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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

Working Group on Water and Health

Second meeting
Geneva, 2–3 July 2009

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WATER AND HEALTH
ON ITS SECOND MEETING**

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1–7	3
A. Attendance	2–4	3
B. Organizational matters	5–7	3
II. PROGRESS IN THE RATIFICATION PROCESS.....	8–9	3
III. SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY-WARNING SYSTEMS, CONTINGENCY PLANS AND RESPONSE CAPACITIES.....	10–19	4

CONTENTS (*continued*)

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
IV. SETTING TARGETS AND REPORTING UNDER THE PROTOCOL.....	20–29	6
V. WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION IN SHORT-TERM CRITICAL SITUATIONS AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE.....	30–36	7
VI. AD HOC PROJECT FACILITATION MECHANISM.....	37–38	8
VII. JOINT AND COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL ACTION.....	39	8
VIII. COMPLIANCE PROCEDURE.....	41–42	9
IX. RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY	43	9
X. PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH	44	9
XI. EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER.....	45–46	10
XII. SMALL-SCALE WATER SUPPLIES	47–50	10
XIII. FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH.....	51–52	11
XIV. PARTNERS IN COOPERATION: LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMES.....	53–59	11
XV. PROMOTION OF THE PROTOCOL.....	60–61	12
XVI. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL.....	62–70	13
XVII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP AND OTHER MEETINGS UNDER THE PROTOCOL	71	14
XVIII. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING.....	72	15

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The second meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health was held from 2 to 3 July 2009 in Geneva.

A. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

3. Representatives of the following international organizations were also present at the meeting: the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promoting Water Management and Risk Communication (Institute for Hygiene and Public Health, University of Bonn), the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Water and Health (DHI) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

4. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in the meeting: Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE), the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) and the World Plumbing Council.

B. Organizational matters

5. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Kjetil Tveitan (Norway) and co-chaired by Ms. Martina Behanova (Slovakia) and Mr. Thomas Kistemann (Germany).

6. The Chairperson of the Working Group on Water and Health opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

7. The Working Group adopted its agenda as set out in document ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/1 - EUR/09/5086340/3.

II. PROGRESS IN THE RATIFICATION PROCESS

8. The Chairperson informed the meeting about progress made with respect to the ratification of the Protocol on Water and Health. Since the first meeting, two countries had acceded to the Protocol: Belarus on 22 April 2009 and the Netherlands on 25 June 2009, bringing to 23 the number of countries that had ratified the Protocol.¹

¹ See http://www.unece.org/env/water/status/lega_wh.htm.

9. In the discussion that followed, delegates provided information on the status of the ratification process in their respective countries. Italy informed the meeting that it was difficult to provide a precise date for ratification; nevertheless it reconfirmed that it would continue to provide technical and political support for the Protocol. Kyrgyzstan reported that it would start the ratification procedures in September 2009.

III. SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY-WARNING SYSTEMS, CONTINGENCY PLANS AND RESPONSE CAPACITIES

10. The representative of the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO-EURO) secretariat recalled the mandate of the Task Force on Surveillance, as agreed by the first Meeting of the Parties. He reported on the progress achieved in this area, and presented the main activities carried out under the auspices of the Task Force. Moreover, he presented the draft guidance document on water-related disease surveillance, Part 1: Technical guidance related to drinking water (Information paper 1) and Part 2: Practical guidance on setting up, implementing and assessing a surveillance system on water-related diseases (Information paper 2).²

11. Participants found the document to be a well-elaborated and comprehensive draft. Once finalized, the guidance would be a very useful source of reference and information for many countries. They recommended including a summary in the document on water-related disease surveillance.

12. The Working Group was asked to provide comments on the two parts of the draft guidance document by 31 August 2009.

13. The representative of the WHO-EURO secretariat also reported on the survey carried out by the Task Force on the status of water-related disease surveillance systems in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)/WHO-EURO region and its findings (Information paper 4). All the countries that replied to the survey had in place mandatory surveillance systems for all primary non-communicable diseases. However, not many of them had established surveillance systems for emerging diseases such as campylobacteriosis, cryptosporidiosis, giardiasis and legionellosis. Locally important water-related diseases caused by chemical contamination (e.g. blue-baby syndrome and arsenicosis) were surveyed where they are relevant.

