
Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Bureau

Thirtieth meeting

Geneva, 8 and 9 July 2015

Minutes of the meeting

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The following members of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) attended the meeting: Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), Chair; Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova), Vice-Chair; Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands); Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic); Mr. Yashar Karimov (Azerbaijan); Mr. Alexandros Kiriazis (European Union); Mr. Eero Kytömaa (Finland); Ms. Torill Tandberg (Norway); Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany) and Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Chair of the Working Group on Implementation). Mr. Pawel Dadasiewicz (Poland), Vice-Chair, could not attend the meeting. The meeting was serviced by the secretariat to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), represented by Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Ms. Franziska Ilg-Hirsch, Ms. Virginia Fusé, Mr. Nikolay Savov and Ms. Claudia Kamke.

2. The Bureau welcomed Mr. Karimov, newly designated member from Azerbaijan, to his first Bureau meeting.

3. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda (CP.TEIA/2015/B.2/Agenda) without changes.

2. Financing

4. The secretariat provided information on the overall financial situation of the trust fund, considering pledges indicated by Parties at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and contributions received and expected. The overall pledges and commitments for 2015¹ totalled USD 453,274. Funding of approximately USD 300,000 by the Swedish Development Cooperation through the Environment and Security Initiative had unfortunately not been awarded due to the redirecting of funds to the Syrian refugee crisis. Pledges and commitments for 2016 were significantly lower at USD 278,131. In-kind contributions by the Republic of Moldova, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU) European Investment Bank totalled approximately USD 150,000. Total contributions (financial and in-kind) of USD 881,405 for the biennium were in stark contrast with the workplan budget of USD 3,202,828 adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting. In early July, the trust fund balance was at approximately USD

¹ This includes (a) contributions received at the end of 2014 for 2015, (b) contributions received in 2015 until July, and (c) commitments for funds yet to be received in 2015.

700,000. Should not additional financing be provided, the trust fund balance could decrease to approximately USD 500,000 by the end of the year.

5. Reasons for the difficult budgetary situation, compared with the previous bienniums, were exchange rate loss, as the majority of the contributions were received in foreign currency (Euros, Swiss Francs and Norwegian crowns), and no or smaller contributions for 2015 by some of the major donor countries, in particular Italy and Finland. For 2016, the situation was more severe, as financing by other major donors such as Germany was also uncertain.

6. The current financial situation did not allow for the implementation of the workplan as adopted. At the same time, it posed constraints on the operational planning for the activities and the human resources of secretariat, considering the need for reserving funds for contract extensions at the end of year. Should no additional resources be mobilized by the Bureau by the end of 2015, the secretariat may not be in a position to retain three extrabudgetary staff members. The secretariat reported that the sending of letters to Ministers and to Heads of the competent national authorities, highlighting the shortfalls in the biennium and requesting (additional) contributions, was under way.

7. The co-Chair of the small group on financing, Mr. Dijkens, reported on the outcome of the small group's meeting held on 7 July 2015 and the envisaged next steps to ensure sustainable and predictable financing for this workplan period and beyond. The report covered future actions by the group's members to engage in research on development cooperation agencies and engage with the focal points from Parties contributing below their potential/economic strength. The group had also discussed how to enhance country ownership and leadership, and balance the overall scale of the workplan. The small group had also suggested that a marketing strategy be developed, which shall explain the Convention's value-added and usefulness, including by highlighting its linkages with the 2030 development agenda. The co-Chair of the small group also reported on the envisaged follow-up to EU financing opportunities and related project proposals prepared by the secretariat. The option of organizing high-level meetings in Brussels, including with the new EU Director-General for Environment, was considered by the small group on financing. On the basis of the small group's report, the Bureau discussed the need to prepare a realistic and affordable workplan, to remind Parties of their obligations related to the financing for the implementation of the workplan, and to raise beneficiary countries' ownership and engagement in preparing project proposals and in their implementation.

