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Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

First session

Geneva, 20–22 April 2010

Agenda item 9 (b) of the provisional agenda

Draft decision on financial arrangements

Draft Decision on Financial Arrangements¹

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling article 17, paragraph 2 (h), of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, which states, inter alia, that the Meeting of the Parties shall consider establishing financial arrangements by consensus,

Recalling also article 21 of the Protocol, which stipulates that the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe shall carry out secretariat functions,

Recalling further its decision [I..] on the procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes and on the work programme for 2011–2014,

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 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,

¹ The present document was prepared by the Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers established under the auspices of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters at its sixth meeting for adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its first session (ECE/MP.PP/AC.1/2008/2, para. 22).

Believing that a voluntary scheme of contributions by Parties and other States, based upon a system of differentiated shares, can provide an effective and workable solution,

Believing also that some organizations and non-State entities such as charitable foundations may be interested in contributing financially to the activities under the work programme and should be encouraged to do so,

Convinced that in the longer term the levels of contributions should be based upon an appropriate scale of assessments, and that consideration should be given to establishing stable and predictable financial arrangements[,

Agreeing that the practice developed under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of routinely providing financial support through the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Local Technical Cooperation Trust Fund to facilitate the participation of environmental non-governmental organizations in meetings held under the auspices of the Convention should apply to meetings held under the auspices of the Protocol, subject to the availability of funds]²,

1. *Establishes* an interim voluntary scheme of contributions to be sustained by contributions from Parties, Signatories and other States having opted to participate in the scheme;

2. *Decides* that the contribution of the European Union to activities under the work programme not covered by the United Nations regular budget shall be 2.5 per cent of the total needed for core activities³;

3. *Recognizes* that activities under the work programme for 2011–2014 not covered by the United Nations regular budget should be covered by voluntary contributions based on a differentiated system of shares, as follows:

- (a) Type A of 20,000 United States dollars,
- (b) Type B of 500 dollars;

whereby Parties, Signatories and other States having opted to participate in the scheme would be able to contribute one or more shares, or parts thereof, from either of the two types, including in combination;

4. *Invites* Parties, Signatories and other States in a position to do so to contribute, in cash or in kind, an amount corresponding to one or more shares or parts thereof, especially to core activities identified in the work programme. Each such Party, Signatory and other State should notify the secretariat as soon as possible after the beginning of each year of the amount that it will contribute for that year. No contribution should be less than 200 dollars;

5. *Further invites* interested organizations to contribute under the scheme towards activities under the work programme of the Protocol;

² This preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 9 are alternatives. A third alternative discussed by the Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers would be to address the issue in the meeting report (see ECE/MP.PP/AC.1/2008/2, para. 21 (d)).

³ The format of the contribution by the European Union does not prejudice the current voluntary scheme of contributions by States Parties, Signatories and others having opted to participate in the scheme.

6. *Requests* that all such contributions in cash be made to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Local Technical Cooperation Trust Fund (Project: Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers);

7. *Also requests* that those contributions to be used for activities taking place in a given calendar year be made as early as possible and in any case no later than the end of that year;

8. *Endorses* the guiding principles for financial assistance to support the participation of experts and representatives from countries with economies in transition in meetings and workshops organized within the framework of the Protocol and other relevant activities 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 funds;

9. [*Agrees* that the practice developed under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of routinely providing financial support through the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Local Technical Cooperation Trust Fund to facilitate the participation of environmental non-governmental organizations in meetings held under the auspices of the Convention should apply to meetings held under the auspices of the Protocol, subject to the availability of funds;]

10. *Requests* the secretariat, in accordance with the financial rules of the United Nations, to monitor the expenditure of the funds and to prepare a report for the next ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties as well as annual reports for the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol in the interim years, to ensure that the level of contributions matches the level of funding needed for the implementation of the work programme and to include information on how much Parties and other participating States contributed to the budget of the Protocol in cash and in kind, and on how the contributions were spent;

11. *Also requests* the Working Group to:

(a) Consider, in the light of these annual reports, whether changes should be made to the content or time frame of the work programme in the event that the level of actual and/or pledged contributions does not match the level of funding needed;

(b) Consider the feasibility of and modalities for introducing a system of financial arrangements based upon an appropriate scale of assessments;

(c) Consider whether the present mechanism is sufficient to ensure stable and predictable financial contributions;

(d) Explore the implications of allowing in-kind contributions, such as might be contributed for projects undertaken within the context of the framework programme on capacity-building, to be counted within a State's overall contribution;

12. *Decides* to review the question of financial arrangements at its second ordinary session, on the basis of the work of and any proposals from the Working Group, taking into account the evolution of financial arrangements under the Convention and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication.