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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

**Report of the Bureau on its activities since the  
tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties****Activities of the Bureau since the tenth meeting of the  
Conference of the Parties****Submitted by the Bureau of the Convention***Summary*

At its tenth meeting (Geneva, 4–6 December 2018), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents requested the Bureau to report to it at its eleventh meeting on the Bureau's activities in the intersessional period (ECE/CP.TEIA/38, para. 18).

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of its terms of reference (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1), the main responsibilities of the Bureau are, among other things, to: "(a) Carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the Conference of the Parties; (b) Take the lead in, and take initiatives to strengthen and facilitate the implementation of, the Convention; and (c) Prepare the draft programme of work, monitor its implementation and take appropriate decisions, if needed, to strengthen its implementation".

The present report details the Bureau's activities since the tenth meeting, including in relation to the Long-term Strategy for the Convention until 2030 and the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy (both contained in ECE/CP.TEIA/38/Add.1), implementation of the sustainable financial mechanism (ECE/CP.TEIA/24, annex I) to the Convention and decision 2018/2 fostering implementation of the mechanism (ECE/CP.TEIA/38/Add.1), implementation of workplan activities during the biennium 2019–2020 and preparations for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.



## Introduction

1. The present report summarizes the activities of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) during the biennium 2019–2020, as mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting (Geneva, 4–6 December 2018).
2. The report is based on and includes the outcomes of the fortieth meeting of the Bureau (Geneva, 12 February 2019), held jointly with the thirty-eighth meeting of the Working Group on Implementation, and of the Bureau's forty-first (Geneva, 13 February 2019), forty-second (Oslo, 26 and 27 September 2019) and forty-third (Geneva (online), 16 and 17 June 2020) meetings.
3. The Bureau expressed its appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat, which serviced all of the aforementioned meetings.
4. At its meetings, the Bureau reflected on the process by which nominations for its membership are handled. Keeping in mind the need for balance between geographic subregions, it encouraged the Parties to put forward their candidatures in due time (12 October 2020 deadline) and in accordance with the terms of reference of the Bureau (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1) and the rules of procedure for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties (ECE/CP.TEIA/37).
5. The Bureau thanked Mr. Rolf-Jan Hoeve, member of the Bureau from the European Union over the past two years, for his contribution to and support for the work of the Bureau. As from mid-June 2020, Mr. Hoeve has been replaced by his successor, Mr. Camille Siefriidt, who represented the European Union at the forty-third meeting of the Bureau.

## I. Implementation of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention

6. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Long-term Strategy for the Convention until 2030. During this first biennium with the Long-term Strategy, the Bureau began the essential work of highlighting the Strategy to the industrial safety community and beyond, fostering its implementation by Parties and ensuring that the work under the Convention is in line with the Strategy. At its meetings during this biennium, the Bureau reflected on the need to raise awareness among the Convention's focal points and partners, relevant national authorities and other stakeholders of the Long-term Strategy and its linkages with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Following a request from the Bureau, the Long-term Strategy and the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy (both contained in document ECE/CP.TEIA/38/Add.1) have been made available as separate stand-alone documents on the Convention's website.<sup>1</sup>
7. In consideration of the Convention's vision and key objectives until 2030,<sup>2</sup> the main focus for the Bureau has been to support Parties in: (a) improving industrial safety and

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<sup>1</sup> The Long-term Strategy is available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/about-us/strategic-documents/long-term-strategy-until-2030.html>; and the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy is available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/about-us/strategic-documents/communication-outreach-and-engagement-strategy.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents' overall vision until 2030 is to significantly increase industrial safety and reduce the risk of technological disasters by ensuring its full implementation, its wide recognition as a legal instrument for risk reduction under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. By building on its strengths, critically evaluating its role in the wider context and considering existing challenges and new opportunities, it will serve as an example of the prevention of and preparedness for industrial accidents through transboundary cooperation, including

enhancing transboundary cooperation; (b) implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework, including suggestions that elaborate how this can be done; (c) addressing emerging risks and developments that the Bureau has specifically reviewed; and (d) the amendment of the Convention. The report will discuss each of these elements in the following subsections.

## **A. Improving industrial safety and enhancing transboundary cooperation**

### **1. Overall progress made and remaining challenges**

8. The Bureau reviewed and took note of the progress on the implementation of the Convention that some countries reported for the ninth reporting round (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/5). It noticed that significant challenges remain, particularly in relation to the full implementation of the Convention and its transboundary provisions.

9. The Bureau took note of the general high level of implementation in providing access to information, public participation and enhanced awareness of risks for the domestic public in most countries in this reporting round, indicating progress since the previous reporting round.

10. The Bureau welcomed the progress of Ukraine on the path toward becoming a Party to the Convention, as announced at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (ECE/CP.TEIA/38, para. 86). Members of the Bureau had been involved in a high-level mission (2017–2018) and were planning to engage in a technical mission to Ukraine to further support the accession process.<sup>3</sup>

11. The Bureau calls on other non-Parties to increase their implementation of the Convention's provisions and to progress towards accession. In this respect, the Bureau recalls the high-level commitment made in 2005 (CP.TEIA/2005/12, annex). It welcomes the successful completion of the project on strengthening implementation of the Convention (2016–2019) in the five Central Asian countries and the development of the Implementation Guide for Central Asia on the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents,<sup>4</sup> which it encourages all interested countries to use in their efforts to further implementation. The Bureau also welcomes the initiation of national policy dialogues for industrial safety in Central Asia as of mid-2020, which will allow for the strengthening of policymaking and governance in Central Asia, including with further support to the four non-Parties in this region.