14. The findings of the survey called for possible new directions and priorities in future work on surveillance under the Protocol: (a) strengthening surveillance capacity with regard to emerging water-related diseases, (b) consideration of locally important diseases and (c) initiation of an action programme on virus-related diseases.

15. A literature study on the relationship between the size of water services and the outbreak of water-related disease pointed to the need of strengthening surveillance in relation to areas served by small water supplies. Exposure routes other than drinking water, such as aquaculture,

² All official and information documents are available at:
http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents_WGWH.htm.

irrigated agriculture products, etc., should also be included. With regard to epidemic preparedness and response plans, the study pointed out the need for general improvement. The need for international support for specific water-related disease surveillance training was also highlighted by the study.

16. A representative of Slovakia gave a presentation on intersectoral cooperation related to surveillance of water-related disease in Slovakia. The institutional and legislative set-up, public involvement and role of epidemiological information system in raising awareness about water-related disease was demonstrated. Furthermore, the speaker presented the statistics related to the outbreaks of water-related disease in Slovakia as well as tools, e.g. water safety plans, to minimize the risk of occurrence of water-related disease.

17. The representative of the WHO-EURO secretariat summarized the reflections and lessons learned thus far from the Task Force's work that could inspire the further work under the Protocol. He particularly highlighted the high risk of water-related disease in areas served by small-scale water supplies.

18. The Working Group agreed on the activities to be developed by the Task Force up to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties of the Protocol (tentatively scheduled to take place in October 2010), namely:

(a) To review and finalize the guidance document's two parts, and to submit them for consideration to the third meeting of the Working Group for endorsement before formal adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its second session;

(b) To publish the review on water-related disease surveillance systems;

(c) To further research the literature on the relationship between size of the water service and the outbreak of water-related disease;

(d) To develop advocacy materials on health risk assessment and the management of small-scale water services, and to strengthen epidemiological evidence;

(e) To investigate the economic impact of water-related disease;

(f) To organize a workshop on climate change and water-related disease;

(g) To contribute to the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Parma, Italy, 10–12 March 2010);

19. The Working Group requested the Task Force on Surveillance to hold a third meeting in time to present its outcomes at the Working Group's third meeting. At that meeting, the Task Force should also assess the work achieved, draw lessons learned and develop a workplan for 2011–2013, including financial implications. The assessments and proposed workplan 2011 - 2013, should be presented to the Working Group for consideration at its next meeting.

IV. SETTING TARGETS AND REPORTING UNDER THE PROTOCOL

20. The Chairperson of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting informed the Working Group about the activities of that Task Force. He summarized the outcomes of the workshop on setting targets and reporting (Geneva, 10–11 February 2009; ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/6 - EUR/09/5086342/8), stressing that until now only a few countries had set targets as required by the Protocol. He called on Parties to intensify their efforts to comply with the Protocol's provisions, in particular their obligations under articles 6 and 7.

21. The Chairperson of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting also presented the guidelines on setting targets, evaluation of progress and reporting (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/4 - EUR/08/5086340/9). He illustrated the main steps in setting targets and reminded participants of the benefits of setting targets under the Protocol, namely that target-setting created a platform for discussion, promotes coherence in policies, and harmonized and integrated the actions of the different stakeholders (i.e. governmental agencies, NGOs, the scientific community, the private sector and the general public). The target-setting process also provided for vertical communication between the different levels of administration (from local to national), and helped translate national targets into local contexts.

22. The Working Group commented on the guidelines and proposed some minor amendments. The Chairperson invited the Working Group to provide additional comments by 31 July 2009. The Working Group entrusted the Task Force to further elaborate and finalize the guidelines and to submit a revised version at the Working Group's third meeting for endorsement before submitting it to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

23. A representative of the UNECE secretariat presented the guidelines for summary reports and the template for reporting to the Meeting of the Parties in accordance with Protocol's article 7 (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/5 - EUR/09/5086342/7). She recalled the obligations of the Parties to report progress achieved towards the targets set and presented the main objectives of reporting. She emphasized that the aim of reporting was not to compare countries, but rather to provide Parties with the opportunity for self-assessment.

