon a seven-step plan to develop the checklist/methodology by the Joint Expert Group.

54. Mr. Cozzone also invited the Conference of the Parties to elect the co-chair to lead the work of the Joint Expert Group on behalf of the Industrial Accidents Convention.

55. The delegation of Hungary informed participants that Mr. Peter Kovac (Hungary) would co-chair the Joint Expert Group on behalf of the Water Convention.

56. The delegation of Germany drew the attention of the Conference of the Parties to the fact that the 25-year anniversary of the accident in Schweizerhalle would fall in 2011, and that that would be a good occasion to reflect on the work carried out and the progress achieved in the area of prevention of accidental water pollution. Germany offered to host a workshop in the second half of 2011 that would examine existing deficits in prevention of accidental water pollution and make recommendations, as necessary.

57. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Appreciated the elaboration of the strategy for the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents;

(b) Confirmed its commitment to the work of the Joint Expert Group, and urged all Parties and UNECE member countries to support the activities towards the elaboration of the checklist/methodology for contingency planning for transboundary waterways by providing expertise and inputs to it and by active participation of their experts in the Group's meetings;

(c) Invited the Joint Expert Group to report on its activities at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(d) Entrusted the Bureau to elect the co-chair on behalf of the Industrial Accidents Convention to lead the Joint Expert Group; and

(e) Appreciated the proposal of Germany to organize the seminar to review the progress reached in prevention of accidental water pollution, and invited all Parties and UNECE member countries to actively support it.

58. Mr. Zoltan Cseplo (Hungary) presented a report on the dam burst of the waste reservoir in Kolontar, including details of the circumstances surrounding the accident, the management of the disaster, rescue operations, mitigation and water decontamination measures, as well as the planned remediation measures in the medium and long term. Given the circumstances, the accident had not fallen under the scope of the Seveso II Directive or the Convention, and no transboundary effects had been reported.

59. The delegation of Germany raised the issue of whether tailings dams fell under the scope of the Convention, as per its article 2, paragraph 2 (c).

60. The secretariat noted that, at the time of the negotiations of the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters, participants had concluded that exclusion of the dam failures contained in article 2, paragraph 2 (c), referred only to water dams. In order to avoid any uncertainty, the Protocol clearly defined the scope to include tailing dams (art. 2, para. 2 (e) (i)).

61. Mr. Gay recalled that Parties had the right to extend the obligations of the Convention in relation to any installation on a bilateral basis.

C. Activities related to the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters

62. The Chair reported on the work of the Bureau together with the Bureau of the Water Convention related to the Protocol on Civil Liability, which had resulted in the elaboration of a three-step approach to help countries with economies in transition to ratify the Protocol.

The steps aimed at creating a better understanding of the Protocol's requirements and the benefits from implementing and ratifying it for countries with economies in transition, in particular for the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, for which a pilot project would be established.

63. The EU said that the position of its member States had not changed with regard to the Protocol. The EU was not in a position to ratify the Protocol for the time being, but supported activities that would help the countries with economies in transition to implement it. Support for the three-step approach was expressed.

64. The Republic of Moldova requested an assistance project that would help to establish a legal basis for civil liability. The three-step approach would facilitate the understanding of the requirements of the Protocol and other civil liability instruments. Ukraine also welcomed the three-step approach, which would allow for a better understanding of the Protocol.

65. The Conference of the Parties agreed to implement the following three actions:

(a) Step 1, to strive to better understand what national legislation was required to implement the Protocol in light of differences between the Protocol and other civil liability instruments;

(b) Step 2, to carry out case studies based on realistic potential accidents to understand the implications including the benefits of implementing the Protocol and/or other instruments; and

(c) Step 3, to identify and recommend actions which would enable the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to implement the Protocol.

66. The Conference of the Parties requested its Bureau to report on the implementation of these actions at its seventh meeting.

X. Plan of action under the Convention

A. Resources in 2009–2010

67. The secretariat reported on the use of financial resources under the Convention in the period 2009–2010 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/9), and expressed appreciation for the financial and in-kind contributions made by UNECE member countries to the Convention trust fund for implementing the 2009-2010 workplan. The expenditures made from the trust fund during that period were detailed.

68. The EU appreciated the transparent presentation of the use of resources, as well as the comparison between planned and utilized expenditures, and the fact that the trust fund was well-managed.

69. The Conference of the Parties endorsed the report on the use of financial resources under the Convention for the period 2009–2010, as presented in document ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/9.

