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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

**REPORT OF THE 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
ON ITS FIRST MEETING
(Geneva, 17-19 January 2007)**

Addendum

Declaration and decisions adopted by the Meeting of the Parties ?

This document contains the Declaration of the first meeting of the Parties, the Decisions I/1, I/4, I/5 and the terms of reference of the Working Group on Water and Health. For practical reasons, Decision I/2 on review of compliance is published in document ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.3 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.3, and Decision I/3 on the Ad hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism is published in document ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.4 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.4.

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DECLARATION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

We, the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health, gathered at Geneva from 17 to 19 January 2007 for our first meeting:

1. *Reaffirm* the commitments made during the adoption of the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.
2. Recalling the ultimate objective and principles of, and the commitments under, the Protocol, *confirm* our commitment to achieving the internationally agreed goals on environmental sustainability – including integrated water resources management, access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation – agreed upon in Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the decisions of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) to further the implementation of the international goals.
3. *Consider* that water is a primary human need, that safe water and adequate sanitation are basic social services and that it is intolerable that in the twenty-first century, people still suffer heavily from water-related diseases, and emphasize that public authorities must take adequate measures to make these services effective and affordable.
4. *Recall* that the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2005–2015 the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” to implement international commitments concerning safe water and adequate sanitation.
5. *Renew* our commitments to the priorities endorsed by the fourth World Health Organization (WHO) Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Budapest, June 2004), in particular, to take measures to improve safe water supply and sanitation for all children of the European Region as Regional Priority Goal 1 under the Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE).
6. *Recognize* the work done by the World Health Organization’s Centralized Information System for Infectious Diseases (CISID) and *underline* the importance of this tool in setting realistic targets and monitoring progress in the control of water-related diseases.
7. *Acknowledge* the initiative of the Government of Norway to host the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe, and express commitment to continue to promote international cooperation.
8. *Note with concern* that a significant amount of the population in the region does not have sustainable access to safe water or adequate sanitation, and *further note with concern* the effects of extreme weather events that could be caused by climate change, particularly floods, droughts, heatwaves and coldwaves in different parts of the European region, and their consequences for the sustainable management of water resources and human health.

9. *Appreciate* the discussions on human right to water that took place at the “Round Table on the Human Right to Water and the Protocol on Water and Health: making access to water a reality”, which showed the synergies between the Protocol and the human right perspective.
10. *Invite* Parties and non-Parties to the Protocol to work together towards the attainment of safe, sufficient, and reasonably affordable drinking water for the entire population of the region through, inter alia, identifying regions with deficient water supply and sanitation and increased water-related disease burdens; taking appropriate risk management measures, such as in-house treatment of water; promoting the concept of water safety plans as soon as possible to optimize risk assessment and hazard management with regard to the drinking water supply; and promoting community-based water supply and sanitation systems.
11. *Investigate* the possibility of extending and inter-connecting the current environment and health information systems on water-related issues, water supply and sanitation as a tool for national target setting, progress monitoring and reporting, as well as facilitation of comparisons between countries.
12. *Express willingness* to continue and extend cooperation with other organizations in the United Nations system, governmental and non-governmental organizations, treaty bodies, and institutions active in the field of water and health, inter alia, to anticipate, detect and prevent adverse effects on human health.
13. *Agree* to focus on priority areas associated with commitments under the Protocol, notably: awareness-raising and human capacity-building for water-related health issues; strengthening of surveillance and early-warning systems, contingency plans, and response capacities; ensuring safe access to water and adequate sanitation in normal and extraordinary conditions taking into account equity issues; developing integrated management of small water supply and sanitation systems; sharing of experiences on relevant issues among the countries; and developing a mechanism to set targets and monitor progress towards them.
14. *Invite* countries, financial institutions, and funding mechanisms to contribute resources to the achievement of the objectives and purposes of the Protocol. In particular, we invite them to consider making voluntary contributions to the Protocol’s trust funds.
15. *Request* the Executive Secretary of the UNECE and the Regional Director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to provide adequate resources for the joint secretariat and for the implementation of the work programme.
16. *Welcome* the establishment of the Compliance Committee to review, facilitate, promote, and secure the compliance of the Parties based on a non-judicial, non-adversarial, and cooperative procedure.
17. Referring to Article 14 calling for international support for national actions, *are committed to implementing* the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism for facilitating identification, financial support, and effective implementation of projects for countries with

economies in transition, in particular in South-Eastern Europe and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

18. *Are committed* to cooperating with the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes on all issues of common relevance.