24. The representative of the secretariat then presented the template for reporting, together with the objectives, format and timeline for the pilot reporting exercise (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/7 - EUR/09/5086342/9). She stressed that as this was a pilot reporting exercise, all Parties, Signatories and interested countries should take part, so as to test their abilities to fulfil the subsequent, obligatory, cycle for reporting.

25. The Working Group commented on the guidelines for the summary reports. Participants pointed out that access to sanitation, as defined by the Joint Monitoring Programme, was not fully addressing the problems in the UNECE/WHO-EURO region, in particular the risks related to contamination of resources by untreated wastewater and other related hygiene issues. At the same time, finding alternatives to the commonly used indicators would be difficult. Participants therefore proposed, for the time being, using the proposed indicator, including for the pilot

reporting exercise. The issue would be reconsidered at the third meeting of the Working Group, where an alternative proposal would be presented by WECF, Sweden and Germany.

26. The Working Group endorsed the guidelines for summary reports and agreed on the proposed format for pilot reporting to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties. Accordingly, the summary reports should be submitted by Parties and non-Parties by 1 April 2010. The reports should follow the template included in the draft guidelines for summary reports (see ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/5 - EUR/09/5086342/7). The secretariat would disseminate further information by August 2009.

27. The Working Group agreed to revise the guidelines for summary report, if needed, at its third meeting, on the basis of the experience with the pilot reporting exercise.

28. The Working Group discussed and agreed on the future workplan of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting (including the financial implications) up to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties, in particular on the organization of a workshop on reporting to be held back-to-back with the Task Force's third meeting (tentatively scheduled for 16–18 February 2010).

29. The Working Group requested the Task Force to assess the work achieved, draw lessons learned and develop a workplan for 2011–2013, including financial implications, at the Task Force's third meeting. These assessments and the proposed workplan should be presented to the Working Group for consideration at its next meeting.

V. WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION IN SHORT-TERM CRITICAL SITUATIONS AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

30. The Chairperson of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events informed the Working Group about the developments and progress in the work of that Task Force. The Working Group was presented with an advance draft of a guidance document on water supply and sanitation in extreme weather events (Information paper 5). She stressed that the guidance document contained all the information needed to tackle risk emerging from recurrent extreme weather events, emphasizing the importance of taking into account climate change issues when setting targets under the Protocol. The process of setting targets could help introduce relevant adaptation measures for climate change; these needed to be developed in cooperation with stakeholders representing different sectors.

31. The Chairperson of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events stressed the significance of climate change impacts on the Protocol's objectives. She pointed out that climate change was already affecting both the water and health sectors, and stressed that the effects would become stronger in the future. She suggested amending the Protocol to reflect this situation.

32. The Working Group agreed that there was a need to discuss and clarify possible actions under the Protocol related to climate change; however, amending the Protocol's text was not considered as a viable solution.

33. The Working Group was asked to contribute to the revision of the guidance document by providing comments by 31 August 2009. The Working Group entrusted the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events with further elaborating and finalizing the guidance document and presenting a revised version to the Working Group's third meeting for endorsement before submitting it to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

34. The Working Group also entrusted the Task Force to make an advance version of the guidance document available at the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.

35. The Working Group agreed on the workplan of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events up to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties. It requested the Task Force to assess the work achieved, draw lessons learned and develop a workplan for 2011–2013, including financial implications, at the Task Force's second meeting (Geneva, 27–28 October 2009). These assessments and the proposed workplan should be presented to the Working Group for consideration at its next meeting.

36. A representative of the UNECE secretariat informed the Working Group about cooperation and work-sharing arrangements with the Convention's Task Force on Water and Climate and the preparation of the Guidance on water and adaptation to climate change.

VI. AD HOC PROJECT FACILITATION MECHANISM

37. The Chairperson on the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism, reported on the outcome of the Mechanism's second meeting (1 July 2009; ECE/MP.WH/AC.1/2009/2 - EU/09/5086361/4). She underlined the quality of submitted project proposals, highlighting the positive trends and direction of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism. Positive aspects included the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from countries in preparing the project proposals, including NGOs, and the close cooperation with the component for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) of the European Union (EU) Water Initiative. It was emphasized that linking the AHPFM with the work of EBRD could provide access to the funds needed to achieve the targets set under the Protocol, in particular with respect to water supply and sanitation systems.