B. Workplan and resources in 2011–2012

70. Mr. Gay introduced the proposal for the 2011–2012 workplan prepared by the outgoing Bureau, as contained in document ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/10. The workplan differentiated between the Convention's core and assistance activities and had been developed following the strategic directions of the Long-term Strategy. The attention of

participants was drawn in particular to the estimated resource requirements required to implement the workplan.

71. The delegations of Italy, Norway, Switzerland and the EU said that they would support the implementation of the workplan in kind as well as financially by contributing similar amounts as in the 2009–2010 biennium. The Czech Republic announced a contribution of \$10,000. Serbia also expressed its intention to support financially the implementation of the workplan.

72. The delegations of the Netherlands, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom declared their intention to provide in-kind support towards the implementation of the 2011–2012 workplan.

73. Germany said it would support the workshop on experience gained in the area of prevention of accidental water pollution with a donation of \$70,000, as well as providing for two capacity-building projects under the Assistance Programme — earmarking some \$340,000 for implementing the Danube Delta project in the period 2011–2012 and \$80,000 for the on-site inspection project.

74. In response to a question from the EU, the secretariat provided the following additional information regarding an increase in resources requirements in 2011–2012 over 2009–2010:

(a) The expected costs of approved assistance projects in 2011–2012 were expected to be higher by some 40 per cent; and

(b) Additional staff resources were needed to implement the 2011–2012 workplan, which had been designed to address the strategic directions of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention. A shortage of staff resources had already been signalled in 2009–2010, which was being temporarily addressed by supporting the secretariat with a short-term staff member seconded by the Netherlands.

75. The representative of the EU noted that, should the announced and future contributions turn out to be insufficient to cover full implementation of the workplan, priority should be given to assistance activities.

76. The Conference of the Parties:

(a) Adopted the workplan for 2011–2012 and its corresponding budget (see annex II); and:

(i) Requested all Parties, and invited the other UNECE member countries, to participate actively in the implementation of the workplan for 2011–2012, and invited them to take the lead in specific projects of the workplan;

(ii) Welcomed the financial contributions to the budget pledged at the meeting by the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and the EU, as well as the in-kind contributions pledged by the Netherlands, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom. At the same time, it urged other Parties and other UNECE member countries to provide voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to the budget of the Convention, including for ensuring adequate human resources in the secretariat;

(iii) Mandated the Bureau to oversee the implementation of the workplan and raise the additional funds for requested activities within the Assistance Programme;

(iv) Requested the secretariat to manage the activities contained in the workplan, in particular under the Assistance Programme;

- (v) Decided to maintain the guiding principles for financial assistance to ensure the effective participation of experts and representatives from countries with economies in transition in meetings organized within its framework and in the activities under the Assistance Programme, depending on the availability of funds (see annex III);
- (b) Requested the UNECE secretariat to manage voluntary financial contributions in agreement with the donor countries/institutions;
- (c) Requested its Bureau to draw up, with the support of the secretariat, a budget for the next two-year period for adoption at the seventh meeting;
- (d) Requested the secretariat, at the seventh meeting, to report on the use of resources for the period 2011–2012, and to include in its report a comparison between planned and actual expenditures;
- (e) Invited the Executive Secretary of UNECE to continue supporting the work under the Convention by:
 - (i) Strengthening the human resources available for the secretariat by establishing an additional P–4 position;
 - (ii) Organizing the activities planned in the workplan;
 - (iii) Providing formal documentation for these activities.

XI. Date and venue of the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties

77. The Conference of the Parties recalled article 18, paragraph 1, of the Convention, in particular the possibility of holding a meeting of the Conference of the Parties at the written request of any Party, and the terms of reference of the Bureau (ECE/CP.TEIA/2, annex I), in particular paragraphs 1 and 2 (c), stressing the need to use human and financial resources efficiently, including those of the UNECE secretariat. In that light, the Conference of the Parties decided unanimously to hold its seventh ordinary meeting in the second half of 2012.

78. The delegation of Sweden announced its country's intention to host the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

XII. Other business

79. The Chair reminded delegations about the joint seminar on land use planning around hazardous industrial sites that would be hosted by the Netherlands back to back with the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He extended his invitation for participation in the seminar to the delegations that had not registered. The seminar would include a simulation exercise that would highlight different views and approaches of safety and land use planning authorities.

XIII. Review of decisions

80. The Chair summarized the decisions taken during the sixth meeting. The Conference of the Parties entrusted the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, with finalizing the report of the meeting.

