



# Activities of the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) in 2013–14 and 7th report on the implementation of the Convention

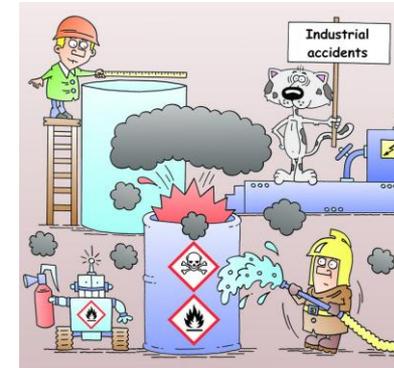
- 8th Conference of the Parties  
Geneva, 3–5 December 2014
- Sandra Ashcroft, UK
- Chair of the Working Group on Implementation to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents





# Outline of the presentation

- WGI composition and activities
- 7th reporting round – introduction
- 7th report on implementation – structure
- Status of reporting
- Reporting trends
- Quality of reporting and level of implementation of the Convention
- Overall assessment of the implementation of the Convention
- Findings
- Recommendations and conclusions by the WGI





# WGI composition and activities

- 10 elected members from Belarus, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Romania, **Serbia (vice-Chair)**, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the **United Kingdom (Chair)**
- 7 WGI meetings in 2013–14, incl. 2 joint meetings with the Bureau
- WGI Chair also attended the Bureau meetings
- Main tasks of the WGI in 2013–14:
  - Monitor the implementation of the Strategic Approach, incl. the review of national self-assessments/action plans and publishing a more user-friendly indicators and criteria document (see item 6c)
  - **Preparation of the 7th report on the implementation of the Convention**, including updating the reporting format and guidelines





# 7th reporting round – introduction

- In accordance with terms of reference, the WGI has conducted the 7th reporting round of the Convention's implementation
- Bureau had requested the WGI to review the reporting format/guidelines before the 7th round (completed and approved by the Bureau before):
  - Section on emergency response and mutual assistance added
- Reporting initiated by Secretariat with letters sent to Parties and non Parties participating in the Assistance Programme on 10 Sep 2013
  - deadline for reporting 31 Jan 2014
- Reporting obligation by Parties to the Convention (currently 41 Parties: 40 ECE countries and the EU)
- Assistance Programme countries agreed at the High-level Commitment meeting (2005) also to report on the implementation of the Convention
  - Currently 5 committed ECE countries, not Parties to the Convention





# 7th report on implementation – structure

- Introduction
- Reporting
- Overall assessment of the implementation of the Convention
- List of good practices
- Areas for follow-up
- Complementary information to the 7th report on implementation in the informal document COP.TEIA/2014/INF.1





# Status of reporting – 7th round

- 13-14 Apr 2014: WGI meeting to review implementation reports
- WGI reviewed reports from 34 out of 41 Parties and from 2 out of 5 committed Assistance Programme countries (Georgia, Ukraine)
- Reports of 7 Parties (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, EU, Greece, Kazakhstan, Spain) and 3 committed non-Parties (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) could not be reviewed by WGI in Apr and thus not be included in the 7<sup>th</sup> report on implementation
- Submission of reports between Apr and the end of Nov 2014:
  - 3 Parties (Albania, Denmark, Kazakhstan)
  - No receipt of further reports from committed ECE countries





# Reporting trends

- Number of Parties that did not submit a report for the WGI meeting to review the implementation reports increased from 3 to 7
- 18 countries submitted their reports on or before the deadline (31 Jan 2014), 18 countries submitted their reports late but before the WGI meeting
- WGI welcomes the submission of a report from the Russian Federation which had not submitted its report for the last 3 reporting rounds (until recently)
- WGI expressed concerns regarding the absence of implementation reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina (new Party since 2013) and the three committed countries from Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan)
- WGI encourages all Parties and committed countries to submit their implementation reports in the future





# Quality of reporting and level of implementation

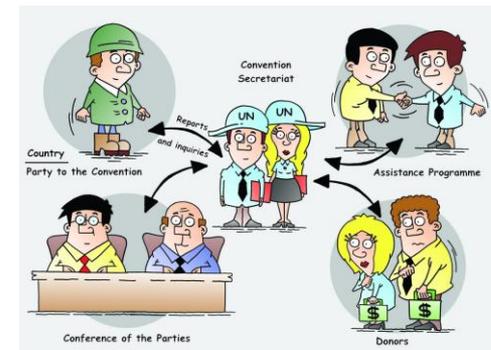
- WGI is of the opinion that the overall quality of reporting had improved
- Generally the guidelines for reporting had adequately been followed
- Countries were requested to copy their replies from the previous reporting round and to add only new information to the 2012-13 section. This was not followed in some instances and/or changes were not clear in some reports
- Level of implementation of the Convention by Parties and committed ECE countries had steadily improved since the previous reporting round
- Some Parties and non-Parties used the indicators and criteria, as requested
- Some responses did not clearly express the difference between transposition and implementation





# Overall assessment of the Convention's implementation

- a. Policy for the implementation of the Convention
- b. Identification and notification of HA with possible transboundary effects
- c. Prevention of industrial accidents
- d. Emergency Preparedness and Response
- e. Mutual assistance
- f. Scientific and technological cooperation and exchange of information
- g. Participation of the public
- h. Decision-making on siting
- i. Reporting on past industrial accidents





