



**Economic and Social  
Council**

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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

Working Group of the Parties to the Convention  
(Sixth meeting, Geneva, 5–7 April 2006)

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE MEETING**

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland,  
starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 5 April 2006<sup>1</sup>

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments with respect to the ratification of the Convention and the Protocol in their respective countries.

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<sup>1</sup> New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the attached registration form, also available from the website of the Aarhus Convention at <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/wgp.htm>, and then to transmit it to the Aarhus Convention secretariat, **at least two weeks prior to the meeting**, either by fax +41 22 917 0107 or by e-mail to the following address: [public.participation@unece.org](mailto:public.participation@unece.org). Prior to the meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Villa Les Feuillantines, 13 Avenue de la Paix (a map is attached), to pick up their identification badge. In case of difficulty, please contact the Aarhus Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 4226 or 917 1502.

3. Pollutant release and transfer registers

The secretariat will report on the preparations for the third meeting of the Working Group on PRTRs, scheduled for 17–19 May 2006. The Working Group is expected to take note of these activities, in particular the preparations for the entry into force of the Protocol, which include the preparation of rules of procedure and a compliance mechanism; the status of technical guidance documents and the PRTR cost analysis; and the activities promoting international outreach and international PRTR coordination.

4. Genetically modified organisms

Delegations will be invited to inform the Working Group of any steps taken towards ratifying the amendment to the Convention adopted through decision II/1. The secretariat will present information on the manner in which the Convention's provision dealing with the conditions for the entry into force of such amendments (Art. 14, para. 4) is interpreted by the Depositary. The Working Group may wish to discuss any implications arising from this explanation.

The Working Group will also be invited to consider plans for activities to support the application of the Guidelines on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice with Respect to Genetically Modified Organisms and of the amendment to the Convention pending its entry into force. The Working Group will in particular be invited to consider preparations for a regional or international expert meeting on this topic (see decision II/7, Annex, Activity IX, 'Method of Work') on the basis of a proposal from the Bureau.

5. Public participation in international forums

The Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums was established under the authority of the Working Group of the Parties by decision II/4 of the Meeting of the Parties. The Task Force was requested to submit to the next meeting of the Working Group of the Parties a proposed plan of consultation, including a list of the international forums to be consulted, the modalities of the consultation and a time schedule, having regard to the internal procedures of these forums. The Chairman of the Task Force, Mr. Laurent Mermet (France), will report on the outcome of its first meeting (24–25 November 2005, ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/3). The Working Group will be in particular invited to consider the draft plan of consultation and the list of international forums to be consulted (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/3/Add.1 and Add.2) and to take appropriate decisions in order for the consultation process to be able to start.

6. Access to justice

A new Task Force on Access to Justice was established under the authority of the Working Group of the Parties by decision II/2 of the Meeting of the Parties to carry out further work with a practical focus in relation to the elements of that decision. The Chairperson will report on its activities, in particular the outcome of its first meeting (16–17 February 2006, ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/4), and on plans for further work. The Working Group will be invited to take note of these activities and plans and to comment as appropriate.

7. Electronic information tools and the clearing-house mechanism

The Meeting of the Parties extended the mandate of the Task Force on Electronic Information Tools by virtue of decision II/3 in order to continue work on the identification of capacity-building needs, barriers and solutions; facilitate the sharing of approaches and standards to public access information systems as well as examples of good practice and further documentation of case studies by monitoring the implementation of the recommendations annexed to that decision; and maintain and further develop the Convention's clearing-house mechanism. The Chairman of the Task Force, Mr. Chris Jarvis (United Kingdom), will present the report of the fourth meeting of the Task Force, including the next steps planned by the Task Force, and will describe the progress in developing draft guidance for national nodes of the clearing-house mechanism on behalf of the lead country (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/5 and Add.1). The secretariat will report on progress in developing the clearing house. The Working Group will be invited to take note of the activities and plans of the Task Force and to comment as appropriate.

#### **8. Public participation in strategic decision-making**

At its second meeting, the Meeting of the Parties was invited to consider the progress achieved in this area and decide on further steps. The Meeting invited the Working Group of the Parties to reconsider the issue at its sixth meeting, basing its discussions on an earlier document prepared by the secretariat (MP.PP/WG.1/2003/5) as well as on the response received from the Espoo Convention bodies.

In order to facilitate discussion, the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, prepared a background paper outlining proposals for the preparation of a workshop and a compendium of examples of good practice in the implementation of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/6). The Working Group will be invited to use this document as a basis for deciding on further work in this area.

