Third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs

Budva, Montenegro 15 September 2017

Agenda item 5(d): Financial arrangements

Norway

Thank you Madam Chair!

Norway would like to thank the Secretariat for its excellent support to the Bureau in preparing the draft decisions, including this one on financial arrangements.

As many of the Parties probably are aware of from previous discussions at the 2nd Meeting of the Parties in Maastricht and subsequent meetings of the Working Group, Norway prefers establishing a mandatory financial scheme based on adjusted UN scale of assessed contributions. We believe this would be the best solution based on the principles of an equitable sharing of the burden, stable and predictable sources of funding, accountability and sound financial management.

The Parties to the PRTR Protocol have a collective responsibility to contribute to the effective functioning and follow-up of the Protocol, in order to achieve its goals. Although contributions can be and are made in different ways, stable, predictable and fairly shared financial contributions are a necessary foundation.

Norway intends to maintain its annual contribution of 40,000 USD, divided equally between the expenditures under the Aarhus Convention and its PRTR Protocol, subject of course to the annual endorsement by the budgetary authorities, in order to support financial sustainability and predictability and thus also the effective functioning and follow-up of the Protocol.

Effective functioning and follow-up of the Protocol is important for several reasons. It contributes to the fulfilment of procedural human rights and good governance in the environmental field, which in turn contribute to safeguarding the environment and thus also to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We therefore regret that there is at present insufficient support for the establishment of a general mandatory scheme of contributions.

We are however aware that the Parties operate under budget constraints.

We are also aware that we need to come to an agreement on this decisive issue.

Judging from the previous discussions (and the latest intervention made by the EU), the chances that we will reach an agreement that include a mandatory scheme
seems increasingly distant. If we had thought that there was even a faint possibility of convincing those opposed through discussions at the Meeting of the Parties, we would have insisted on keeping the two options at the table. We have, however, come to the conclusion that this is not the case.

It is clear from the last preambular paragraph and stated in paragraphs 12 and 14 of the draft decision that the Parties agree to review the operation of the financial arrangements at the 4th session of the MoPP and that the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties are mandated to explore options for more predictable, stable and equitably shared funding. The EU has not proposed to amend or delete these paragraphs. These paragraphs are important to us in light of our aim to secure more predictable, stable and equitably shared funding of the activities under the Protocol.

We are therefore willing to compromise in the short term and support the draft decision with the amendments proposed by the EU to contribute to consensus and enable the MoPP to concentrate on other important, outstanding issues.

We are however not giving up on our aim, and intend to pursue possible ways to ensure stable, predictable and fairly shared contributions, including through a strengthened funding mechanism.

Thank you Chair!