12. The Bureau took note of the challenges indicated in the ninth report on implementation (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/5). The following list highlights some examples:

(a) Only 19 countries reported having fully or partially notified affected Parties about their hazardous activities, indicating an increase in the number of countries that had not notified or had only partially notified in comparison to the previous reporting round;

(b) Only 12 countries reported fully and four countries reported partially having tested, updated and reviewed emergency plans in cooperation with neighbouring countries, indicating that these tasks remain a challenge for many countries;

(c) Some countries reported weaknesses in their emergency preparedness and response, including lack of coordination between authorities, insufficient cooperation between neighbouring countries and lack of equipment for first response and of experienced and trained staff.

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beyond the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region (ECE/CP.TEIA/38/Add.1, Long-term Strategy until 2030, para. 18).

<sup>3</sup> The technical mission to Ukraine was initially planned for May 2020 and then postponed to October 2020 but could not take place in 2020 due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.II.E.1.

13. The Bureau calls on Parties and committed countries to strengthen their overall implementation of the Convention and its transboundary provisions.

14. In view of the vision of the full implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels throughout the ECE region, the Bureau calls on all countries to make further progress at the national level and in terms of transboundary cooperation. To support this progress through the Convention's activities, the Bureau also calls on countries to extend their support to the work under the Convention — both financially and in-kind.

## **2. Risk assessment**

15. The Bureau recognizes that risk assessment and risk management are crucial for industrial accident prevention under the Convention and important in understanding and implementing global commitments under the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. The seminar on risk assessment methodologies held in the framework of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties demonstrated that a variety of risk assessment and risk management methodologies are available in the ECE region.<sup>5</sup> Based on analysis of the seminar's evaluation forms, key conclusions and discussion outcomes, the Bureau concluded that the organization of the seminar was successful and that the seminar objectives were achieved.

16. The Bureau thanks the small group on risk assessment, namely Mr. Martin Merkofer (Switzerland), Mr. Michael Struckl (Austria) and Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia) from the Bureau and Mr. Raphael Gonzalez (Switzerland) from the Working Group on Implementation, for their efforts in preparing and following up on the seminar. At the beginning of 2019 and during the follow-up to the seminar, the small group expanded to include four new members from the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation, namely Mr. Evgeny Baranovsky (Belarus), Ms. Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia), Ms. Laura Vizbule (Latvia) and Ms. Sanja Stamenkovic (Serbia).

17. The Bureau welcomed the suggestions from the small group on the way forward for this project. The second step planned is the elaboration of a risk assessment study, supported financially by Switzerland, and substantively by the small group, the deliverables of which are expected to be finalized in the biennium 2021–2022 and presented at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

## **3. Tailings management facilities**

18. Tailings management facility safety has been a matter of concern for the work under the Convention since its entry into force in 2000. The work completed on this topic has covered both core and assistance work, and thus the strengthening of industrial safety and transboundary cooperation within the ECE region. The Bureau recognized and welcomed the fact that the safety guidelines and the tailings management facility methodology<sup>6</sup> developed have been applied and proven to be useful in several ECE countries during dedicated projects under the Convention's workplans. For example, the guidelines and methodology have been used in projects in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Romania, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

19. The Bureau welcomed the tailings management facility-related assistance activities carried out in the biennium 2019–2020. It also appreciated the sustainable financial and in-kind support for these activities from Germany, the Russian Federation and Switzerland.

20. At its forty-second meeting, the Bureau decided to hold a seminar on mine tailings safety in the ECE region and beyond at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (see section IV below). In preparation for the seminar, the Bureau established a small group to develop a background document for the seminar (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/2) and to prepare a draft decision on strengthening mine tailings safety (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/3). The members of the small group were Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), Mr. Struckl (Austria),

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<sup>5</sup> Information available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/TEIA/Report\\_of\\_the\\_UNECE\\_risk\\_assessment\\_seminar\\_4\\_December\\_2018.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/TEIA/Report_of_the_UNECE_risk_assessment_seminar_4_December_2018.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36132>.

Ms. Martine Rohn-Bossard and Ms. Laura Platchkov (Switzerland) and Ms. Torill Tandberg (Norway, Chair of the small group), and the secretariat.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. Land-use planning and industrial safety

21. The Bureau welcomed the organization of the subregional workshop on land-use planning and industrial safety for Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Chisinau, 22–24 May 2019), chaired by the Convention's Chair. The workshop enabled the follow-up to the recommendations arising from the seminar on land-use planning and industrial safety (Mechelen, Belgium, 16 and 17 May 2018), notably to strengthen both national policymaking, governance and cooperation on land-use planning and siting of hazardous activities and capacity to implement article 7 of the Convention and related legal instruments, such as the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, and the policy instruments under the ECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. The Bureau welcomed the partnerships with the other multilateral environmental agreements and the aforementioned ECE Committee established to that effect. Furthermore, the workshop strengthened transboundary cooperation and awareness of the Convention's tools, such as the notification template.<sup>8</sup> The Bureau also welcomed the development of the Russian-language version of the video on land-use planning and industrial safety, in cooperation with the Zoï Environment Network. It encourages Russian-speaking focal points and counterparts to make use of and promote the video.<sup>9</sup>

22. The Bureau welcomed the preparations for the subregional workshop on land-use planning and industrial safety for South-Eastern Europe, initially scheduled to take place in Belgrade in March 2020, then rescheduled for October 2020 and further moved to 2021 in view of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It welcomed the organization by the secretariat of an online teaser event in October 2020. The Bureau thanked the host countries — notably the Republic of Moldova and Serbia — for those activities and welcomed the expression of intent by Kyrgyzstan to host a subregional workshop for Central Asia in the coming biennium. It also thanked France, the donor country, for making feasible the continued organization of activities on land-use planning and industrial safety.

23. In addition, the Bureau welcomed the development of an information repository on land-use planning and industrial safety and a partnership with the European Investment Bank to that effect. The information repository, to be launched by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting, will enable the collection of good practices and lessons learned related to land-use planning, siting and the modification of hazardous activities, industrial safety, disaster risk reduction, environment assessment and public information/participation. The Bureau encourages countries to submit good practices and lessons learned for inclusion in the repository.