XIV. Closing of the meeting

81. The Chair thanked all delegations participating in the meeting for their contributions and to the work of the Convention. He then urged all the UNECE member States to take an active part in implementing the 2011–2012 workplan under the Convention before formally closing the meeting.

Annex I

Long-term Strategy for the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Introduction

1. The 1992 Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, being part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) multilateral environmental legal framework, aims to prevent industrial accidents from occurring, reduce their frequency and severity, and mitigate their transboundary effects.
2. The Convention requires that Parties establish and maintain a high level of safety in industrial activities and seek continuous improvement through:
 - (a) Enhancing preventive measures;
 - (b) Strengthening preparedness for industrial accidents;
 - (c) Improving mechanisms for response and mutual assistance to mitigate the effects of accidents; and
 - (d) Exchanging information and cross-border cooperation.
3. The work performed within the framework of the Convention has contributed to the improvement of industrial safety in many countries and to a more safety-conscious culture within their authorities and industries. This is mostly a result of activities to: (i) raise awareness and increase understanding about industrial safety; (ii) improve national legislation on industrial safety; and (iii) enhance institutional capacities.
4. The Convention has also facilitated cooperation between different authorities in working together on industrial safety, both in the national and international contexts.
5. Many of the above results were achieved by the beneficiary countries of the Convention's Assistance Programme.
6. The Conference of the Parties now needs to prevent complacency and facilitate further improvement for countries with a high level of industrial safety and to continue providing support to countries less advanced in implementing the Convention.
7. In order to reach those objectives, the Conference of the Parties needs to build on its experience and achievements and be ready to address effectively any challenges that may arise. The purpose of this Long-term Strategy is to give directions for further work under the Convention, which will be specified in two-year workplans.
8. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties will look proactively at developments in the context of the Convention and, if necessary, respond to them appropriately.

Objectives and directions

9. The Long-term Strategy defines the following five issues as priority areas of work under the Convention for the coming years.

I. Involvement of Parties and other stakeholders

Objective: to achieve comprehensive involvement of all Parties and other stakeholders

Active involvement of Parties and other stakeholders is essential to maintain and further improve the level of implementation of the Convention. Some Parties, through their competent authorities, have been actively involved in the work of the Convention. There are also some examples of involvement of other stakeholders. Nevertheless, the number of active Parties and other stakeholders has been rather low and should be increased.

Directions

The Conference of the Parties will:

- (a) Regularly use targeted communication (e.g., newsletters, press releases, leaflets, website, participation in forums) to reach competent authorities and other stakeholders (e.g., authorities at regional or local levels, industry, other organizations) and to promote and further increase the understanding of the work under the Convention; and
- (b) Organize working visits and high-level meetings to activate the less involved competent authorities and other stakeholders and to support related national and international activities.

II. Exchange of information

Objective: to consolidate and enhance the exchange of information

Exchange of information is crucial to further strengthen the implementation of the Convention across the UNECE region. In the past, activities have been organized under the Convention to exchange knowledge, good practices and experience. However, the number and scope of such activities should be extended.

Directions

The Conference of the Parties will:

- (a) Organize, on a needs-driven basis, the exchange of information between competent authorities and other stakeholders by organizing seminars, consultations and round tables on relevant topics (e.g., technologies, scientific knowledge, trends and developments, good practice in prevention, preparedness and response); and
- (b) Stimulate cross-border exchange of information among Parties.

III. Assistance Programme

Objective: to facilitate the implementation and ratification of the Convention by the beneficiary countries of the Assistance Programme

The Assistance Programme is necessary to support the efforts of the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in implementing the Convention. There is a need to continue and further provide efficient assistance on a needs-driven basis.

Directions

The Conference of the Parties will:

(a) Ensure an adequate use of the Strategic Approach by the means defined therein and in particular tools such as the set of indicators and criteria for assessment and identification of future steps to be undertaken under the Assistance Programme; and

(b) Facilitate the transfer of knowledge to support the beneficiary countries in addressing challenges faced in implementing the Convention by providing them with relevant and needs-driven capacity-building activities.

IV. Strategic partnerships

Objective: to enhance the Convention's relevance through strategic partnerships

Strategic partnerships are necessary to improve effectiveness and efficiency and to avoid duplication of work in maintaining and enhancing industrial safety. In a number of situations the Conference of the Parties has been working jointly with other organizations, Conventions and programmes to this end. However, this approach should be enhanced.