8. The Chair reported on the outcome of the informal meeting of the representatives of the governing bodies of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements and the Committee on Environmental Policy on 13 April 2015. The meeting had, among others, considered the secretariat's information paper on a possible way forward to enhance the sustainability and predictability of financing for UNECE multilateral environmental agreements, which had been circulated to all Parties to the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements.² The secretariat provided additional information on the definition of core and non-core activities and the experiences of other UNECE multilateral environmental agreements in implementing this approach, in particular the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions. The secretariat also presented a possible list of core and non-core activities drafted by the UNECE secretariat.

ACTION ITEMS:

- ***The Bureau to:***
 - ***Actively encourage Parties to provide financial resources for the implementation of the 2015–2016 workplan, in line with the***

² http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2015/TEIA/WGD/2015_MEA_Financing.pdf

Bureau's role predefined in the sustainable financial mechanism, to encourage Parties to provide resources for the implementation of the workplan.

- *Provide their comments on the list of core and non-core activities by email following the meeting.*
- *The Chair, in cooperation with the secretariat (and possibly other Bureau members) to consider organizing high-level meetings in Brussels including with the new Director-General for Environment and other representatives of the European Commission.*
- *The secretariat to:*
 - *In cooperation with the Chair, follow-up on EU financing opportunities and project proposals and brief the Bureau of such proposals when they materialize*
 - *Circulate to the Bureau the presentations delivered on the financial situation of the trust fund and the core and non-core activities.*

3. Implementation of the 2015–2016 workplan

3.1 Assistance activities to support countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

(a) Assistance Programme

9. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation reported to the Bureau on the Working Group's deliberations regarding the Assistance Programme and the implementation of the Strategic Approach. She informed the Bureau of the updated self-assessment received by Albania. She outlined the actions undertaken by the Working Group and the secretariat in order to encourage the submission of self-assessments and action plans, in particular through the sending of official letters to the Ministers of the responsible authorities of the beneficiary countries, reminding them about their related commitments. The Working Group had invited Georgia and Montenegro to participate via teleconference in the latest meeting of the Working Group in order to report on progress.

10. The Working Group had recognized that the current implementation of the Strategic Approach was not satisfactory. The Chair suggested that it may be worthwhile to consider alternatives to the current functioning of the Assistance Programme for delivering support to the countries with economies in transition. Discussing the possible reasons for the failure of the beneficiary countries to prepare self-assessments and action plans, the Working Group had also considered the complexity of the tools developed under the Assistance Programme and their internal approval process which some countries were hesitant to engage in, not aware of its outcome. The Working Group also underlined that sustainable financing of the activities under the Assistance Programme was key to its sustained implementation.

11. Furthermore, the Chair of the Working Group reported on progress with regard to the analytical review to determine whether the information available was sufficient to document and assess the Assistance Programme's effectiveness. She reported on the preparation of a matrix by the secretariat which contained existing information from all relevant documents (national fact-finding mission reports, implementation reports, self-assessments and action plans, reports from capacity-building activities, etc.). She also highlighted the need for the further examination of the information included in this matrix and possibly other information sources.

12. The secretariat provided an update on the implementation of Assistance Programme activities since the last Bureau meeting. It presented the recent developments within the framework of the Danube Delta Project, namely the Hazard and Crisis Management Week, including a table-top exercise and an evaluation workshop addressing complacency (Chisinau, 23–26 March 2015). This activity was financed by Finland and Germany, with in-kind contributions by the beneficiary countries, in particular the Republic of Moldova as host. The secretariat also provided information on activities planned to finalize the project, in particular the field exercise in the Danube Delta and the final workshop of the project scheduled for the autumn of 2015, while financing for these activities, beyond a commitment by Germany and a dedicated contribution by the Netherlands, was not fully assured.

13. The secretariat also reported on the subregional workshop for the countries of Central Asia on chemicals management, identification and notification of industrial hazardous activities and accidental water pollution (Astana, 26–28 May 2015), which was carried out thanks to the financial contribution provided by Norway, dedicated financing for this activity by Germany and in-kind financing to support the travel of three participants provided by the Conference Support Programme of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

14. The secretariat informed the Bureau that no further assistance activities were planned for 2016 in the absence of any dedicated financing for them. The majority of the assistance activities in 2015 were implemented with dedicated financing which had already been received in 2014. Additional funds had been made available by the Netherlands during 2015 to support the Danube Delta Project. Project proposals which have been developed by the secretariat, most notably to support activities in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and South-Eastern Europe, have not been financed to date through the Environment and Security Initiative or the EU Environment and Climate Regional Accession Network.

