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**Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context**

**Preparatory meeting for the first meeting
of the Signatories to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment**

REPORT OF THE SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING

1. The second preparatory meeting for the first meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) took place in Geneva (Switzerland) from 26 to 27 January 2004.
2. It was attended by the delegations of: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uzbekistan. In addition, the Islamic Republic of Iran was represented.
3. A representative of the Commission of the European Communities attended the meeting.
4. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and World Health Organization (WHO) were represented, as were the following international and non-governmental organizations: ECOGLOBE, ECOTERRA, Environment Experts Association, European ECO Forum, International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), International Public Network for Environmental Impact Assessment (IPNEIA), Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and Unisféra International Centre.
5. Mr. Jan De Mulder (Belgium), Chairman, opened the meeting.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Meeting adopted the agenda as set out in document MP.EIA/AC.3/2004/1. The Meeting was informed that all the draft decisions had been circulated to the focal points well in advance of the meeting and put on the web site because of the shortage of time between meetings. Delegations agreed with this procedure.

II. REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE

7. Mr. Roger Gebbels (United Kingdom), Chairman of the Implementation Committee, presented a draft decision on the review of compliance, prepared by the Implementation Committee. The delegation of Ireland, representing the Presidency of the European Union, presented a coordinated EU position on the proposed draft decision. Following the discussion, the meeting amended the proposed draft decision and requested its Chairman to submit it to the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for consideration at its seventh meeting (28-30 January 2004) (MP.EIA/WG.1/2004/2).

III. FUTURE WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

8. The Chairman introduced possible activities which could be carried out under the Protocol pending its entry into force, as identified in the previous meeting (MP.EIA/AC.3/2003/2). The Meeting discussed the selection process in detail and selected the following activities for further examination:

- Capacity-building needs analysis
- Tools for capacity-building:
 - o Capacity development manual
 - o Information sharing
 - o Subregional workshops
- Issues for capacity-building:
 - o WHO work on health
 - o Transboundary consultations

9. The Chairman invited the representatives of WHO, REC and Unisféra to provide the Meeting with further information on the activities that they had proposed respectively on health assessment within SEA, the preparation of a capacity development manual for the Protocol and the strategic assessment of policies and legislation.

10. Small groups then examined the selected activities and described each in more detail, including its objective, expected outcome, method of work, organizational arrangements, time schedule and budget. The small groups reported back to the Meeting, which discussed the proposals further before requesting its Bureau to finalize the activities to be submitted to the Working Group on EIA at its seventh meeting for inclusion in the Convention's draft work plan and budget.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES

11. Mr. Nenad Mikulic (Croatia), Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties, described the practical arrangements for the third meeting of the Parties to the Convention, including the first meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol (Cavtat, Croatia, 1-4 June 2004), specifically the conference facilities and hotel accommodation. He also described the activities that the host authority was undertaking in order to raise funds.

V. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROTOCOL ON SEA AND THE ESPOO CONVENTION

12. The delegations of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom introduced a proposal for a draft decision on the preparation for the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to facilitate it and make it transparent. The two delegations also made available a document describing different possible scenarios for the body to be responsible for these preparations.

13. The Meeting discussed the proposals in detail and prepared a draft decision on this issue and requested its Bureau to finalize the decision and to submit it to the Parties at their third meeting for formal adoption.

VI. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

14. The meeting was closed on 27 January 2004.