Directions

The Conference of the Parties will approach partners, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, other United Nations Convention bodies, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European Commission (EC) and industrial associations, to explore and form, if possible, strategic partnerships to coordinate joint activities for strengthening industrial safety and to complement each other's work.

V. Financing

Objective: to ensure sustainable financing

Robust financing is necessary to ensure that the increasing demands for assistance activities from Parties and other countries are met and that other workplan activities are implemented. In the past, financing for activities under the Convention has come from only a few of the Parties and on an ad hoc basis. There is a need for a higher number of Parties and for other stakeholders to provide regular financial and/or in-kind support to the Convention's activities. Also, human resources in the secretariat need to be increased which would allow, among others, for the implementation of the tasks mentioned in this strategy and address the increasing demands for activities.

Directions

The Conference of the Parties will establish and continuously improve a mechanism through which financial and in-kind support is obtained from Parties and other stakeholders, such as the EC, industry and others. The mechanism will differentiate between funding for the core activities of the Convention and its assistance activities. The Conference of the Parties invites UNECE to make available an additional regular budget P-4 post; pending its establishment, the post will be financed through extrabudgetary resources.

Annex II

Workplan and resources for 2011–2012

Area	Activities, lead/supporting countries	<i>XB</i> <i>financial</i> <i>resources</i>	<i>RB/XB human resources in work-</i> <i>months of Professional [P] and</i> <i>General Service [G] secretariat staff</i>	
		US\$	P	G
I. Core activities of the Convention				
Involvement of Parties and other stakeholders	Targeted communication (newsletter, press release, leaflet, website, participation in forums)	15 000		
	Working visits and high-level meetings to Parties	9 000		
	Working visits to other stakeholders	6 000		
	Subtotal	30 000	6.00	3.00
Exchange of information	Workshop on sharing good practices for improving costs-effectiveness for major accident prevention policies	50 000		
	Workshop on sharing good practices for increasing public involvement in national work on industrial safety	50 000		
	Exchange of experience in preparedness and response	15 000		
	Subtotal	115 000	6.50	3.25
Strategic partnerships	Workshop with the Water Convention to discuss the progress achieved in prevention of accidental water pollution 25 years after the Schweizerhalle accident	50 000		
	Meeting with partner organizations to coordinate joint activities	20 000		
	Subtotal	70 000	4.50	2.25
Financing	Meetings to establish financing mechanism	10 000		
	Donor meetings	10 000		
	Bilateral visits	15 000		
	Subtotal	35 000	1.00	0.50

Area	Activities, lead/supporting countries	XB financial resources	RB/XB human resources in work- months of Professional [P] and General Service [G] secretariat staff	
		US\$	P	G
Other activities	Seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties	80 000		
	Meetings of the Bureau	75 000		
	Meetings of the Working Group on Implementation	25 000		
	Meetings to review the progress achieved within the Assistance Programme	60 000		
	Consultation for Points of Contact to review effectiveness of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Notification System	50 000		
	Subtotal	290 000	19.50	10.00
	Subtotal, Section I	540 000	37.50	19.00
II. Assistance activities of the Convention				
Assistance Programme	Project on improvement of the legal basis for Georgia	40 000		
	On-site inspections for Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	90 000		
	Workshop on indicators and criteria for Assistance Programme beneficiary countries	100 000		
	Danube Delta project involving Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania	300 000		
	Other projects as approved by the Bureau and Working Group on Implementation, subject to availability of human resources	150 000		
	Two advisory missions	20 000		
	Subtotal, Section II	700 000	21.00	7.00
III. Other secretariat activities		–	4.00	2.00
Total activities (Sections I+II+III)		1 240 000	62.50	28.00
XB, Professional		400 000		
XB, Professional (Assistance Programme)		240 000		
XB, General Service (Assistance Programme)		70 000		
Total (activities and staff)		1 950 000		

Annex III

Guiding principles for financial assistance to support the participation of experts and representatives from countries with economies in transition in meetings organized within the framework of the Conference of the Parties and in the activities under the Assistance Programme

1. The following countries of Eastern European, the Caucasus and Central Asia — Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan — as well as the following countries of South-Eastern Europe — Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina — are eligible for full financial assistance (travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance (DSA)) to support the participation of their experts and representatives in activities organized within the framework of the Conference of the Parties. Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkmenistan are eligible for partial financial assistance (DSA only).
 2. The countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe, as accepted by the Conference of the Parties as recipient countries in the Assistance Programme under the Convention, are eligible for full financial assistance (travel expenses and DSA) to support the participation of their experts and representatives in the capacity-building activities organized within the Programme.
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