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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Meeting of the Parties to
the Convention on Access to Information,
Public Participation in Decision-making and
Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
(First meeting, Lucca, Italy, 21-23 October 2002)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

**to be held at San Romano, Lucca
beginning at 10 a.m. on Monday, 21 October 2002**

Ceremonial statements

- Welcome address by Mr. Altero Matteoli, Minister of the Environment, Italy
- Welcome address by Ms. Brigita Schmögnerová, Executive Secretary, UNECE

1. Opening and constitution:
 - (a) Constitution of the Meeting of the Parties;
 - (b) Election of the Chairperson of ministerial segment;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (d) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (e) Election of officers and other Bureau members.

2. General statements.
3. Ministerial panel discussion on “Making Aarhus Work.”
4. Adoption of Declaration.
5. Specific substantive issues:
 - (a) Pollutant release and transfers registers;
 - (b) Genetically modified organisms;
 - (c) Access to justice;
 - (d) Electronic information tools.
6. Procedures and mechanisms:
 - (a) Compliance mechanism;
 - (b) Reporting requirements;
 - (c) Designation of focal points;
 - (d) Clearing-house mechanism and capacity-building service.
7. Programme of work and operation of the Convention:
 - (a) Procedures for preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes for the Convention;
 - (b) Work programme and budget for 2003-2005;
 - (c) Financial arrangements;
 - (d) Operation of the Convention in the intersessional periods.

8. Issues for information:
 - (a) Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Public participation in international forums;
 - (c) Interlinkages between the Aarhus Convention and the other ECE environmental conventions and protocols;
 - (d) Strategic environmental assessment.
9. Date and venue of the second ordinary meeting.
10. Any other business.
11. Adoption of the report.
12. Close of the meeting.

TIME	ITEM	ACTION	EXPLANATORY NOTES	DOCUMENTATION
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Monday, 21 October 2002

10.00-10.30	Ceremonial statements			
10.30-11.00	Item 1 Opening and constitution		The Executive Secretary will formally open the meeting and preside over it until the election of the Chairperson of the ministerial segment.	
	(a) Constitution of the Meeting of the Parties		The secretariat will inform the Meeting of the Parties about the status of ratification of the Convention and any declarations made by the Parties upon the deposit of their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, whereupon the Meeting of the Parties will be declared to be duly constituted.	MP.PP/2002/inf.1
	(b) Election of the Chairperson for the ministerial segment	Election	The Meeting of the Parties is expected to elect the Chairperson for the ministerial segment. The Meeting will be invited to apply ad interim the draft rules of procedure until their formal adoption (see item 1 (d) below).	MP.PP/2002/2
	(c) Adoption of the agenda	Decision	The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to adopt the agenda of the meeting as prepared by the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties and set out in the present document.	ECE/MP.PP/1

TIME	ITEM	ACTION	EXPLANATORY NOTES	DOCUMENTATION
11.00-12.00	Item 2 General statements		Ministers and high-level representatives of selected intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations will be invited to deliver general statements, including declarations on priorities related to the implementation of the Convention. Delegates are invited to provide written versions of their statements and any supplementary information, and to keep the delivery of their statements to a maximum of five minutes. <u>1/</u>	
12.00-13.00 15.00-16.30	Item 3 Ministerial panel discussion “Making Aarhus Work”	Debate	The list of panellists and the subjects of their keynote addresses will be further developed and circulated prior the meeting. Delegates are invited to provide written versions of their keynote addresses and any supplementary information, and to keep their addresses to a maximum of ten minutes. Ministers and other delegates will be invited to take part in the debate.	
16.30-18.00	Item 4 Adoption of Declaration	Adoption	Ministers, heads of delegation of Parties, Signatories and other States, as well as non-governmental organizations and other representatives of civil society will be invited to consider and adopt a Declaration based on a draft text prepared at the initiative of the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties.	MP.PP/2002/1

1/ Subject to downward revision, depending upon the number of delegates wishing to take the floor.

TIME	ITEM	ACTION	EXPLANATORY NOTES	DOCUMENTATION
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Tuesday, 22 October 2002

10.00-10.15	Item 1 (continued)		In the absence of the Chairperson of the ministerial segment, the Executive Secretary or her representative will preside over the meeting until the election of the Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties.	
	(d) Adoption of the rules of procedure	Decision	Following article 10, paragraph 2 (h), of the Convention, the Meeting of the Parties will be invited to adopt its rules of procedure.	MP.PP/2002/2
	(e) Election of officers and other Bureau members	Election	Following the adoption of the rules of procedure, the Meeting of the Parties is expected to elect its Chairperson and other officers in accordance with rule 18 and the remaining members of the Bureau in accordance with rule 22. Non-governmental organizations established for the purpose of, and actively engaged in, promoting environmental protection and sustainable development are expected to appoint a representative to attend the meetings of the Bureau in accordance with rule 22.	MP.PP/2002/2