#### **9. Reporting requirements**

At the second meeting of the Parties, four Parties that had failed to submit national implementation reports by the time of the meeting were requested by the Meeting of the Parties to submit their reports by 15 December 2005 (Decision II/10, para. 4). All four Parties submitted reports (ECE/MP.PP/2005/18/Add.27 to 29 and Add.31). The Working Group will be invited to take note of these reports as well as a national implementation report submitted by the Netherlands (ECE/MP.PP/2005/18/Add.26). The secretariat will inform the Working Group of steps taken to make information on the status of implementation of the Convention, including the information contained in the national implementation reports, more accessible through the website.

#### **10. Compliance mechanism**

The Working Group will be invited to take note of the results of the work of the Compliance Committee, in particular the outcome of its meetings held after the second meeting of the Parties (ninth meeting, 12–14 October 2005, ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2005/6; tenth meeting, 5–7 December 2005, ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2005/8; and eleventh meeting, 29–31 March 2006, ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2006/2).

#### 11. Capacity-building

The secretariat will report on the implementation of capacity-building activities, in particular the outcome of the third inter-agency coordination meeting (17–18 November 2005, ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/7). The Working Group will then be invited to hold a general discussion on capacity-building needs and priorities. The Bureau has proposed to use a panel format for the discussion, involving participants (both governmental and NGO), from countries with the greatest capacity-building needs representatives of the donor community and representatives of international and regional organizations running capacity-building projects and/or programmes.

The Working Group will be invited to take note of the various developments and activities and to encourage Parties, Signatories, other States and other relevant bodies to continue to provide support for them, taking account of the needs and priorities identified during the discussion.

#### 12. Financial arrangements

The secretariat will report on the status of financial contributions received and the expenditures incurred in 2005 (ECE/ MP.PP/WG.1/2006/8). The Working Group will be invited to take note of this document and to consider its implications for the implementation of the 2006–2008 work programme.

#### 13. Work programme for 2006–2008

At their second meeting, the Parties requested the secretariat to compile, in accordance with the financial rules of the United Nations, a detailed breakdown of estimated costs of the activities proposed in the work programme for 2006–2008, specified for each year, including expected expenditure and income, and indicating, as far as possible, the origin of the expected pledges, the United Nations regular budget contributions and contributions in kind, and a provisional list of meetings for the intersessional period between the second and third meeting of the Parties (decision II/7, para. 3). The Working Group will be invited to consider, amend as necessary and approve the document on expected income and expenditure and the schedule of meetings (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2006/9) prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau.

Having regard to the voluntary scheme of contributions established under decisions I/13 and II/6 and the need to secure sufficient funding for the implementation of activities in the work programme adopted under decision II/7 for the forthcoming year, delegations will be invited through a *tour de table* to indicate the type and the number of “shares” that they intend to contribute for the years 2006 and 2007.

#### 14. Long-term strategic planning

By virtue of decision II/8, the Working Group of the Parties was requested to develop, with the assistance of the secretariat and appropriate involvement of the public, a strategic plan for the Convention covering a five-year period starting the year following the third meeting of the Parties. The Working Group will be invited to decide on the procedure for the preparation of the

plan on the basis of a background document prepared by the Bureau with the assistance of the secretariat (ECE/MR.PP/WG.1/2006/10).

**15. Outreach to non-UNECE member States**

The secretariat will report on activities undertaken to promote the implementation of Decision II/9 of the Meeting of the parties on accession of non-UNECE member States to the Convention and the advancement of the principles of the Convention in other regions and at the global level. The Working Group will be invited to take note of these developments.

**16. Preparations for the third ordinary meeting of the Parties**

At the second meeting of the Parties, the delegation of the Republic of Moldova kindly offered to host the third ordinary meeting of the Parties. The Meeting took note of this offer. At the tenth meeting of the Bureau (16–17 November 2005), Latvia expressed its willingness to host the meeting. The Working Group is expected to consider both offers and to make a decision on the issue.

**17. Any other business**

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.



## UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

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### Conference Registration Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send in this form by 22 March 2006 by fax(+41 22 917 0634) or e-mail (public.participation@unece.org).

#### Title of the Conference

##### 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,

From 1 February at 10.00 h until 4 February 2006 at 18.00 h

#### Organization or Agency // Delegation/Participant of which Country

#### Participant

Mr.

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ms.

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

(dd/mm/yyyy)

#### Participation Category

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Observer Organization

Participation

##### Delegation Member

NGO (ECOSOC Accred.)

From \_\_\_\_\_

##### Observer Country

Other (Please Specify Below)

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