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**WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

Meeting of the Parties to
the Protocol on Water and Health
to the Convention on the Protection
and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes

Fourth session

Geneva, 14-16 November 2016

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Special session on moving forward on the water and sanitation agenda in the pan European region: the role of the Protocol on Water and Health in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

MOP4/WH/2016/INF.3

PROGRAMME

SPECIAL SESSION ON MOVING FORWARD ON THE WATER AND SANITATION AGENDA IN THE PAN EUROPEAN REGION:

THE ROLE OF THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH IN ACHIEVING THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

10–10.50 a.m.

Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

Opening speech by Alain Berset, the Federal Councillor, Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Switzerland

Speech by Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Speech by Pirooska Östlin, Director of the Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being, World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe

10.50–11 a.m.

Status of ratification of the Protocol and report on credentials

11–11.10 a.m.

Elections of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

11.10–1 p.m.

Special session on moving forward on the water and sanitation agenda in the pan European region: the role of the Protocol on Water and Health in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its Sustainable Development Goals will shape the dynamics in which the international community approaches its main challenges. In the pan European region, the Protocol on Water and Health has supported remarkable progress in water, sanitation and health in recent years, in particular in terms of access to water and sanitation, the quality of drinking water and the reduction of water-related disease. There are still many challenges that require further attention. The region has not met the Millennium Development Goal target on sanitation. It still faces an unacceptable burden of water-related disease and significant inequities in access to water and sanitation services remain, including with respect to rural-urban disparities and in institutions such as schools and hospitals. Realizing the effects of global drivers such as climate change and urbanization, there is a need to increase the resilience of water supply and sanitation systems to extreme weather events, including growing water scarcity, and to strengthen safe and efficient management approaches of water and sanitation services, including specific attention to wastewater reuse. Generally, intersectoral cooperation between the water, health and other relevant sectors needs to be further enhanced to effectively deal with the problems at stake. All these issues, which are part of the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda, have been recognized as priorities under the Protocol.

The 2030 Agenda sets ambitious objectives to be achieved in the next 15 years. Reaching them will require stepping-up efforts in the region; more efficient approaches and stronger cross-sectoral partnerships are therefore essential. The Protocol features a number of strengths that make it very relevant to support meeting the 2030 Agenda commitments across the pan-European region.

The Protocol's provisions and work are fully aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 6 "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" and relevant targets under Goal 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". The Protocol also clearly supports the implementation of other Sustainable Development Goals pertinent to water, sanitation and health, specifically Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on improving nutrition, Goal 4 on equitable quality education, Goal 11 on safe, resilient and sustainable cities and Goal 13 on combating climate change and its impacts.

With a strong integrated and intersectoral approach, its focus on the coherence of policies and its attention to inclusivity and equity issues, the Protocol's objectives, principles and approaches are consistent with the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, the Protocol's legally binding nature, which allows it to channel long-term efforts, and its intergovernmental framework — open to all stakeholders — makes it possible for the Protocol to respond to changing and varying needs across the region.

The Protocol can therefore be a powerful tool to promote and operationalize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in national and regional contexts. Its planning and accountability approach — through target setting and reporting — offers a practical framework for Parties to translate the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda into specific national targets and actions. The Protocol also offers a pan-European hub for all relevant stakeholders to build evidence, strengthen political commitment, develop policy and technical guidance, build capacities and

share experiences and good practices for attaining the 2030 Agenda targets on water, sanitation and health.

The special high-level session will foster a strategic discussion between Parties, other States, international and non-governmental organizations and academia on the different perspectives on and expectations for advancing the water and sanitation agenda in the pan-European region and in particular how the Protocol can best fulfil its potential role in this respect and support countries and other stakeholders in their efforts.

Background document: A healthy link: The Protocol on Water and Health and the Sustainable Development¹ (brochure)

Provisional programme

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| 11.10–11.15 a.m. | Introduction by the moderator
<i>Awilo Ochieng Pernet, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Switzerland</i> |
| 11.15–11.35 a.m. | Vision, challenges and opportunities for achieving the water, sanitation and health-related Goals and targets under the 2030 Agenda
<i>Jamie Bartram, Director of the Water Institute, University of North Carolina</i> |
| 11.35–12.15 p.m. | High-level panel on the role of the Protocol in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with regard to water, sanitation and health

A panel composed of high-level representatives from countries and international organizations will discuss implementation of the 2030 Agenda with regard to water, sanitation and health, and the role of the Protocol, around the following questions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>How will the 2030 Agenda with its aspirations and drive impact on your water, sanitation and health policies, initiatives and programmes? What will be the main opportunities and challenges?</i>b. <i>How can silos be broken and interlinkages and cooperation promoted among all relevant sectors, including environment, health, education, nutrition, financing and infrastructure? What cross-sectoral partnerships need to be strengthened to advance the 2030 Agenda on water, sanitation and health issues?</i>c. <i>What have been the main successes of the work of the Protocol so far and what are the implications of the 2030 Agenda for its future work? How can the Protocol, its governance structure and its activities best support the implementation of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals?</i> |

Panelists

- Zhandarbek Bekshin, Chief Sanitary Doctor, Deputy Chairman, Committee for Protection of Consumers Rights, Ministry of National Economy, Kazakhstan

¹ See <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44282>.

- Gheorge Brega, Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Moldova
- Raniero Guerra, Director General for Health Prevention, Ministry of Health, Italy
- Jean Launay, Member of the Parliament, President of the National Water Committee, President of the French Water Partnership, President of the International network of Basin Organizations for Europe, France
- Basil Rodriques, Senior Regional Adviser, Health Systems and Policy, United Nations Children's Fund
- Agnija Tumkevic, Chief Specialist, Economic Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

12.15–12.50 p.m.	Interactive moderated discussion involving Parties, other States and stakeholders from the floor.
12.50–1 p.m.	Conclusions of the high-level session by Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