#### 5. Assistance and Cooperation Programme and other assistance activities

24. The Bureau recognizes the willingness of numerous donor countries to continue to support the Assistance and Cooperation Programme, in order to meet the needs voiced by the beneficiary countries with respect to the Convention's implementation and eventual accession.

25. Information provided to the Bureau on the different projects has been important in monitoring the Assistance and Cooperation Programme. Evaluation of projects under the Programme is important in order to assess the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the assistance provided and received. The Bureau welcomed the secretariat's efforts to continuously monitor the effectiveness of the Programme through ongoing evaluations of

<sup>7</sup> See the Minutes of the forty-second meeting of the Bureau, para. 55, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau\\_Oslo/Bureau-42\\_Minutes\\_as\\_agreed\\_with\\_the\\_Chair\\_and\\_Bureau\\_final\\_clean.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau_Oslo/Bureau-42_Minutes_as_agreed_with_the_Chair_and_Bureau_final_clean.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Guidelines\\_and\\_good\\_practice/EN\\_G\\_sample\\_HA\\_notification.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Guidelines_and_good_practice/EN_G_sample_HA_notification.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Workshop materials, including the video are available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=52356>.

assistance activities. It particularly welcomed the independent external evaluation of the three-year “Project on Industrial Safety in Central Asia through the implementation of and accession to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents”<sup>10</sup> and the continuous monitoring of the follow-up to its recommendations.<sup>11</sup> As such, the Bureau believes that the Programme functions effectively and efficiently and recommends the Conference of the Parties to take note accordingly.

26. The Bureau underlined the importance of sharing results from the projects carried out under the Programme, so that as many countries as possible can benefit from them and learn from the different projects carried out. It calls on beneficiary countries to also make use of the results and lessons learned from assistance activities. It encourages donor countries to consider financing multi-year projects, so as to allow for financial and planning predictability, in line with the recommendations of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 3–5 December 2014).

27. The Bureau recognizes the remaining challenges regarding the Programme. The importance of implementing the results from the projects and assuring their sustainability must not be underestimated in projects carried out under the Programme. The Bureau expects planning processes for future projects/activities to take into consideration the results and learn from prior projects/activities at the national level and across borders. The Bureau also underlines the importance of ensuring that Programme activities are focused on and tailored to the challenges identified in the beneficiary countries and their regions.

28. The Bureau recognizes that the financial sustainability of the Programme is crucial and encourages donors to consider multi-year contributions following the example of donor countries, such as France, Norway, the Russian Federation and Switzerland, which will allow for planning predictability, financial stability with respect to activities and related staffing and the achievement of sustainable outcomes.

## 6. Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

29. The Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accident’s work on strengthening the prevention of accidental water pollution, including its potential transboundary effects, is in line with the Industrial Accidents Convention’s Long-term Strategy until 2030 and the principle of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) being open for accession to all States Members of the United Nations.

30. The activities carried out by the Joint Expert Group have been important this biennium. The Bureau welcomes and appreciates the results from the projects carried out this biennium.

31. The Bureau welcomed the brochure on the Joint Expert Group released in autumn 2019, which focuses on the Group’s history and purpose, present day importance, key areas of work and key achievements and outputs.<sup>12</sup>

32. The Bureau agreed to pursue stronger implementation of the Joint Expert Group Strategy, which had been adopted back in 2009. In line with the decisions taken by the Bureau at its forty-second meeting (Oslo, 26 and 27 September 2019), the Bureaux of the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions will pursue a more prominent role in guiding and overseeing the work of the Joint Expert Group to advance the planning of work.<sup>13</sup> The Joint Expert Group Co-Chairs will regularly report to the Bureaux on the implementation of ongoing/completed Joint Expert Group activities, both from a substantive and a financial

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=43554>.

<sup>11</sup> See under “Environment” tab, available at <http://www.unece.org/info/open-unece/evaluation/evaluation-reports.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications/industrial-accidents/official-publications/2019/brochure-on-the-joint-expert-group-on-water-and-industrial-accidents/docs.html>.

<sup>13</sup> See Minutes of the forty-second meeting of the Bureau, para. 58, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau\\_Oslo/Bureau-42\\_Minutes\\_as\\_agreed\\_with\\_the\\_Chair\\_and\\_Bureau\\_final\\_clean.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau_Oslo/Bureau-42_Minutes_as_agreed_with_the_Chair_and_Bureau_final_clean.pdf).

point of view. In advance of the forty-third meeting of the Bureau (Geneva (online), 16 and 17 June 2020), the Joint Expert Group met remotely (Geneva (online), 2 June 2020) and developed a list of activities, which the Bureau agreed to include in the workplan or to place on a “long-list” for later implementation.<sup>14</sup>

33. The Bureau re-elected Mr. Winkelmann-Oei (Germany) as Joint Expert Group Co-Chair in the biennium 2019–2020. The Bureau also agreed on a distinction between the Joint Expert Group and its subsidiary expert groups. Future Joint Expert Group meetings will be held once per biennium in Geneva. Parties to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions are encouraged to nominate experts for these meetings, which will be serviced by the secretariat. Meetings of the subsidiary groups to the Joint Expert Group will only be serviced by the secretariat to the extent that additional resources are available.

## 7. Industrial Accident Notification system

34. The Bureau welcomed the secretariat’s decision to hold the Industrial Accident Notification system connectivity test and consultation of the points of contact earlier in the biennium (respectively, on 4 May and 10 June 2020, online), as other activities had to be postponed due to the pandemic. It welcomed the fact that the response rate to testing of the Industrial Accident Notification system had improved compared to the last biennium and that more countries had appointed points of contact and registered in the system. The Bureau took note of the recommendations and conclusions of the connectivity test and the points of contact consultation as included in the informal document “Results of the seventh online consultation of the points of contact” (CP.TEIA/2020/INF.4). It encourages countries to conduct Industrial Accident Notification system tests at the subregional level.

