

11 January 2017

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Bureau

Thirty-third meeting

Ljubljana, 27 November 2016

Minutes of the thirty-third meeting

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The meeting was held on the premises of the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia.
2. The following Bureau members were present:
 - Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), Chair and co-Chair of the small group on financing
 - Mr. Paweł Dadasiewicz (Poland), Vice-Chair
 - Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova), Vice-Chair
 - Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands), Chair of the Working Group on Development and co-Chair of the small group on financing
 - Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic)
 - Mr. Aléxandros Kiriazis (European Union)
 - Ms. Torill Tandberg (Norway)
 - Ms. Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund (Finland)
 - Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), co-Chair of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents.

Mr. Yashar Karimov (Azerbaijan) was absent. Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom), Chair of the Working Group on Implementation, was present upon invitation by the Chair of the Bureau.

3. The meeting was serviced by the secretariat to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), represented by Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin and Ms. Claudia Kamke.
4. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda (CP.TEIA/2016/B.2/Agenda) without changes.
5. The Bureau adopted the minutes of its previous meeting (CP.TEIA/2016/B.1/Minutes) without changes.

II. Preparations for the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

6. The Bureau reviewed and adjusted as necessary the final arrangements for the meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP), being held at the Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre on 28–30 November 2016.

A. Practical arrangements

7. The Chair, representing also the host country for the COP meeting, Slovenia, provided an update on the practical arrangements for the COP meeting, including regarding access, equipment and catering, with all arrangements in order. The secretariat provided additional information including regarding expenditure, the availability of documentation and the side events.

8. Specifically, the financial contributions provided by Slovenia and Germany were sufficient to ensure financial support for representatives of all eligible countries in transition. As a result, all such countries were expected to be represented at the meeting, bar Albania. All documents had been issued, both official and informal. Sufficient speakers had been arranged for the joint UNECE/OECD seminar being held on the first day and arrangements were in place for two side-events, one by the European Union's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, the other by the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents.

B. Representation and credentials

9. The secretariat reported that approximately 150 participants were expected on the first day of the COP meeting. Three Parties were not expected to be represented: Albania, Denmark and Monaco. Sufficient copies of credentials had been provided in advance for the secretariat to be confident that a sufficient number of Parties (i.e., more than half) would be present to allow the COP to take decisions.

10. Mr. Dadasiewicz, Vice-Chair, agreed to report to COP on the representation and the credentials with the support of the secretariat.

C. Nominations of officers and members of the Bureau and of members of the Working Group on Implementation

11. The secretariat reported on whether the individuals or Parties proposed by the Bureau had confirmed their willingness to serve in the Bureau following the ninth COP meeting. The Bureau was unable to finalize its proposal to COP on the future Vice-Chairs and other members of the Bureau, as it still awaited information from one Party.

12. Similarly, the secretariat reported on whether the individuals or Parties proposed by the Chair of the Working Group on Implementation had confirmed their willingness to serve in the Working Group following the ninth COP meeting. The Bureau was confident that a complete proposal could be made to COP on the future membership of the Working Group, though the exact composition would depend also on the conclusion of the Bureau membership.

D. Provisional agenda

13. The Bureau reviewed the provisional agenda of the ninth COP meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/31) and for each item confirmed that the information necessary for COP to make decisions had been made available to delegates and who would present the necessary information to COP. The Chairs of the Working Groups on Implementation and Development requested the secretariat to share with them the notes prepared for the Bureau Chair, to ensure a full understanding of how the deliberations were expected to unfold.

14. The Bureau discussed possible outputs from the seminar on the first day and how those outputs might be used. It was expected that the seminar would demonstrate that the Convention and the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents provided platforms for discussing industrial and chemical accidents, both for their membership and possibly globally. Bureau members suggested that the seminar might also identify good practices. There was an expectation that the outcomes of the seminar might be used by the Bureau in reviewing the long-term strategy of the Convention, if so mandated, and in the design of the next workplan (2019–2020). In addition, members of the Bureau were encouraged to intervene in the seminar from the floor in case the discussion would lag.

15. The Bureau discussed the anticipated decisions to be taken by COP and their consequences for the Convention, with a focus on the draft decisions on the workplan and budget, reporting requirements and the proposed amendment of the Convention. No particular concerns were expressed, except with regard to the ambitious workplan.

III. Recent developments under the current workplan

16. The Chair and members of the Bureau and the secretariat provided an update on activities and project proposals under the workplan. The secretariat introduced a number of project proposals for which donor support was needed. It also explained that a Russian-funded project on strengthening industrial safety in Central Asia through the implementation and accession to the Convention would be launched during the COP meeting and that two subregional workshops on industrial accidents prevention, one for South-Eastern Europe, the other for the Caucasus and Eastern Europe, were being prepared for the first half of 2017.

17. The secretariat informed the Bureau of the adopted by the Bureau of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of the draft workplan of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents for the biennium 2017–2018. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei, co-Chair of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, then described preparations for work on fire-water retention and for transboundary response exercises. He also reported on on-going activities to address risk management at tailings management facilities.

IV. Other business

18. The secretariat reported that a joint op-ed by the Executive Secretary of UNECE and the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia had been published widely (including in Italy, the Russian Federation, Slovenia and Ukraine) and mentioned even more widely (e.g., in Colombia).

V. Next meetings

19. The Bureau agreed to meet again, jointly with the Working Group on Implementation, in Geneva on 30 January–1 February 2017. The Bureau also requested the secretariat to propose at its next meeting dates for a further meeting later in 2017.

VI. Closure of the meeting

20. The Chair closed the meeting on 27 November at 5.30 p.m.