15. Mr. Kiriazis recalled the joint exercise between Belarus and Lithuania, financed through EU neighbourhood policy funds and which had been presented during the seminar of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and recommended further examining the possibility of organizing a similar project. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation agreed and emphasized the importance of such a project to strengthen transboundary cooperation as promoted by the Convention.

16. Ms. Stirbu, the Bureau member from the Republic of Moldova, host country of the Hazard and Crisis Management Week and the planned field exercise of the Danube Delta Project, highlighted the importance of international cooperation and support for the beneficiary countries. She pointed to the increased spirit of cooperation and partnership between the beneficiary countries as a result of the implementation of the Danube Delta Project. She highlighted the need for improved financing of the Assistance Programme projects, pointing out that beneficiary countries could be discouraged to submit project proposals because of the complex procedures and documentation needed and a relatively small amount of project financing received.

17. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei, the representative of Germany as the major donor of the Danube Delta Project, also expressed his appreciation to the Republic of Moldova leading key project activities and his hope that the project would lead to successful and sustainable outcomes. Mr. Dijkens, Chair of the Danube Delta Project Management Group, highlighted the need to evaluate the project outcomes in order to identify the lessons learned and to improve future projects. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the insufficient overall financing of the Danube Delta Project, pointing out that there were gaps in the financing of project activities (in particular the crisis management component of the project, including the field exercise and the final workshop), in particular the secretariat staff costs which, in 2015, were only partially covered through dedicated contributions to the project and were largely financed through the Convention trust fund. The cost to the trust fund in 2015 of the

Danube Delta Project could be estimated at USD 130,000. The Bureau decided to continue with the implementation and finalization of the Danube Delta Project. It also recognized that there was a need to ensure the additional availability of funds to implement future assistance activities.

(b) Other assistance activities

18. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei, representative of Germany as lead Party for activities to address risk management at tailings management facilities, provided the Bureau with information about the implementation of the final workshop (Kyiv, 19–20 May 2015) and its results, notably regarding the testing of the checklist on such facilities in Ukraine. Following the successful testing and finalization, a new project on tailings management facilities was planned to be carried out in the Caucasus.

19. The meeting took note of the information provided and expressed its acknowledgment to Germany for the successful finalization of the tailings management facility project in Ukraine. The Bureau requested the representative of Germany to keep it informed of future plans for addressing tailings management facilities in the Caucasus and other future assistance activities financed in-kind. It also considered that, in the light of the role of the Working Group on Implementation to provide substantive advice and guidance to assistance activities, including those under the Assistance Programme, the representative of Germany should in future also inform the Working Group of planned assistance activities financed in-kind and submit related information to the Working Group for information sharing and possible feedback. The same would apply to representatives of other Parties providing in-kind financing for other assistance activities. The Chair of the Working Group indicated that this was important for the Working Group's awareness of different assistance activities in countries in transition under the workplan of the Convention which it was overseeing. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei expressed his concern that this process might be overly burdensome and lead to delay in the approval of such activities by the German authorities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- *The secretariat to oversee the finalization of the Danube Delta Project, in cooperation with the Project Management Group and the beneficiary countries, and to prepare forms for the evaluation of the project after its finalization.*
- *The Bureau to:*
 - *Ensure the availability of financing for future assistance programme activities*
 - *To discuss the evaluation of the Danube Delta Project after its finalization*
- *The Working Group on Implementation to continue to monitor the implementation of the Assistance Programme and its Strategic Approach, and to continue to review the documentation available to assess the Assistance Programme's effectiveness through its analytical review*
- *Representatives of Parties providing in-kind project financing for "other assistance activities" to share information with the Working Group on Implementation and the Bureau about the proposals for and implementation of such activities*

3.2 Exchange of information

(a) Exchange of experience and good practices among Parties and to promote the continuous organization of bilateral exercises for preparedness

(i) Joint UNECE/OECD seminar

20. The Chair recalled the decision at the last Bureau meeting to explore possibilities to organize a joint seminar with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), back-to-back with the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2016. The secretariat reported on preliminary contacts with the OECD secretariat in the matter.

