

Conclusions of the Subregional Workshop of the Project on strengthening industrial safety in Central Asia through the implementation of and accession to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Almaty, 25-26 September 2018

Main Objectives

- Allow countries of Central Asia to exchange their experiences and progress made on the implementation of the Convention and the preparation of national self-assessments and action plans
- Determine remaining priorities and challenges and ways of addressing them
- Showcase project results and explore ways of future cooperation with beneficiary countries, the donor and partners
- Provide a platform for subregional exchange, initial transboundary consultations and decisions on the identification and notification of hazardous activities in the future
- Present and gather feedback on the Implementation Guide for the Convention for Central Asian countries

Attendees

The subregional Workshop brought together representatives of state authorities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as representatives of international organizations and NGOs, such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR, which hosted the meeting), CIS Interstate Council on Industrial Safety (ICIS), Regional Environment Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), Dushanbe Aarhus Centre and international experts from the Russian Federation, Belarus, Slovenia and Hungary, including representatives of the UNECE governing bodies, notably the Chair of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention, and a member of the Working Group on Implementation. The meeting was organized and serviced by the UNECE secretariat.



Programme

The workshop was divided into an international and a subregional segment. During the international segment, the main outcomes of the Project's implementation in the beneficiary countries were presented by the national and international experts of the Project and its management team. Other regional and international organizations, partners of UNECE (such as OSCE, CESDRR, CIS ICIS and CAREC) presented how their work in Central Asia contributes to the enhancement of industrial safety and disaster risk reduction more generally and engaged in a discussion on needs, opportunities and ways forward for Central Asian countries in this area. The subregional segment focused specifically on transboundary cooperation for industrial safety in Central Asia and included the presentation of template for the notification of hazardous



activities, developed in response to countries' needs voiced during the national meetings, and a draft Implementation Guide on the Industrial Accidents Convention for Central Asia developed under the Project. It also allowed countries to exchange their experiences and best practices, both through presentations by experts from countries outside the Central Asian subregion and UNECE secretariat as well as through bilateral consultations between the five Central Asian countries. Bilateral meetings between each of the five beneficiary countries and UNECE secretariat were held

which allowed the countries to further communicate their envisaged next steps, challenges and capacity development needs with respect to knowledge development and transfer, exchange of experiences, high-level awareness raising with decision-makers, advisory services to support legislative coherence and the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention. . The workshop concluded with summarizing the needs and challenges of Central Asian countries revealed through the preparation of self-assessments and national action plans, the conduct of National Expert Group Meetings, consultations with the Convention's secretariat and exchange during the subregional workshop. Through the interactions during the workshop and a quiz which participants completed at its end, they demonstrated an improved understanding of the key requirements of the Industrial Accidents Convention. Key results of the discussions held at the Subregional Workshop as well as the main conclusions of the Project in general are presented below.

Key outcomes of the subregional workshop:

- Beneficiary countries recognized the importance of a well-established process of **inter-institutional coordination** in view of the multitude of actors responsible for prevention, preparedness and response to industrial accidents. They recognized the need to continue this process which was initiated through the conduct of one National Expert Group Meeting in each of the countries and the need for its further strengthening and transformation into a steady and sustainable process through so-called "**national policy dialogues for industrial safety**"¹
- Beneficiary countries acknowledged a need for **drafting and/or alignment of by-laws** with the current laws on Industrial Safety which are in force and the further **alignment of national legislation** with the requirements of the Industrial Accidents Convention
- Beneficiary countries requested further support in strengthening their capacities for the **identification of hazardous activities** and their subsequent **notification** to potentially affected countries (key requirements under the Convention)
- Participants expressed their needs for further **capacity-building activities** by UNECE, in cooperation with relevant partners, in the area of industrial safety and technological disaster risk reduction, in the form of workshops (national and sub-regional), high-level meetings and advisory services
- Participants recognized the value of **subregional workshops as platforms** allowing to meet counterparts from neighboring and riparian countries, and enabling the exchange of