TIME	ITEM	ACTION	EXPLANATORY NOTES	DOCUMENTATION
10.15-13.00	Item 5 Specific substantive issues			
	(a) Pollutant release and transfer registers	Decision	The Chairman of the Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, Mr. Karel Blaha (Czech Republic), will report on its progress. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to acknowledge the Working Group's achievements and to consider and adopt a draft decision to establish formally a new working group under its auspices to complete the preparation of the draft protocol. The Meeting of the Parties is also expected to decide to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Parties in Kiev in May 2003 to adopt the protocol.	MP.PP/2002/3 MP.PP/2002/4
	(b) Genetically modified organisms	Decision	In their resolution adopted at the time of the adoption of the Convention, the Signatories recognized the importance of the application of the provisions of the Convention to deliberate releases of genetically modified organisms into the environment and requested the Parties at their first meeting to further develop the application of the Convention by means of inter alia more precise provisions. Following this request, the Signatories at their first meeting established a task force on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and at their second meeting replaced this task force with an intergovernmental working group on GMOs.	MP.PP/2002/5 MP.PP/2002/6

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			The Chairman of the Working Group, Mr. Helmut Gaugitsch (Austria), will be invited to report on its results. The Meeting will be invited to consider and adopt the draft guidelines on access to information, public participation and access to justice with respect to genetically modified organisms and to decide on future work on GMOs by adopting a draft decision on the topic.	
	(c) Access to justice	Decision	<p>At their second meeting (July 2000), the Signatories established a task force on access to justice, led by Estonia, to support the implementation of the third pillar of the Convention (CEP/WG.5/2000/2, paras. 46-47). In line with its mandate, the task force developed a handbook of good practices of access to justice, based on a number of case studies selected from all over the region. The task force also held a workshop in Tallinn to share experiences with access to justice (September 2000). The workshop discussed examples of how different countries had dealt with the different issues and identified areas where further activities seemed important.</p> <p>The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review and acknowledge the work of the task force. It will also be invited to consider and adopt a draft decision on promoting effective access to justice, thereby establishing a task force to continue and further develop the work of the task force established under the auspices of the Meeting of Signatories.</p>	<p>CEP/WG.5/2001/5 MP.PP/2002/7</p> <p>Handbook on Access to Justice</p>

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	(d) Electronic information tools	Decision	<p>At their second meeting, the Signatories established a task force on electronic information tools, led by Austria, to support the implementation of the Convention through promoting good practices in the field of electronic information tools.</p> <p>The task force held a workshop in Arendal, Norway (March 2000), and identified a number of activities to be undertaken on electronic information tools to support the implementation of the Convention. In addition, the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe prepared a compendium of good practices and a survey of priorities, challenges and case studies.</p> <p>The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the work of the task force and to consider and adopt a draft decision on promoting the use of electronic and other information tools.</p>	CEP/WG.5/2001/4 MP.PP/2002/8
15.00-16.30	Item 6 Procedures and mechanisms			
	(a) Compliance mechanism	Decision, Election	Article 15 of the Convention requires the Meeting of the Parties to establish, on a consensus basis, arrangements for reviewing compliance with the provisions of the Convention.	MP.PP/2002/9

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			<p>The Signatories at their first meeting established a task force on compliance and at their second meeting replaced this with a working group to prepare a compliance mechanism on the basis of article 15 of the Convention. The working group held two meetings and presented the results of its work to the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties, where a number of outstanding issues were resolved.</p> <p>The Meeting will be invited to consider and adopt a draft decision establishing a compliance mechanism. The Meeting is also expected to elect the members of the compliance committee envisaged in the draft decision in accordance with the procedure set out in the decision and in the rules of procedure.</p>	
	(b) Reporting requirements	Decision	<p>According to article 10, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the Parties are required to keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention on the basis of regular reporting by the Parties. In the draft decision on the compliance committee, reference is made to the need for rigorous reporting by the Parties on their compliance with the Convention.</p> <p>On this basis, the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties has prepared a draft decision, including a format for each Party to use when reporting on its implementation of the Convention. The Meeting will be invited to consider and adopt the draft decision setting out the reporting requirements.</p>	MP.PP/2002/10