21. Ms. Tandberg, speaking as Chair of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents, reported on the discussion held during a meeting of the OECD Working Group's Bureau. The Working Group's Bureau had welcomed and supported the initiative of holding a joint seminar. It had suggested that the seminar provide good practices on elements of interest for the OECD Working Group and suggested, among others, as topics "lessons learned from past industrial accidents." The OECD Working Group's Bureau suggested that the seminar could be entitled "Going global with prevention, preparedness and response," which would link well with the discussions related to the opening of the Convention.

22. The Industrial Accidents Convention Bureau supported the idea of organizing the joint seminar, addressing industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response, with a particular focus on policy and governance aspects, as a seminar organized in the framework of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties would provide for a suitable framework to exchange experiences and good practices across the UNECE region, OECD membership and beyond. One Bureau member questioned the value of cooperation by UNECE and OECD by means of a joint seminar. He raised the need for the Industrial Accidents Convention to focus on its core competencies.

23. The Bureau decided to create a small steering group for the organization of the seminar. The following members volunteered to be part of it: Ms. Sandra Ashcroft, Ms. Jasmina Karba, Mr. Chris Dijkens, Mr. Pavel Dadasiewicz and Ms. Torill Tandberg. Ms. Svetlana Stirbu and Ms. Yashar Karimov were invited to consider joining the steering group in order to ensure that the perspective of countries in transition was reflected. Following consideration by the steering group, an elaborated proposal was to be sent to the OECD Working Group's Bureau and to the Working Group itself by the last week of September 2015.

(ii) Bi- and multilateral exercises for preparedness

24. At their previous meeting, Bureau members decided to investigate the possibility to organize and finance bi- or multilateral exercises for preparedness. In this regard the Chair reported having enquired whether the Slovenian Civil Protection would be willing to take the lead for a project on industrial accident preparedness. The relevant department did not have sufficient resources in 2015, mainly because of other ongoing projects. Transboundary exercises on preparedness and response were organized regularly at the local level between Slovenia and its neighbours. It might be envisaged that Slovenia could take the lead on preparedness as of 2016.

25. In the absence of the Vice-Chair from Poland, the secretariat provided information on the efforts made by Belarus, in cooperation with Lithuania and Poland and with the support of the secretariat, to develop a project on a transboundary exercise among these countries and a follow-up pan-European conference. It was planned to apply for financing for this project under an EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (DG ECHO) call for proposals on prevention and preparedness in the field of civil protection in the first quarter of 2016.

(b) Guidance on the implementation of the Convention with regard to amended annex I on hazardous substances for the purpose of identifying hazardous activities

26. The secretariat updated the Bureau on the development of guidance on the amended annex I on hazardous substances for the purpose of identifying hazardous activities. Following the update of the terms of reference, a possible consultant from the United Kingdom was identified. The consultant could not be contracted in 2015 due to a lack of funds. Due to changes in the exchange rate, the financing provided by Norway as lead Party had not been sufficient to provide the resources for developing this guidance, as envisaged per the workplan. The resources provided by Norway for 2015 have been absorbed for the organization of the first annex I capacity-building workshop in Central Asia.

(c) Raising knowledge on industrial safety at universities

27. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei, representative of Germany as lead Party for the above-mentioned activity, reported on the organization of the summer school in Perm, the Russian Federation, in 2014 and indicated plans to organize a similar event in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, in 2016. The activity will have a specific focus on tailings safety and the application of the tailings management facility checklist.

28. The Bureau took note of the information and expressed its acknowledgment to Germany. It also highlighted the need to involve industry in such activities and pointed out that future activities should build on the previous two summer schools, also considering possible synergies with other international organizations and initiatives and ensuring the sustainability of the results.

