



**PRTR Protocol to the Aarhus Convention 2nd Meeting of the Working Group of
the Parties
(Geneva, 20-21 November 2012)
- Position by the EU and its Member States -**

Item 7. Financial matters

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Bureau and the secretariat for the efforts put into preparing a new proposal for financial arrangements under the Protocol.

We fully recognise the need for stability, predictability and fair burden sharing in financial matters.

Noting that, at the 15th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention held in Geneva from 3 to 5 September 2012, no immediate changes were envisaged to the current interim scheme of contributions to the Convention and bearing in mind the current global financial and economic crisis which is severely affecting several EU countries and their citizens, the European Union and its Member States can only support the option to maintain the current interim voluntary scheme of contributions. Therefore we cannot support any of the options outline in the paper PRTR/WG.1/2012/Inf.3 and the financial arrangements as per Decision I/3 should be kept.

In particular we would like to highlight that if financial burden has to be borne by all, it should not necessarily be evenly distributed, and we would also like to underline the importance of maintaining the ability to make in kind alongside cash contributions. Moreover, since the financial calendar may be different from country to country, a commitment in relation to the year ahead may not always be possible, but it would be important to have contributions made as soon as possible at the beginning of the year.

In spite of the difficult current situation, we are in a position to confirm that the European Union will keep its contribution at the level of 2.5 percent of the total needed for core activities. This commitment is of course subject to annual endorsement by the budgetary authorities of the European Union and is without prejudice to the arrangements for State Parties.

Taking into account that the amounts contributed under the voluntary scheme have fallen short of the estimated costs of implementing the work programme, with a significant numbers of Parties and Signatories not contributing at all, we believe it is necessary to explore new possibilities for assuring adequate funding for the Protocol.

Alternative and innovative sources of funding beyond the traditional model could be explored for funding specific projects, for example from industries whose activities fall within the scope of PRTR and would like to show that their environmental goals are aligned with the broader aspirations of the Protocol or from other financing schemes such as charitable foundations or organisations interested to contribute.

Moreover, simple actions such as the following may help the implementation of the work programme:

1. Present and promote the work being carried out under the Protocol in order to encourage Parties/Signatories that have historically contributed generously to maintain their previous levels of contributions, and to encourage contributions from Parties/Signatories that have not previously done so.
2. Invite Parties/Signatories to notify the secretariat as soon as possible after the beginning of each year of the amount that they will contribute for that year or indicate any possible problem, in order to secure the timely and effective implementation of the work programme.
