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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE
IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Third meeting

Riga, 11–13 June 2008

Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda

Procedures and mechanisms facilitating implementation
of the Convention: reports on implementation

DRAFT DECISION III/5

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Draft decision prepared by the Bureau

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling decisions I/8 and II/10 on reporting requirements,

Recalling also the mandate of the Compliance Committee set out in paragraph 13 (c) of the annex to decision I/7 on review of compliance,

Having considered the reports submitted by Parties and the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 4 of decision 1/8 (ECE/MP.PP/2008/IR series and ECE/MP.PP/2008/4),

Having also considered the report of the Compliance Committee and its addenda (ECE/MP.PP/2008/5 and Add.1–10),

1. *Notes with appreciation* the implementation reports submitted by more than three quarters of the Parties to the Convention pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2 of the decision I/8;
2. *Welcomes* the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraph 5 of decision I/8;
3. *Further welcomes* the reports submitted by [international, regional and]¹ non-governmental organizations pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision I/8;
4. *Considers* that these reports together provide an impressive body of information on the status of implementation of the Convention, as well as the significant trends, challenges and solutions, which will help to guide future activities;

Timely submission of reports

5. *Notes with concern* that many Parties that submitted reports did not do so within the deadline indicated in decision II/10;
6. *Encourages* Parties to start the preparation of national implementation reports in future reporting cycles sufficiently in advance of the deadline for submission of the reports to the secretariat set out in decision II/10, with a view to providing for meaningful public consultation at the national level while adhering to the deadline for the submission of the reports;

Failure to submit reports

7. *Notes with regret* that Croatia, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Community², all of which were Parties at the time of the deadline for submission of the implementation reports, failed to submit reports;
8. *Calls upon* each of those Parties to submit their national implementation reports to the secretariat by 15 September 2008, for subsequent consideration, inter alia, by the Compliance Committee;

Public consultation

9. *Welcomes* the fact that most Parties prepared their reports through a process that involved consultations with various governmental agencies as well as civil society;
10. *Encourages* Parties to ensure transparency throughout the process of preparation and submission of the reports;

¹ At the time of preparing the draft decision, no reports had been submitted by international or regional organizations.

² The Parties listed here are those that had not submitted implementation reports at the time of the preparation of the draft decision by the Bureau.

Length of reports and comparability of information

11. *Notes with concern* that some of the reports have significantly exceeded the suggested word limit and that this had a negative effect on the time and costs related to their editing, translation and reproduction as well as on the comparability of the information between the reports;

12. *Requests* Parties, in the next reporting cycle, to prepare their reports within a length limit of 13,000 words, including the section headings drawn from the reporting format, and to allocate a proportionate level of detail to each item of the reporting format;

Reporting format

13. *Considers* that the reporting procedure as set out in decisions I/8 and II/10 should in principle continue to apply for the next reporting cycle;

14. *Notes* however that the reporting format set out in decision I/8 needs to be expanded to cover the implementation of the amendment to the Convention adopted in 2005;

15. *Mandates* the Working Group of the Parties to revise the reporting format to accommodate information on the implementation of the amendment to the Convention in time for the additional information to be incorporated in the implementation reports prepared for the fourth meeting of the Parties;

16. *Requests* each Party to include information on the implementation of the amendment, according to the revised reporting format, in all implementation reports prepared following the entry into force of the amendment for that Party;

17. *Invites* Parties for which the amendment has not entered into force to provide information related to their legislation and practices in the field to which the amendment relates;

18. *Resolves* to review the revision to reporting format introduced by the Working Group of the Parties at the fourth meeting of the Parties with a view to its formal endorsement;

19. [*Requests* Parties, having in mind the shared commitment to promoting and applying the Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums, to give special attention in their implementation reports to reporting on measures taken to implement article 3, paragraph 7;]³

³ Such a paragraph may not be required in the event that paragraph 1 of the draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/2008/L.6) is retained.

Guidance on reporting requirements

20. *Welcomes* the guidance on reporting requirements prepared by the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2007/L.4), and the fact that many Parties applied the guidance in preparing their national implementation reports in the second reporting cycle;

21. *Invites* Parties, in subsequent reporting cycles, to follow the methodology for the preparation and submission of the national implementation reports set out in the guidance, including in connection with the timeline for the preparation of the reports at the national level and through indicating new information within the consolidated text;

22. *Notes with appreciation* that more information on the practical implementation of some of the Convention's provisions has been provided by the Parties in this reporting cycle, inter alia, through addressing selected issues from the list contained in the annex to the guidance, and encourages Parties to continue including such information in subsequent reports;

23. *Requests* the Compliance Committee keep the guidance under review, as appropriate, with a view to assisting Parties with preparation of their reports in the next reporting cycle.