38. The Chairperson pointed out that to attract donor countries more efforts should be made to raise awareness about the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism. The rather limited number of donors could not ensure the Mechanism's sustainability, thus more countries should be involved. Establishing cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission (e.g. EuropeAid, and the Directorate-General for External Relations (DG RELEX)) were considered to be strategic priorities.

VII. JOINT AND COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL ACTION

39. The representative of the WHO-EURO secretariat recalled the orientation of the work of the WHO-EURO towards a more country-focused approach in 2000, and subsequently a greater emphasis on the biennial cooperation programmes (BCAs) with individual countries. He

informed the Working Group about the past assistance provided to the Government of Tajikistan by specialists from Germany, Italy and Switzerland with regard to assessing current water services and current risks to human health.

40. He also presented the future plans for the period 2011–2013 under the BCAs. He called for countries to make sure that water and health issues were promoted in BCA programmes and that proposals of action regarding water and health were forwarded to WHO/EURO through the WHO country offices.

VIII. COMPLIANCE PROCEDURE

41. A representative of the UNECE secretariat informed the Working Group about the Compliance Committee's activities and presented the documents elaborated during the Committee's second and third meetings (Geneva, 24–25 September 2008 and 25–26 February 2009, respectively). The Working Group was briefed on the purpose and scope of the guidelines for communications from the public (Information paper 6) and the rules of procedure of the Compliance Committee (Information paper 7).

42. The Working Group took note of the documents presented and thanked the Compliance Committee for the important work achieved.

IX. RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY

43. The representative of the WHO-EURO secretariat summarized the outcome of the study of the Robens Centre for Protection of Water Quality and Human Health on the current management of swimming pools, spas and similar recreational water environments. A number of countries (e.g. France, Georgia and Hungary) indicated their interest in this area of work. Participants agreed that this activity could be continued under the future workplan if one or more Parties decided to lead and to prepare a proposal, including financial implications, for consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting.

X. PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH

44. A representative of Romania, lead Party for this activity, presented an information note on an upcoming workshop on public participation, information and education in water and health related issues (Information paper 9), presenting the workshop's rationale, objectives and expected outcomes. The workshop was planned to be held in April–May 2010, in Bucharest. A representative of Italy suggested including in the workshop's programme issues related to communication of risks from climate change and emerging situations. AWHHE and WECF expressed their interest in contributing to the workshop, and recommended gathering case studies related to public participation, information and education in water and health. The Chairperson asked participants to send their written comments on the information note to the secretariat by 31 July 2009.

XI. EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER

45. The representative of France, lead Party for this activity, presented the future plan in this area of work. Planned activities included carrying out a survey between July and November 2009 through a questionnaire, establishing a drafting group to analyse its replies and developing a document on good practices in the region. Switzerland and Portugal – in particular in relation to Portugal’s experience with designing tariffs – and UNDP, WECF and INBO expressed their interest in joining the drafting group. It was also considered desirable to involve OHCHR in the drafting group.

46. The Working Group requested France to proceed with the planned steps and to report on progress at its next meeting. It also entrusted France with preparing for consideration at its third meeting a proposal for follow-up activities, including financial implications, for inclusion in the Protocol’s programme of work for 2011–2013.

XII. SMALL-SCALE WATER SUPPLIES

47. The representative of Germany reported on the outcome of the workshop on “Water Safety in Small-Scale Water Supplies in the European Region: Common Challenges and Needs” (Bad Elster, Germany, 26–27 November 2008; ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2009/9 - EUR/5086344/7). The workshop had developed a consensus statement on challenges for safe water supply in small-scale water services. The workshop had also called for further work related to small-scale water supplies, which had resonated with the Article 12 Committee of the EU Drinking Water Directive³ and the work of TECHNEAU⁴. The revision process for the Drinking Water Directive was bringing additional attention to the issue of small-scale water supplies.

48. Climate change impacts and the need for adaptation were stressed, and participants suggested that the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events might consider addressing issues related to small-scale water supplies in its work.