## B. Supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and other relevant policies

35. At the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Ljubljana, 28–30 November 2016), the seminar on fostering implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework concluded that the Convention is a strong legal instrument for helping its Parties in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and achieving the priorities for actions set out in the Sendai Framework.

36. This is also deeply embedded in the Long-term Strategy, which sets out the vision to significantly increase industrial safety and reduce the risk of technological disasters by ensuring the Convention’s full implementation, its wide recognition as a legal instrument for risk reduction under the Sendai Framework and its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>15</sup> The Bureau welcomes the initiatives taken by the secretariat and members of the Bureau to promote this vision in cooperation and in dialogue with organizations such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR),<sup>16</sup> the Joint United Nations Environment Programme/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Environment Unit (Joint Environment Unit),<sup>17</sup> the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)<sup>18</sup> and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.<sup>19</sup> Results from this work include the following:

(a) Substantive input from the secretariat to the publication *Words into Action Guidelines: Implementation Guide for Man-made and Technological Hazards*,<sup>20</sup> which was

<sup>14</sup> See Minutes of the forty-third meeting of the Bureau, paras. 36–38, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Bureau/Bureau43\\_16-17\\_June\\_2020\\_online\\_minutes\\_final.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Bureau/Bureau43_16-17_June_2020_online_minutes_final.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/LTS\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/LTS_ENG.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.undrr.org/>.

<sup>17</sup> See <https://www.unocha.org/themes/environmental-dimensions-emergencies>.

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.oecd.org/>.

<sup>19</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/joint-research-centre\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/joint-research-centre_en).

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) (Geneva, 2019), available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/TEIA/Words\\_into\\_Actions.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/TEIA/Words_into_Actions.pdf).

launched at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and placed on the Convention's web page;

(b) Substantive input from the secretariat to the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019,<sup>21</sup> resulting in the inclusion therein of a section on chemical/industrial hazards;

(c) At the UNDRR Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, 13–17 May 2019),<sup>22</sup> the Chair, Ms. Tandberg, intervened to underline that major accidents in the chemical industry can cause transboundary effects and lead to consequences for critical infrastructure and the loss of lives — not only pollution. As the Industrial Accident Convention should be used as an instrument to prevent this, Ms. Tandberg encouraged the disaster risk community to cooperate in prevention, preparedness and response to chemical accidents;

(d) Contribution to the Global Risk Assessment Framework,<sup>23</sup> a framework that created by UNDRR to allow policymakers in Governments, industry and research institutions, among other sectors, to build understanding of the systemic nature of risk, affirm that their risk management strategies align with the Sendai Framework and contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda. The Vice-Chair, Ms. Karba, contributed to the Global Risk Assessment Framework Expert Group, which was established to support development of the Framework. While recognizing that the Framework covers risks of natural and man-made hazards, Ms. Karba's contribution focused on considerations of industrial accidents' risks in the operationalization of the Framework.

37. To promote the work under the Convention and mark the twentieth anniversary of its entry into force, the Chair, Ms. Tandberg, published a blog post on UNDRR PreventionWeb.<sup>24</sup> In the post, she described how the Convention is an important legal instrument for managing industrial risks across borders. The Secretary to the Convention had previously published a blogpost entitled "From 'disaster' to 'risk' management: Ensuring a multi-hazard, multi-stakeholder, and integrated approach for man-made/technological hazard".<sup>25</sup>

38. The Bureau recognizes the importance of continuing cooperative work at the national, regional and global levels on the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and other relevant policies. These issues should be an integral part of the Convention's workplan for the next biennium.

## C. Addressing emerging risks and developments

### 1. General reflections by the Chair and the Bureau

39. At its forty-third meeting, the Bureau reviewed and reflected on the progress of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention until 2030, including emerging risks and developments.

40. The Bureau recognized that emerging risks and developments are an important part of the Long-term Strategy, because the Convention aims to address present and future challenges. For example, this pertains to the following:

(a) Urbanization and infrastructure developments, including with smart technology, and their impacts on industrial safety;

(b) Increasing demands for metal and minerals, which will be a challenge regarding the safe storage and handling of hazardous substances at mine tailings and mine waste;

<sup>21</sup> UNDRR (Geneva, 2019), available at [https://gar.undrr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-05/full\\_gar\\_report.pdf](https://gar.undrr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-05/full_gar_report.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> See <https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/home>.

<sup>23</sup> Available at <http://www.preventionweb.net/disaster-risk/graf>.

<sup>24</sup> Available at <http://www.preventionweb.net/experts/oped/view/71358>.

<sup>25</sup> Available at <https://www.preventionweb.net/experts/oped/view/64176>.

(c) Increased risk of natural hazard-triggered technological accidents (NATECH) — this is already a situation that needs consideration in risk assessment and evaluation, technological safety measures, land-use planning and emergency and contingency planning.

41. The Bureau calls for disaster risk management for industry owners and national authorities regarding the above-mentioned and other emerging risks.

42. The Bureau also recognized that the use of new energy sources, like liquefied natural gas, biogas, hydrogen and lithium batteries/accumulators, will have an impact on both safety and sustainability for the industry. Furthermore, it highlighted that future risk scenarios may have complex sequences (for example, energy blackouts caused by natural disasters or pandemic situations) and therefore need to be seen within a wider context.

43. The Bureau's ambition is that emerging risks and developments will be addressed in the Convention's future workplans. In the workplan 2021–2022, emerging risk-related issues, such as NATECH and land-use, continue to be prominent, further to continued activities on risk assessment.