ACTION ITEMS:

- *The secretariat to:*
 - *Share with the steering group the initial draft of the concept for the joint UNECE/OECD seminar in August 2015, update the concept following discussions and provide the final version to the secretariat of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents by the third week of September 2015*
 - *To continue working with Belarus, Lithuania and Poland to develop a project proposal on preparedness and response*
- *The Bureau to explore possible financial and/or in-kind resources to cover expenses for the implementation of the workplan item related to the preparation of guidance on the amended annex I*
- *The members of the steering group on the preparation of the Joint UNECE/OECD seminar to comment electronically on a first proposed outline for the seminar, to be circulated by the secretariat in August*
- *Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to provide information to the Bureau on the development concerning the follow-up activities on training students on industrial safety at universities financed by Germany as lead country and to share the relevant documents with the Bureau.*

3.3 Strategic partnerships

29. The secretariat reported on the third inter-agency coordination meeting on industrial accidents, hosted by the OECD in May 2015. Among the outcomes of the meeting, it highlighted the preparation of a joint brochure by the organizations involved on their chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response work, as well as the organization

of a joint side event during the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (Geneva, 28 September–2 October 2015).

(a) OECD

30. Ms. Tandberg, Chair of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents, presented the Working Group's workplan activities, highlighting possible synergies with the Convention. She highlighted the preparation of the Working Group's workplan for 2017–2020 and informed the Bureau of a project proposal developed by the UNEP-OCHA Joint Environment Unit in cooperation with OECD and the Convention secretariat, as follow-up to a previous project on natural-hazard triggered technological accidents (NATECHs) and a seminar organized in 2012, in which the secretariat had actively participated. She also circulated the draft OECD Working Group workplan for 2017–2020 and invited Bureau members to provide their comments on it. The Bureau confirmed the importance of cooperating with the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents and recognized the opportunity of having two Bureau members who were also members of the Working Group's Bureau.

(b) Industry associations

31. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the meeting organized with representatives of Concawe, a division of the European Petroleum Refiners Association, based in Brussels, in the framework of other meetings with the European Commission. The secretariat had encouraged Concawe to distribute to its members the guidance materials developed under the Convention, and to promote the participation of its members as experts in activities organized under the Convention.

32. Bureau members welcomed this approach and recommended maintaining and further developing the linkages with Concawe and the European Chemical Industry Council. Representatives of both organizations could be invited to the seminar to be organized back-to-back with the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

(c) European Union

33. Mr. Kiriazis, the Bureau member representing the EU, reported on an EU-funded project, implemented by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), on strengthening chemical accident prevention and preparedness in EU neighbourhood countries. He explained the background of the five-year project. He also provided information on the initial steps to be undertaken, such as a gap analysis and the mapping of stakeholders in the countries, which were to be followed by capacity-building activities. He pointed out that in such projects, it was essential to coordinate in the beneficiary countries on-going activities by other organizations.

34. Mr. Kiriazis also highlighted the Convention's potential role in the implementation of the project and the contribution to the organization of capacity-building activities under the project. In addition, Bureau members pointed out that some activities in the current or future workplan could be implemented through or in cooperation with the project. This would also include possible activities to be implemented in the framework of the opening the Convention.

35. The Bureau recommended taking part in activities organized under the project, to the extent that the Convention could contribute and they were relevant to its workplan and on condition that financing was provided.

(d) Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

36. The Bureau briefly discussed cooperation with OPCW. Ms. Tandberg raised concerns with regard to the expansion of the mandate of OPCW in the area of chemical safety, encroaching on the domain of other organizations. From this perspective,

coordination with other organizations was particularly important in order to avoid any duplication. The secretariat mentioned that OPCW had participated, for the second time, in the inter-agency coordination meetings, and that this participation has led to the identification of synergies in annex I capacity-building activities.

(e) Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law

37. Due to time constraints, the Bureau could not review reports on cooperation with the EU Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL).

ACTION ITEMS:

- *Bureau members to continue their efforts in involving industry associations in the work of the Convention and in exploring possible synergies*
- *The secretariat to:*
 - *To keep on informing industry associations of relevant upcoming events*
 - *To keep up the information exchange with the JRC on planned activities under the project financed by the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department and implemented by JRC, and discuss possibilities for synergies with activities being planned under the Convention.*
 - *To keep this project in mind when designing future projects under the Convention*
- *Mr. Kiriazis, the Bureau member representing the EU, to keep the Bureau informed about the development of the above-mentioned project and other EU funded projects and possibilities for synergies.*

3.4 Involvement of Parties and other stakeholders

38. The Bureau could not discuss this agenda item due to the lack of time.

4. Development of the Convention

4.1 Activities of the Working Group on Development

(a) Composition of the small groups of experts

39. The Chair of the Working Group on Development reported on the decisions taken at the fifth meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 11—13 May 2015) and the ongoing work of the small groups created, one of legal experts and the other of experts on land-use planning.