# Findings – Policy for the Convention's implementation

- Questions generally well understood, although some countries provided extensive lists of legislation of questionable relevance
- Possibility of developing criteria that would reduce the reporting burden for countries that have previously provided the information required. The WGI invites **COP to provide guidance** for possible further actions
- WGI sees a need to further encourage Parties and committed ECE countries to report on the progress made in closing gaps and solving problems that were identified in the previous reporting period
- Countries struggled with identifying indicators of success for the effectiveness of their policies on the implementation of the Convention (beyond a lack of accidents). **COP might wish to entrust the WGI to define criteria or specify this in the reporting guidelines**





# Findings – Identification and notification of HA

- Clarification of reporting format reduced confusion over the meaning of ‘notification’ – it does not mean an industrial accident
- As in the previous round there is still a need for Parties and committed countries to improve their procedures for notification of HA
- The majority of countries that identified HA falling under the Convention had either only partly notified their neighbours, not notified them at all or did not answer the question





# Findings – Prevention of industrial accidents

- Overall there was a slight improvement in the response compared to previous rounds
- Ten parties and committed countries identified areas of weakness. The WGI appreciate the openness and acknowledges the need to identify weaknesses in order that appropriate assistance be provided
- A small number of countries made specific reference to the indicators and criteria in the Benchmark document
- Some answers were very extensive and beyond the reporting guidelines





# Findings – Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Emergency preparedness at national level was generally reported as good, but there are still challenges around co-operation between neighbouring countries
- There were inconsistencies between answers in this section which suggested that some questions were not well understood
- Changes from the previous reporting round were positive with better descriptions and more examples provided
- Some countries referred to the indicators and criteria





# Findings – Mutual assistance

- The WGI was generally satisfied with the responses to this new section
- The majority of countries named a point of contact and most offered clear procedures for requesting and providing assistance
- A few countries did not name a point of contact or were not clear
- Bilateral and/or multilateral agreements for mutual assistance have been assisted by the majority of Parties





# Findings – Scientific and technological co-operation / exchange of information

- Generally the Working Group noted that co-operation is on going and improving
- Some countries misunderstood the question as only relating to activities under the scope of the Convention
- For the first time, countries were asked to provide examples of good practice to share with other parties and committed countries





# Participation of the public

- Overall there was an improvement in the involvement of the public reported in this round
- However there is significant variation of between countries and therefore is need for exchanging good practice
- It would be helpful for all Parties and committed countries to be aware of the public information requirements of the Seveso III Directive





# Findings – Decision-making on siting

- The WGI is generally satisfied with responses in this area, many Parties and committed countries gave the same answer as in the previous round
- Most countries have at least basic regulations and policies in place, some stated that improvements were planned or underway
- Some countries highlighted outstanding issues or obstacles in this area



# Findings – Reporting on past industrial accidents

- There were no accidents with transboundary effects reported for the 2012-13 reporting period





# Areas for follow-up (1)

- **Policy** – *imperfection of legislative base, lack of cooperation with neighbouring countries, lack of institutional capacity, insufficient safety culture, lack of risk assessment software, resources including financial and unclear divisions of responsibilities between authorities*
- **Identification and notification of HA** – *procedures for the notification of HA to neighbouring countries*
- **Prevention of accidents** – *human resources, training (operators and authorities), risk identification and assessment, quality of safety reports and co-ordination between authorities and operators*





# Areas for follow-up (2)

- **Emergency preparedness and response** – *cooperation with neighbouring countries, shortage of specialised equipment, crisis communication and sharing of capabilities*
- **Mutual assistance** – *need for all Parties to the Convention to establish an authority to act as point of contact for MA*
- **Decision-making on siting** – *need for Parties and committed countries to further improve their policies, particularly regarding the inclusion of transboundary aspects, to meet the Convention's requirements*





# Instances of good practice

- For the first time, collection of good practices through national implementation reports
- Among others, the following examples were provided:
  - Czech Republic, Norway and United Kingdom undertake continuous review of legislation
  - Netherlands has a public risk map on hazardous activities [www.risicokaart.nl](http://www.risicokaart.nl)
  - Ukraine has a legal provision allow NGOs to be invited to observe inspections
  - Russian Federation considers overall compliance with sector legislation, not just accident levels, to assess effectiveness
  - Germany sends information for external emergency plans to neighbouring countries if there are transboundary effects





# Recommendations and conclusions by the WGI (1)

- Reporting format and guidelines to be reviewed again before next reporting round to aid reporting
- Include further guidance for the next reporting round on the use of indicators and criteria from the Benchmark document for reporting
- Highlighting of good practices should continue and be shared with other countries where possible
- Parties are recommended to put further efforts into establishing and maintaining bilateral agreements for mutual assistance





# Recommendations and conclusions by the WGI (2)

WGI invites the COP to:

- Provide guidance for possible further actions to take in order to clarify the focus of information to be provided in the national implementation reports (para 25)
- Consider entrusting the WGI to consider other methods, such as the proposal of criteria or a specification in the reporting guidelines, in order to help Parties and committed ECE countries to find criteria to assess their systems' effectiveness (para 28)
- Consider studying whether there is a need to produce common emergency plan guidelines to improve cooperation between neighbouring countries (para 40)





Thank you for your attention!