## **2. Coronavirus disease and its implications for industrial safety**

44. The Bureau recognized that the pandemic has had an impact on people's lives all over the world. At its forty-third meeting, the Bureau reflected on the pandemic and the consequent disruptions and threats to and impacts on industries handling hazardous substances. The Bureau decided to address this topic at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

45. The Bureau welcomed the initiative from the Major Accident Hazards Bureau of the European Union on preparing and sending out a survey on enforcement, monitoring and risk management of hazardous sites during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and post-lockdown planning in order to get more substantive information on countries' handling of the pandemic in relation to industry. Initially, the objective of the survey was to exchange information on how European Union member States dealt with COVID-19 impacts in relation to their hazardous sites. The survey was later also sent to members of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents, Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention, as well as non-Parties, to broaden the discussion and understand experiences from a wider range of countries. The secretariat also translated the survey into Russian and distributed it widely to ECE member States, encouraging its completion. The Bureau thanked the secretariat for its good and constructive cooperation with the European Union and OECD regarding this work. It encourages countries to complete the survey, and actively participate in the envisaged discussion at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The information from this survey will be available for European Union, OECD and ECE member States.

46. The Bureau also welcomed the secretariat's distribution of the European Union Lessons Learned Bulletin on "Pandemic measures and chemical process safety"<sup>26</sup> to ECE member States, following the tragic accidents in Visakhapatnam, India, on 7 and 8 May 2020, and Ottaviano, Italy, on 5 May 2020, subsequent to the start-up and shutdown of operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bureau encourages the Parties to consider learning from these lessons and to take all measures to ensure safety in times of shutdown, whether owing to the pandemic or other reasons.

## **3. Natural hazard-triggered technological accidents**

47. The Bureau welcomes the cooperation by the secretariat with OECD, the Joint Environment Unit, the Joint Research Centre and other countries led by Germany, in participating in the NATECH II and NATECH III projects. This is fully in line with the Convention's Long-term Strategy, both through developing and enhancing existing and new partnerships, and by addressing NATECH risk as an emerging risk for industrial safety. The secretariat's participation in these projects contributes to the development of relevant

<sup>26</sup> Available at [https://minerva.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/shorturl/minerva/llb\\_on\\_pandemic\\_measures\\_and\\_chemical\\_process\\_safety](https://minerva.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/shorturl/minerva/llb_on_pandemic_measures_and_chemical_process_safety).

guidance, policy and expert dialogues to address NATECH as a key challenge, as listed in the Long-term Strategy.

48. The Bureau welcomed an additional financial contribution from France, communicated in the course of the biennium, which enabled the secretariat to further engage itself in the NATECH-III Project,<sup>27</sup> notably to contribute to the development of a brochure and guidance on NATECH risk management. The brochure and guidance will be distributed to countries in the ECE region, among others. The Bureau also welcomed the secretariat's additional efforts, such as the development of a separate web page on NATECH, while noting that contributions should focus on the transboundary aspects/nature of NATECH risk management.<sup>28</sup>

#### **D. Amendment of the Convention**

49. The Bureau discussed the fact that the proposed amendment to the Convention had not been adopted by the Parties at the ninth and tenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties agreed to continue informal consultations, in particular on the proposed amendments regarding public information, participation in decision-making as well as access to justice, and invited the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Bureau to facilitate those consultations with a view to respective positions possibly becoming closer, and to report back on the outcome of those consultations to the next meeting of the Conference (ECE/CP.TEIA/38, para. 37).

50. The Chair had asked the secretariat, through the Executive Secretary of ECE, to contact the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, with the objective of understanding whether there had been any new developments following the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.<sup>29</sup> This initiative was taken to better understand the current situation and the willingness to engage in further consultations (for example, through meetings). The response of the Russian Federation indicated a willingness to convene informal consultations by autumn 2020. However, signals from the Russian Federation in early 2020 indicated that the question of amending article 9 of the Convention was directly related to its position regarding accession to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

51. The Chair of the Bureau is considering whether to hold informal consultations among the Russian Federation, the European Union and the other Parties that supported the amendment<sup>30</sup> during autumn 2020 and to invite them to an informal consultation prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to share information about the positions regarding the proposed amendments.

## **II. Communication, outreach and engagement strategy**

52. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy for the Convention. This document provides a set of messages and tools, together with actions required for their dissemination to a wide range of audiences. The Bureau recognizes that the communication activities of this biennium have been in line with the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy, and encourages the secretariat and the Convention's focal points to continue to promote existing products.

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<sup>27</sup> Further to engaging in the launch of National Policy Dialogues in Serbia.

<sup>28</sup> For additional information, see the Report of the forty-second meeting of the Bureau. Available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau\\_Oslo/Bureau-42\\_Minutes\\_as\\_agreed\\_with\\_the\\_Chair\\_and\\_Bureau\\_final\\_clean.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau_Oslo/Bureau-42_Minutes_as_agreed_with_the_Chair_and_Bureau_final_clean.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> See Minutes of the forty-first meeting of the Bureau, para. 17, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/TEIA\\_Bureau\\_13\\_Feb\\_2019\\_Gen\\_eva\\_final\\_minutes.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/TEIA_Bureau_13_Feb_2019_Gen_eva_final_minutes.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> Additional Parties supporting the amendment include: Norway, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Switzerland.