49. Continuation of work in the area of small-scale water supplies was endorsed by Germany, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, Uzbekistan and WECF. The workshop also highlighted the importance of developing advocacy materials to highlight the health risks of small-scale water supplies.

50. The Working Group entrusted Germany, in cooperation with the secretariat and other interested countries, with preparing a more defined proposal of possible actions to be undertaken in the area of small-scale water supplies under the Protocol’s programme of work for 2011–2013. The proposal should include financial implications, and should be submitted to the Working Group for consideration at its third meeting.

³ See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-drink/revision_en.html

⁴ See <http://www.techneau.org/index.php?id=136>

XIII. FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

51. A representative of Italy briefed the Working Group on the progress made with preparations for the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Parma, Italy, 10–12 March 2010) in terms of presenting the Protocol's proposed inputs to the Conference, namely:

(a) Involvement in the drafting of the Ministerial Declaration, to ensure that issues linked to water and health were properly underlined there and that specific features of the Protocol of relevance to the Conference were highlighted. To this aim, focal points and other experts involved in work under the Protocol should coordinate with their national colleagues involved in the negotiations of the Declaration;

(b) Organization of a "Protocol Day" prior to the Conference, to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Protocol. This event would address the areas of work under the Protocol, in particular the work conducted by different task forces (e.g. surveillance, target setting, extreme weather events), the AHPFM and the Compliance Committee;

(c) Preparation of background document on water and health, which will not only be a product for the "Protocol Day" but should also inform and provide inputs to the Region Priority Goal 1 of the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) and the official agenda of the Ministerial Conference, highlighting strategic areas for further action in the region. The document should also emphasize the main water and health issues in the region and show how the Protocol addressed them. It should take stock of the Protocol's achievements, the existing challenges and the future prospects for work under the Protocol.

52. The Working Group agreed on the proposed inputs to the Ministerial Conference and entrusted the Bureau, with the support of the joint secretariat, with preparation of the proposed inputs.

XIV. PARTNERS IN COOPERATION: LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMES

53. The representative of OHCHR informed the Working Group about recent developments within the United Nations human rights system relevant to the Protocol, in particular those related to the appointment by the Human Rights Council of the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the Independent Expert's mandate, and opportunities for cooperation under the Protocol's programme of work. In addition to cooperation on the preparation of a good practice document to ensure equitable access to water (see chapter XI), she highlighted in particular two potential fields of cooperation with the Protocol:

(a) Cooperation on setting targets under the Protocol on Water and Health, taking into account the human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(b) The possibility of joining forces on the organization of a country visit to one of the UNECE member States, where the Protocol's implementation could be reviewed and the implementation of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation could be assessed.

54. Representatives of countries interested in the above joint activities were invited to contact the UNECE secretariat.

55. A representative of Italy stated that human rights to water and sanitation were very relevant to the work carried out under the Protocol, and suggested that this theme should be taken up by the upcoming Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.

56. A representative of UNDP presented an update on progress made under the regional UNDP programme, "A Human Rights-Based Approach to Water Governance", as well as under other UNDP projects and activities related to water and sanitary health. Experiences and first outcomes of work in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Tajikistan, together with the next steps up to 2010. He stressed the synergies between UNDP activities and work under the Protocol, and confirmed the willingness of UNDP to actively contribute to the Protocol's implementation, in particular in countries with economies in transition.

57. A representative of the UNECE secretariat presented activities carried out under the EECCA component of the EU Water Initiative related to the National Policy Dialogues (NDP) that were linked to integrated water resources management. He explained that the NDPs were the main operational instruments of the Water Initiative and should be seen as policy processes rather than technical projects. They provided a platform for cooperation between different stakeholders, e.g. the EU, OECD, UNECE, UNDP, WHO and NGOs. NDPs were ongoing in Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

58. A representative of WECF briefed the Working Group about the organization and presented its activities relevant to work under the Protocol as well as areas for possible cooperation, in particular related to integrating outcomes of projects by NGOs into target-setting under the Protocol.

59. A representative of World Plumbing Council presented Council's objectives and mission, which was to promote the role of the plumbing industry in improving public health and safeguarding the environment. He underlined that plumbing was not just piping systems but also all the work associated with the design of installations in, and connections between, the buildings, and that plumbing had a direct link with human health and environment.

XV. PROMOTION OF THE PROTOCOL

60. A representative of Romania presented the draft of a joint strategy for promoting the Protocol and the Convention (Information paper 12) prepared by the Chairpersons of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The draft document included a list of existing promotional tools and actions to be carried out by the focal

points, the Bureau and the joint secretariat with the aim of promoting the Protocol at the local, national and international levels.

61. The Working Group was asked to provide comments on this document by 31 July 2009, and also provide examples of specific activities carried out to promote the two tools. The document would be submitted to the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (10–12 November 2009) and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. (tentatively scheduled to take place in October 2010).

XVI. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

62. Representatives of the UNECE and WHO-EURO secretariats informed the Working Group about the financial status of the UNECE Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the WHO-EURO Voluntary Funds. They presented two documents (Information papers 13 and 14) prepared by the joint secretariat, which showed in detail the contributions received, the funds used and the missing resources necessary to implement the work programme. The joint secretariat expressed its sincere gratitude to all the countries that had contributed and/or planned to contribute to implementing activities under the Protocol, either by direct financial contributions to the voluntary funds or in kind by leading the task forces or organizing meetings or workshops.

63. The presented papers, demonstrated that the resources available and the pledges foreseen were insufficient to carry on the activities and implement some of the elements envisioned in the work programme up to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties.

64. Norway and Finland expressed their readiness to contribute to the UNECE Technical Cooperation Trust Fund with disbursements of equal amounts as provided in previous years. Similarly, Hungary indicated its interest in contributing to the WHO-EURO Voluntary Fund. Portugal would check on the possibility of supporting the Protocol's programme of work.

65. The Chairperson called on other countries to contribute either directly or through the two established trust funds so as to help finance the agreed activities up to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties.

66. The representative of the WHO-EURO secretariat presented a document on the difficulties encountered since the first session of the Meeting of the Parties to secure the resources needed to implement the adopted programme of work for 2007–2009 (Information paper 15). It was demonstrated that the financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol adopted by the Meeting of the Parties had not been effective. In particular, the stable and predictable sources of funding and a fair sharing of the burden, as well as the need to ensure that the necessary resources were available for implementing the core elements of the work programme, had not been realized.

67. He recalled that decision I/5 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol had recognized 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”.

68. The document illustrated a number of existing financing mechanisms related to ongoing global and regional environmental conventions and global health conventions and programmes. These mechanisms were based on the United Nations scale of assessment or other scales that recognized the similar but diverse responsibilities of the Parties. The examples could inspire the Working Group to follow up on decision I/5, to search for alternative and more efficient options to ensure the stable, adequate and predictable financing for activities under the Protocol.

69. In the ensuing discussion, Switzerland supported the proposal to explore the matter and prepare proposals for equitable sharing for consideration by the third meeting of the Working Group. It was stressed that countries should demonstrate their support to the Protocol and ensure the long-term sustainability of financing the Protocol’s programme of work.

70. The Working Group requested the joint secretariat, in cooperation with the Bureau, to prepare a proposal with alternative options for financing the programme of work. This would be considered at its third meeting, with a view to submitting conclusions for possible adoption by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its second session.

XVII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP AND OTHER MEETINGS UNDER THE PROTOCOL

71. The third meeting of the Working Group is tentatively scheduled to be held on 27 and 28 May 2010, back-to-back with the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism (26 May 2010). Other meetings under the Protocol scheduled before the third meeting of the Working Group include:

- (a) The third meeting of the Bureau to the Parties to the Protocol (Geneva, 8–9 September 2009);
- (b) The third meeting of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events (Geneva, 27–28 October 2009);
- (c) The third meeting of the Task Force on Surveillance (Rome, January 2010 (tbc));
- (d) The third meeting of the Tasks Force on Indicators and Reporting and the workshop on reporting under the Protocol (Geneva, 16–19 February 2010);
- (e) The workshop on public participation, information and education in health-related issues (Bucharest, April–May 2010).

XVIII. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

72. The Chairperson thanked all the participants for their contributions, the Vice-Chairpersons for their help in co-chairing the sessions, and the joint secretariat for preparing the meeting documents, and closed the meeting.