¹ The Convention's long-term strategy until 2030, to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting (Geneva, 4-6 December 2018) sets out that the ambition that the multi-year, multi-country projects implemented through the Assistance and Cooperation Programme would lead to enhanced governance through national policy dialogues on industrial safety involving all relevant stakeholders and to improved transboundary cooperation through subregional projects and activities (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/5, available from:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/TEIA/CoP_10/E_5_ECE_CP.TEIA_2018_5.pdf)

knowledge, experience and best practices and strengthening their capacities for enhanced prevention, preparedness and response to industrial accidents

- Beneficiary countries recognized the need for further support through the conduct of sub-regional meetings, and facilitation of **transboundary cooperation in Central Asia**
- National experts recognized the need to involve high-level decision-makers, e.g. through the conduct of **outreach missions** by UNECE to their capitals with the view of bringing the issue of industrial safety higher on the political agenda of the state decision-makers and voiced some of the concrete needs to be addressed during such missions
- Beneficiary countries agreed to take further steps to **strengthen industrial safety** at the national and subregional levels and to further **enhance the level of the implementation** of the Convention in view of the high-level commitment made in 2005² and with due consideration to the progress achieved under the Project
- Beneficiary countries welcomed the development of a targeted **Implementation Guide on the Industrial Accidents Convention for Central Asia** under the Project and recognized its usefulness in supporting their progress towards the implementation of the Convention. Further to the good practice examples provided by the Russian Federation and Belarus in the Guide, beneficiary countries agreed to identify and propose for inclusion national experiences and good practices identified through the Project's implementation. In addition, they also welcomed the development of a **template for the notification of hazardous activities**, included in the above-mentioned Implementation Guide, in response to the needs voiced during the National Expert Group Meetings, and recognized its usefulness in the process of notification of hazardous activities, once these are identified
- Project beneficiaries welcomed the support provided by the donor country (the Russian Federation), the Project's international experts (from Russia and Belarus), the Convention's secretariat and expressed their hope for a **follow-up project addressing the needs and challenges** identified as a result of the implementation the current project, while building on its achievements
- Project beneficiaries welcomed **partnerships with regional and international organizations**, conducive to fostering sub-regional information exchange on industrial safety, and furthering the results achieved under the Project, in particular with the CIS Interstate Council for Industrial Safety and the Central Asian Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction. They welcomed the contributions to the Project by other partners, in particular OSCE.

Key Project Conclusions

- National experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan **accomplished all activities** envisaged by the Project in each of their countries, notably:
 - ✓ the holding of one **National Expert Group Meeting** in each of the five beneficiary countries, leading to enhanced clarity of national government institutions in charge of industrial safety, and enabling to initiate the process of inter-institutional coordination with respect to policies and practices related to industrial safety and transboundary cooperation
 - ✓ the preparation and finalization of **self-assessments** in each of the five countries, agreed among the relevant authorities, containing an analysis of the level of implementation of the Convention under the six working areas and identification of challenges faced
 - ✓ the preparation and finalization of **national action plans**, setting out actions for those working areas in which countries face challenges with clear identification of authorities responsible and timing foreseen for their implementation

² Report of the High-level commitment meeting to the Assistance Programme, please see: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/teia/doc/AP/AP_Introduction/CP.TEIA.2005.12_EN.pdf

- ✓ the participation in and contribution to the **subregional workshop** allowing for exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices in the area of industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response, the conduct of initial consultations and enhancing transboundary cooperation in Central Asia
- ✓ the review of, contribution to and/or endorsement of the **Implementation Guide on the Industrial Accidents Convention for Central Asia** developed by the Project's international experts with contribution by the Convention's secretariat & the Working Group on Implementation
- Furthermore, in addition to the foreseen expected accomplishments, as a result of the Project implementation, all Central Asian countries **appointed**:
 - ✓ one or several **competent authority or authorities** for the implementation of the Convention (to be established as per the Convention's article 17)
 - ✓ a national **focal point** under the Industrial Accidents Convention
 - ✓ four out of five countries, notably Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan designated a **Point of Contact for the Industrial Accidents Notification System** (to be established as per the Convention's article 17)

More information on the subregional workshop, its **Evaluation Summary** and results of the **Quiz on the main requirements of the Convention** are available on the Convention's [website](#). More information on the **Project** and its activities is available [here](#).