53. In reviewing the strategy's implementation, the Bureau discussed the following key activities:

(a) Survey on guidance materials: The Bureau welcomed the survey on the Convention's guidance materials to raise awareness and to gather feedback on their use. The survey was circulated to all focal points, industry and other key partners. The results from the survey showed that guidance and training materials are found to be useful and of high quality. However, improvements can be made when it comes to practical applicability and visibility of publications on the Internet. The Bureau encourages the focal points to promote the guidance materials developed under the Convention. The Bureau thanked the secretariat for carrying out this survey, the results of which will be shared at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Publications and promotion materials: For the biennium 2019–2020, the Bureau welcomed the preparation of the following publications and new communication and awareness-raising materials in supporting countries in the improvement of industrial safety:

(i) Implementation Guide for Central Asia on the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (2019). This guide was drawn up under the Project on strengthening industrial safety in Central Asia and is intended to assist the countries of the subregion in their implementation of the Convention. It is based on the needs identified during the national expert group meetings in the countries of Central Asia. The guide was highlighted as a United Nations flagship publications on disaster risk reduction in the 2020 Progress Report on the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience. The Bureau encourages countries with economies in transition to make use of this guide in efforts to improve industrial safety;

(ii) Safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water (2019).<sup>31</sup> These safety guidelines and good practices were presented at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and developed to support Governments, competent authorities and operators in minimizing the risk of fire and safely retaining firefighting water. During this biennium, the publication was finalized, translated into French and Russian and published in the three official languages on the ECE website. The Bureau encourages countries to make use of the guidelines to improve their firefighting water management and retention practices and to avoid disasters like the one at Sandoz, Schweizerhalle, Switzerland, which sparked the Convention's negotiation;

(iii) Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents: Addressing the risk of accidental transboundary water pollution (2019).<sup>32</sup> The Bureau welcomed the development of this first brochure of the Joint Expert Group, thanks to a financial contribution from Germany. It encourages focal points and Joint Expert Group members to make use of and widely distribute the brochure. This brochure highlights the twentieth anniversary of the Joint Expert Group;

(iv) Four postcards promoting the: Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for the Management and Retention of Firefighting Water; Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Oil Terminals; Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Pipelines; and Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Tailings Management Facilities (2019).<sup>33</sup> The postcards give a brief summary and highlights of and bring attention to the four sets of guidelines. The Bureau welcomed the development of the postcards, thanks to a financial contribution from Germany and the secretariat's efforts. It encourages focal points and Joint Expert Group members to make use of and widely distribute the postcards;

<sup>31</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.II.E.29.

<sup>32</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications/industrial-accidents/official-publications/2019/brochure-on-the-joint-expert-group-on-water-and-industrial-accidents/docs.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications.html>.

(c) Press releases: The Bureau welcomed the development of press releases by the secretariat, including those covering the twentieth anniversary,<sup>34</sup> mine tailings safety<sup>35</sup> and land-use planning/industrial safety, and social media posts via the ECE Facebook and Twitter accounts. As the timing of such messages is essential, the Bureau appreciated the timely press release covering the explosion in Beirut on 4 August 2020.<sup>36</sup> Despite Lebanon not being a Party to it, the Convention offers safety principles and guidance available to all countries, including those beyond the ECE region, to improve industrial safety and prevent major industrial accidents. The Bureau calls on all Parties to further disseminate press releases drafted by the secretariat or to develop their own press releases and social media posts (for example, when hosting or contributing to activities);

(d) Strategic partnerships: The Bureau positively welcomed the Convention's cooperation with partner organizations and the secretariat's efforts to integrate partner organizations into the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Industrial Accidents. It appreciated the strengthened and new partnerships, including with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, OECD, UNDRR, the Interstate Council on Industrial Safety of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The work on mine tailings safety had led to new partnerships with other international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme, and industry organizations, such as the International Council on Mining and Metals, through the co-hosting of a regional consultation on the Global Tailings Review for Central Asia (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 18 and 19 November 2019). The Bureau notes that, in the biennium, the secretariat participated for the first time in the meeting of the Regional Forum — Meeting of Heads of Emergency Authorities of Central Asia (Bishkek, 11 and 12 July 2019). Bureau members also participated in meetings of partner organizations, including, for example, Mr. Winkelmann-Oei taking part in the Sixteenth International Symposium on Loss Prevention and Safety Promotion in the Processing Industries (Delft, Netherlands, 16–19 June 2019). The two Vice-Chairs, Ms. Karba and Mr. Struckl, represented the Convention at the UNIDO Conference on ensuring industrial safety and security: The role of Government, regulations, standards and new technologies (Vienna, 30 and 31 May 2019).

54. UNIDO plans to expand its activities in the field of industrial safety. Within this organization, options exist to establish more and important connections with stakeholders outside the ECE region. There are obvious opportunities to make use of synergies and avoid unnecessary parallel work; the latter has already been noted by some conference documents. The representatives of the secretariat and the Bureau expressed the intention to keep in close contact with UNIDO regarding further activities.

55. The Bureau welcomed the secretariat's continued engagement with the target audiences defined in the strategy, including:

(a) Focal points, including Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiaries, through the programme and donors;

(b) Industry, in particular on tailings management facilities, including through the International Council on Minerals and Metals;

(c) Non-governmental organizations, for example, in the context of the subregional consultations for Central Asia on the draft Global Tailings Standard, co-convened with the Global Tailings Review;

<sup>34</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/info/media/presscurrent-press-h/environment/2020/unece-industrial-accidents-convention-celebrates-20-years-of-pan-european-cooperation-to-strengthen-prevention-preparedness-and-response/doc.html>.

<sup>35</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/info/media/news/environment/2019/unece-improves-safety-of-mining-waste-management-in-kazakhstan-tajikistan-and-beyond-in-central-asia/doc.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Available at <http://www.unece.org/info/media/presscurrent-press-h/environment/2020/we-must-not-wait-for-the-next-ammonium-nitrate-blast-solutions-exist-to-improve-safety/doc.html>.

(d) Academia, including the Official Journal of the Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service of the Russian Federation and Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, Germany.

56. The Bureau calls on focal points to make use of and further promote the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy.