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	(c) Designation of focal points	Decision	The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and adopt a draft decision on the designation of focal points for the Convention. Parties will be called upon to designate national focal points and, as appropriate, contact persons for the Convention if they have not already done so, and non-Parties and interested organizations will be invited to do the same.	MP.PP/2002/11
	(d) Clearing-house mechanism and capacity-building service	Decision	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Convention's secretariat have established a capacity-building service and a clearing-house mechanism. The Meeting will be invited to consider and adopt a draft decision welcoming this initiative, urging its continuation and encouraging Parties and other relevant bodies to support it in various ways.	MP.PP/2002/12
16.30-18.00	Item 7 Programme of work and operation of the Convention		The operation of the Convention in the intersessional periods, the procedures for monitoring the implementation of the work programme, the work programme and budget for the period until the second meeting of the Parties and the financial arrangements are closely interlinked. Thus the adoption of each of the proposed four draft decisions will have implications for the others. It is therefore proposed that only after consideration of the four sub-items, 7 (a) – (d) will the Meeting be invited to adopt the draft decisions as one cluster.	

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	(a) Procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes for the Convention	Decision	The Meeting of the Parties is expected to consider and adopt a draft decision on procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes under the Aarhus Convention. A work programme covering the period up to and including the next meeting of the Parties will be prepared for adoption at each meeting of the Parties, although some activities will be ongoing and therefore part of each work programme. For each activity in the work programme, an estimation of the costs of carrying it out should be given to form the basis of a budget for the Convention.	MP.PP/2002/13
	(b) Work programme and budget for 2003-2005	Decision	A draft work programme and budget for the period 2003-2005 have been prepared by the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties. The Meeting is expected to consider them, amend them where appropriate in the light of its other decisions and adopt them.	MP.PP/2002/14

Wednesday, 23 October 2002

10.00-11.30	Item 7 (continued)			
	(c) Financial arrangements	Decision	Article 10, paragraph 3, of the Convention states that the Meeting of the Parties may, as necessary, consider establishing financial arrangements on a consensus basis.	MP.PP/2002/15

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			The Meeting will be invited to consider and adopt the draft decision on financial arrangements prepared by the Working Group for the preparation of the first meeting of the Parties. It is expected that Parties and other States and regional economic integration organizations will have informed the secretariat in advance of the meeting of their intention to contribute to the financial resources of the Convention under the proposed voluntary scheme of contributions envisaged in the draft decision.	
	(d) Operation of the Convention in the intersessional periods	Decision	The Meeting of the Parties is expected to consider and adopt a draft decision establishing a subsidiary body, the Working Group of the Parties, which will be entrusted with overseeing the implementation of the work programme of the Convention between the meetings of the Parties.	MP.PP/2002/16
11.30-13.00	Item 8 Issues for information			
	(a) Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development	Information	The Meeting will be informed of the relevant outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Meeting may wish to discuss possible action to be taken in the light of this outcome.	MP.PP/2002/17
	(b) Public participation in international forums	Information and Exchange of views	At the eighth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy, it was agreed that good practices in public participation in international forums, and its potential problems, should be analysed by the secretariat, or a consultant commissioned by	MP.PP/2002/18 and Add.1

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			the secretariat.	
			<p>The analysis could provide the basis for the development of guidelines on public participation in international forums, for possible adoption at the Kiev Ministerial Conference (ECE/CEP/80, para. 35 (b)).</p> <p>The Meeting will be informed of the main findings of the analysis and of the preparations for further consideration of the topic at the Committee's ninth session. The Meeting will then be invited to exchange views on the issue and may wish to give a mandate to the Working Group of the Parties to take further action in this area.</p>	
	(c) Interlinkages between the Convention and the other ECE environmental conventions and protocols	Information	At its eighth session, the Committee agreed that as a first step the links between the Aarhus Convention and the other ECE environmental conventions and protocols should be analysed in depth by the secretariat, or a consultant commissioned by the secretariat (ECE/CEP/80, para. 35 (a)). The Meeting will be informed of the main conclusions of the analysis.	MP.PP/2002/19 and Add.1
	(d) Strategic environmental assessment	Information	Under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, a draft protocol on strategic environmental assessment is being prepared with the aim of having it ready for adoption at the Kiev Ministerial Conference in May 2003. The Meeting will be informed of the progress in the negotiations of the draft protocol.	

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15.00-18.00	Items 9 to 12			
	Item 9 Date and venue of the second ordinary meeting		The Meeting of the Parties is expected to make a preliminary decision with respect to the date and venue for its second ordinary meeting. Parties and prospective Parties are invited to consider their candidature as a host country.	
	Item 10 Any other business		Delegations wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.	
	Item 11 Adoption of the report	Adoption	The Meeting will be invited to adopt a draft report. The Meeting will also be invited to approve the report on the credentials, prepared by its officers in accordance with rule 17 of the draft rules of procedure.	
	Item 12 Close of the meeting		The Chairperson will close the meeting.	