19. *Recognize* the important role of the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10-12 October, 2007); and *stress* the importance of the synergies between the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health and the “Environment for Europe” process.

20. *Recognize* the important role of the European Environment and Health Process and underline the relevance of the Protocol on Water and Health in reaching the goals adopted at the fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health held in 2004 in Budapest. We will contribute to the Process and especially to its fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health to be held in 2009 in Italy, inter alia, through the improvement of access to safe water and adequate sanitation among all populations, and through the sharing of experiences.

21. *Urge* all Signatories that are not yet Parties and States and regional economic integration organizations that have not signed the Protocol to become Parties to it as soon as possible.

DECISION I/1

MAINSTREAMING ACTIVITIES AND PRIORITIES OF WORK UNDER THE PROTOCOL INTO THE POLICYMAKING OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

The Meeting of the Parties,

Noting the recognition of the cross-cutting importance of water as a determinant of health in the WHO global programmes on communicable disease prevention and control, malaria prevention and control, health promotion and nutrition,

Appreciating the issues and challenges identified in the WHO global programme 2006–2007 concerning the health impact of reduced availability and degradation of water quality, and the added impact of extreme weather events,

Taking cognizance of the work on the development of evidence-based normative and good-practice guidance on water quality, in-country capacity development to manage environmental health information and intersectoral policy development, as well as efforts to address environmental health concerns of vulnerable and high-risk population groups, particularly children,

Being aware of the work done under subsequent Ministerial Conferences on Environment and Health, particularly the adoption of the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) and its Regional Priority Goal 1 aimed at providing all children of the European region with sustainable access to safe water and adequate sanitation,

Heeding the importance given to the provision of detailed information on the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals within the terms of the WHO core mandate in the Organization's eleventh general programme of work 2006–2015 and the relationship between our work and Millennium Development Goals 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), 4 (reducing child mortality), 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability) and 8 (developing a global partnership for development),

Recalling that the Regional Director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe serves as Co-Secretary to the Protocol on Water and Health,

1. *Requests* the Regional Director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to inform the policymaking bodies of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, particularly its Regional Committee, of the decisions taken by the Meeting of the Parties, and to ensure adequate resources for the support of the joint secretariat and for the implementation of the Protocol;
2. *Invites* the Regional Committee of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to take cognizance of the programme of work adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, and

to provide appropriate support for the implementation of the Protocol's programme of work during the definition of the programme of work and budget of the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

DECISION I/4

DESIGNATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOCAL POINTS

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recognizing the important interlinkages between water and health issues,

Wishing to promote synergy between environment and health,

1. *Calls on* Parties to designate one or more national focal points for the Protocol and, as appropriate, contact persons for specific topics under its auspices, if they have not already done so, and to submit the relevant contact information to the secretariat, including any modifications or additions as they occur;
2. *Invites* non-Parties and interested organizations to designate one or more focal points for the Protocol and, as appropriate, contact persons for specific topics under its auspices, if they have not already done so, and to submit the relevant contact information to the secretariat, including any modifications or additions as they occur;
3. *Requests* the secretariat to keep the list of focal points and contact persons for specific issues within the scope of the Protocol up to date and to post it on the Protocol's website to facilitate the sharing of information;
4. *Calls on* Parties to make appropriate internal arrangements so that the nominated focal points can carry out the required tasks to promote and support activities related to the Protocol within their countries/organizations. Focal points should facilitate and/or coordinate, inter alia:
 - (a) Dissemination of information related to the Protocol to other concerned national authorities, organizations and the general public, as applicable;
 - (b) Provision to the secretariat of relevant information that could be of use for other Parties and non-Parties in their implementation of the Protocol; and
 - (c) Information requests from the public, where appropriate.