### III. Financing

57. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2018/2 on fostering implementation of the sustainable financial mechanism under the Convention (See ECE/CP.TEIA/38/Add.1). The Bureau recognizes that the round-table session held at the meeting on financing to support the Convention's activities and the realization of the Convention's vision until 2030 was an important and useful way to highlight the importance of predictable and steady financial support and to make Parties again aware of their financial responsibility.

58. At each of its meetings, the Bureau was informed by the secretariat of the financial situation and the resources made available by the Parties.

59. The Bureau thanks Parties for their financial contributions, in particular the 13 Parties that provided predictable and mostly, multi-year contributions, following their indications and pledges at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, the European Union, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Switzerland). Such contributions are essential in setting up a realistic workplan for the biennium. It also thanks the Parties that confirmed additional contributions during the biennium (Cyprus, Germany, Lithuania, Finland, France, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Slovenia — to be confirmed). In particular, the Bureau highlights the importance of additional financial contributions for multi-year projects that were communicated by France, the Russian Federation and Switzerland during the biennium. Those contributions enabled significant progress to be made towards the implementation of the workplan and the development of key areas of the Long-term Strategy, such as NATECH, national policy dialogues and the safety of hot spots such as tailing management facilities.

60. The Bureau welcomes the positive financial situation for the work under the Convention. However, it calls attention to the fragility of the Convention's financial situation and reminds the Parties that they are primarily responsible for financing the activities and projects in the workplan. The Bureau notes with regret that only half of the Parties have contributed financially or in-kind thus far.

61. When reviewing the implementation of decision 2018/2, the Bureau positively noted and thanked the Parties that provided or intended to provide financing for the hosting of intergovernmental meetings under the Convention, including the costs arising from the servicing by the secretariat.

62. The Bureau also welcomed the dedicated financing provided by some Parties (France, Germany, Norway and Switzerland) to support the participation of representatives of countries with economies in transition and of developing and least developed countries that have expressed an interest in the Convention's activities, whether intergovernmental or assistance-related.

63. The Bureau recognizes that the small group on financing (Ms. Karba, Ms. Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund (Finland), Mr. Baranovsky and Ms. Tandberg) has been pursuing efforts to encourage more Parties to take an active part in the financing scheme and on the possibility of making use of other financial sources, such as available project-related financing, for example by the European Union.

64. In reviewing the implementation of the sustainable financial mechanism (ECE/CP.TEIA/24, annex I) and decision 2018/2, the Bureau noticed that some progress had been made, but significant challenges remain to progress towards a system of longer-term, sustainable and predictable financing. The Bureau reminds the Parties of their responsibilities when it comes to the financial situation of the work under the Convention. The Bureau

strongly encourages Parties that do not yet contribute financially or in-kind to consider providing such a contribution as of the biennium 2021–2022. It welcomes contributions by Parties thus far and encourages them to maintain, or, where feasible, increase their contributions in the coming biennium.

65. The Bureau therefore decided to organize a dedicated round-table discussion on financing at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, focusing on the contributions for the 2021–2022 workplan. During the roundtable, the Chair intends to call on all Parties to highlight their intended contributions.

#### **IV. Preparations for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties**

66. At its forty-third meeting, the Bureau welcomed the initial offer made by Germany at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It had been envisaged that the Conference would be held in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 3 December 2020. The Bureau was aware of the challenges that the pandemic presented to the organizers, and recognized the excellent cooperation between Germany, the secretariat and the Bureau during this period. Infection control measures and travel restrictions required that the number of participants in the meeting room be limited to 100 persons. The Bureau then decided to limit Parties to a maximum of two delegates each, with the possibility of remote participation for additional participants.<sup>37</sup> It asked the secretariat to proceed with communicating invitations to the eleventh meeting accordingly in the summer, and welcomed the solutions prepared by the German organizers and the secretariat's efforts to engage with platforms to make it possible to arrange the eleventh meeting with remote participation.

67. The Bureau understood the decision by Germany, taken in early September, not to host the meeting because it was no longer in a position due to the pandemic. It welcomed the secretariat's efforts in preparing and presenting new options for the Conference at its forty-fourth meeting (Geneva (online), 18 September 2020) with short notice. The Bureau agreed that the Conference of the Parties will be a hybrid meeting at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 7 to 9 December 2020, in view of the availability of a room and interpretation on these dates, and include three two-hour morning sessions. It also agreed on a shortened provisional agenda of the Conference with a focus on decision-making. Due to the shortened provisional agenda, the Bureau agreed to organize two preparatory events, namely an advance information session on the Conference of the Parties (Geneva (online), 30 October 2020) and a seminar on mine tailings safety in the ECE region and beyond (Geneva (online), 1 December 2020). The Bureau encouraged Parties and non-Parties to participate in these events and to follow the Draft operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making in meetings of the Conference of the Parties due to extraordinary circumstances (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/11), particularly the "advance circulation procedure" for submitting any advance comments by 9 November 2020. It also welcomed the possibility for in-person participation of one representative per country and encouraged Parties and non-Parties not in a position to travel to Geneva, in view of the pandemic, to consider the engagement of their Geneva-based permanent missions to represent them at the Conference, further to the remote participation by other delegates, which is not limited in numbers.

68. Regarding the provisional agenda for the eleventh meeting, the Bureau decided the following:

(a) The meeting will highlight the implementation of the Convention, based on the Working Group on Implementation's report from the ninth reporting round (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/5);

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<sup>37</sup> See the Minutes of the forty-third meeting of the Bureau, paras. 6 and 7, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Bureau/Bureau43\\_16-17\\_June\\_2020\\_online\\_minutes\\_final.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2020/TEIA/Bureau/Bureau43_16-17_June_2020_online_minutes_final.pdf).

(b) The meeting will address the implications of the pandemic for industrial safety. The delegations are invited to reflect on this issue and share experiences of lessons learned;

(c) Highlights of the progress report on assistance activities carried out in 2019–2020 will be presented at the meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/4);

(d) The meeting will hold a round-table discussion on financing, where the Parties will be invited to give their views on the financial situation and to indicate their pledges (financial and in-kind) for the new workplan 2021–2022;

(e) A seminar on safety in tailing management facilities in the ECE region and beyond will be organized in advance of the meeting (Geneva (online), 1 December 2020). At its forty-second meeting, the Bureau decided to prepare this seminar with the secretariat.<sup>38</sup> The main objectives of the seminar are to: demonstrate the relevance of the topic; strengthen mine tailings safety; and provide support to countries in the implementation of the Convention. A draft decision on strengthening mine tailings safety in the ECE region (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/3) has been prepared and circulated to the Parties prior to the eleventh meeting, in accordance with the rules of procedures for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The decision is expected to be adopted at the eleventh meeting, following the advance online seminar held on 1 December;

(f) An advance information session on the Conference of the Parties will be organized (Geneva (online), 30 October 2020), in order to:

(i) Present the annotated provisional agenda for the eleventh meeting and the envisaged proceedings for this Conference, focused on decision-making (ECE/CP.TEIA/41);

(ii) Introduce the Draft operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making in meetings of the Conference of the Parties due to extraordinary circumstances (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/11);

(iii) Present all draft decisions for adoption by the Conference, including the Draft decision on strengthening mine tailings safety in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/3), Draft decision on strengthening the implementation of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/6) and Draft decision on guiding principles for financial assistance (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/10);

(iv) Present the Priorities, workplan and resources for the Convention for 2021–2022 for adoption (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/9); and

(v) Provide a space for delegations to ask questions, seek clarifications, receive any additional information and to discuss.

69. At its forty-third meeting, the Bureau requested the secretariat to prepare the Draft operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making in meetings of the Conference of the Parties due to extraordinary circumstances, like the pandemic. At its forty-fourth meeting, the Bureau reviewed the draft operating procedures prepared to that effect, and prepared according to the rules of procedure of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/37) and with consideration to international good practices, operating procedures adopted and applied by other intergovernmental bodies and in consultation with colleagues at ECE and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. The Bureau endorsed the draft operating procedures and recommended that Parties adopt and make use of them in advance of and during the eleventh meeting.

<sup>38</sup> See the Minutes of the forty-second meeting of the Bureau, paras. 54 and 55, available at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau\\_Oslo/Bureau-42\\_Minutes\\_as\\_agreed\\_with\\_the\\_Chair\\_and\\_Bureau\\_final\\_clean.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/Bureau_Oslo/Bureau-42_Minutes_as_agreed_with_the_Chair_and_Bureau_final_clean.pdf).

## V. Conclusions and observations

70. The Bureau, in steering the work under the Convention during the biennium 2019–2020, has taken account of the directions set out in the three strategic documents, namely: (a) the Long-term Strategy for the Convention until 2030; (b) the Communication, outreach and engagement strategy for the Convention; and (c) the sustainable financial mechanism under the Convention.

71. The Bureau noted with satisfaction the Parties' willingness and efforts to support and engage in the longer-term priorities set by the Long-term Strategy and in the concrete activities of the 2019–2020 workplan under the Convention.

72. The Bureau appreciated the continued interest in the work on risk assessment, land-use planning and increasing safety at tailings management facilities. As addressing tailings management facility-safety issues has been an important regional assistance activity, the Bureau decided to prepare a seminar on safety in tailing management facilities at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to further strengthen this work.

73. The Bureau recognized that the pandemic constitutes much more than a public health crisis. It noted that the pandemic situation has had an impact on the work under the Convention. In the light of the pandemic and the lockdown of many countries, the Bureau is pleased that the secretariat and the Parties have been able to adapt to the current situation, including through: meetings of the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation held online; advances regarding remote activities, such as Industrial Accident Notification consultations; and the continuation of core and non-core activities, such as risk assessment and NATECH. In addition, new solutions and formats to address the limitations on in-person meetings have been explored.

74. The Bureau noted with satisfaction that, with the support from the secretariat, it has been possible to be responsive to immediate challenges such as the pandemic. Against this background, they decided to invite the Parties to reflect on the impacts of the pandemic on industrial safety for authorities and industry.

75. The Bureau recognized and appreciated the work done by the Working Group on Implementation to analyse and evaluate the ninth implementation report of the Convention (2016–2018), with support from the secretariat. It also recognized the valuable work carried out by the Working Group on Implementation in monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Approach. The results from this work will be important in the future evaluation of the Long-term Strategy. The Bureau welcomed the fact that an extensive number of good practices shared by the Parties through the ninth reporting round will be made available on the Convention's website. It calls on the Parties to review this and to take the opportunity to learn from each other.

76. The Bureau noted with satisfaction the continued cooperation with other international organizations and programmes and new partners. The work under the Convention benefits from good cooperation with strategic partners. The Bureau appreciated the cooperation with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, the World Health Organization and OECD, in the connection with the COVID-19 follow-up work involving authorities and industry. Furthermore, it welcomed the secretariat's strengthened inputs to the Sendai Framework and its continued awareness-raising on the linkages of the Convention to the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Bureau also welcomed the recognition of the Convention as an instrument for technological disaster risk reduction, as evidenced by the Global Assessment Report 2019. It appreciated these strategic advances towards the implementation of the Long-term Strategy.

77. While welcoming the support for implementation of the Convention's workplan, the Bureau regretted the persistent concerns about reliance on a relatively small number of donors, the absence of contributions from many of the Parties and the low share of pledges in advance of meetings of the Conference of the Parties. It therefore invites Parties to continue, renew or start active participation in the Convention's activities that require financial contributions to be realized.

78. Lastly, the Bureau welcomed the growing recognition of the Convention in the context of policymaking and governance at the national and transboundary levels, and its role in expanding cooperation between countries and societies beyond the exchange of technical information.

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