DECISION I/5

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling its adopted programme of work for 2007–2009,

Recognizing that effective implementation of the Protocol depends, inter alia, on the availability of sufficient financial and human resources,;

Believing that the need for stable and predictable sources of funding and a fair sharing of the burden, transparency and accountability should be the guiding principles of any financial arrangements established under the Protocol,

Determined to ensure that the necessary resources are available for implementing the core elements of the work programme,

Believing that a voluntary scheme of contributions by Parties, Signatories, other States, regional economic integration organizations and other partners can provide an effective and workable solution in the short to medium term,

Recognizing that, in the longer term consideration should be given to establishing stable and predictable financial arrangements for the core elements of the programme of work for example using the United Nations scale of assessment or other appropriate scales,

1. *Establishes* two funds for voluntary contributions from Parties, Signatories, other States, regional economic integration organizations and other partners to support the promotion and effective implementation of the Protocol. The United Nations Technical Cooperation Trust Fund will be managed by the UNECE secretariat in accordance with the established United Nations Financial Rules and Regulations. The Voluntary Fund will be managed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO-EURO) in accordance with WHO financial rules;

2. *Decides* that the two funds can be used, inter alia, for:

(a) Support for the participation of experts and representatives of countries in transition, especially the countries in South-Eastern Europe and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, in the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, in the meetings of its subsidiary bodies and in workshops, seminars, symposia and other informal forums organized within the framework of the Protocol (travel and/or daily subsistence allowance, as applicable);

(b) Technical support to Parties, particularly to countries in transition, for implementation of and compliance with the Protocol;

(c) Support for the participation of the joint secretariat in meetings of subsidiary bodies, workshops, seminars, symposia and other formal and informal forums related to the Protocol's activities;

(d) Joint secretariat costs involved in implementing the programme of work that are not covered by the regular budgets of UNECE and WHO-EURO;

(e) Specific consultants' fees and travel;

(f) The organization of activities to promote the Protocol in other regions;

(g) The preparation of publications, including editing, translation and printing costs.

3. *Recognizes* that voluntary contributions of at least 3,451,500 USD are needed to cover the costs of activities under the programme of work 2007–2009, of which amount 2,816,000 USD would cover core requirements and 635,500 USD would cover the remaining requirements;

4. *Entrusts* the joint secretariat with matching requests for the use of the resources with contributions, taking into account the conditions set by donors, if any; arranging for the issuance of travel authorizations, tickets and vouchers, as appropriate; providing statements of account to donors, as appropriate; and reporting to the Meeting of the Parties on contributions to the funds and their use;

5. *Entrusts* the Working Group on Water and Health and the Bureau to oversee the management of the funds, taking into account agreed priorities, and the Bureau to take appropriate action to raise resources;

6. *Invites* Parties, Signatories, other States, regional economic integration organizations and other partners in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the funds or in-kind contributions to support the programme of work, and thanks those Parties, Signatories, other States, regional economic integration organizations and other partners that have already promised to do so;

7. *Endorses*, for resources managed through the UNECE trust fund, the guiding principles for financial assistance to support the participation of experts and representatives from countries with economies in transition established and periodically updated by the Committee on Environmental Policy, while recognizing that the provision of any financial support is subject to the availability of resources;

8. *Agrees* to review the question of financial arrangements at its second meeting.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WATER AND HEALTH

1. The Working Group on Water and Health is an open-ended subsidiary body of the Meeting of the Parties responsible for the implementation of the programme of work.
2. The Working Group shall:
 - (a) Prepare the meetings of the Parties;
 - (b) Oversee and direct the activities of subsidiary bodies established by the Meeting of the Parties and any other activities carried out under the programme of work. In this context, the Working Group shall examine experience and draw up draft recommendations and other soft-law instruments. It shall:
 - (i) Review policies, strategies and methodologies of relevance to human health and safety as well as the protection and use of waters;
 - (ii) Examine the implications of such policies, strategies and methodologies;
 - (iii) Assist the Meeting of the Parties in developing response measures; and
 - (iv) Promote the harmonization of rules and regulations in specific areas.
3. The Working Group shall provide guidance – in between the meetings of the Parties – on the implementation of the programme of work. The Working Group may advise the Meeting of the Parties in respect of the further development of the programme of work and its adaptation to changing circumstances;
 - (c) Keep under review the need to amend the Protocol and prepare proposals to this end for the Meeting of the Parties;
 - (d) Make such proposals and recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties as it considers necessary for the achievement of the purposes of the Protocol; and
 - (e) Undertake any other duties requested by the Meeting of the Parties.
4. The Working Group shall meet no less than once a year. It shall organize its work within the means available and in the way that it deems most effective, e.g. by establishing task forces and ad hoc expert groups, by holding meetings back to back with other meetings, and by conducting electronic discussions.