40. Bureau members considered the membership of the two groups and noted with concern that in the small group of experts on land-use planning, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia were underrepresented. They also noted that several non-governmental organizations and international organizations were represented, especially in the small group of legal experts, and highlighted that their role as observers should be stressed.

(b) Chairing of the sixth meeting of the Working Group on Development

41. The Chair of the Working Group on Development informed the Bureau that, due to a conflicting obligation, he was not able to chair the sixth meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 30 November–2 December 2015). The Bureau discussed the various possibilities, including anticipating or postponing the meeting to allow Mr. Dijkens to be present. The secretariat informed the Bureau that it had researched the availability of suitable rooms and interpretation in the Palais des Nations on alternative dates and that, unfortunately, there was no availability at another suitable time.

42. The Bureau, as the Working Group did not have a Vice-Chair, decided to request the Chair of the Bureau and the Conference of the Parties to take up the chairing of the Working Group for the conduct of its sixth meeting. She agreed to take on this task.

(c) Report by the Chair of the Working Group on Implementation

43. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation reported on discussions and preliminary decisions concerning the role of the body in the development of the Convention and in particular on:

(i) Preparation of guidance by the Conference of the Parties by means of a draft decision on reporting obligations with regard to periodicity, public accessibility and other issues

44. The Working Group on Implementation discussed the establishment of a four-year reporting round on the implementation of the Convention. This would imply that the Working Group members would be elected for two intersessional terms – that is for four years. The four-year reporting round would allow better assessing the impact of measures taken by countries in the implementation of the Convention and it would also allow the Working Group to deal with all the new tasks within the Assistance Programme acquired in the past years, and to absorb compliance functions.

(ii) Compliance

45. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation reported on the outcome of the meeting of the informal network of the Chairs to the UNECE multilateral environmental agreement compliance and implementation bodies (Geneva, 29 June 2015), in which the possibility of introducing a compliance mechanism for the Industrial Accidents Convention was discussed. She also reported about the initial discussion in the Working Group. The Working Group was of the opinion that the body was already carrying out, although on an ad-hoc basis, several tasks usually undertaken by compliance-related bodies, for instance when providing recommendations through the overall report on implementation. In that respect, the introduction of a compliance mechanism would formalize actions undertaken and contacts by the Working Group with countries. A compliance mechanism should have as its main aim to support Parties in the implementation of the Convention.

(iii) Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Implementation

46. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation reported that the body discussed the draft Terms of Reference as circulated by the secretariat and agreed that a reference to a compliance mechanism should be inserted.

(iv) Notification

47. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation recalled that the Working Group on Development had requested it to assess the confusion between “notification of hazardous activities to neighbouring countries” and “notification of industrial accidents” in view of deciding whether an amendment of the definitions contained in article 1 of the Convention would be needed. She reported that the confusion by countries seemed to be linked to their insufficient understanding of the provisions of the Convention. The Working Group on Implementation considered that this was best addressed through an enhanced dialogue with the countries which it was planning to engage in and, in addition, through

activities related to the compliance mechanism that the Working Group suggested introducing. Consequently, the Working Group on Implementation was to report to the Working Group on Development that no amendment of definitions was needed in this respect.

4.2 Terms of Reference of the Convention's subsidiary bodies

48. The Chair recalled the mandate from the Conference of the Parties to the Bureau to amend the Terms of Reference of Bureau, the Working Groups on Implementation and Development, taking in consideration the views of the respective bodies. She also asked Mr. Kiriazis to present the proposal prepared by him for amendments of the Terms of Reference, as circulated to the Bureau members in advance of the meeting and based on the draft version circulated by the secretariat. Mr. Kiriazis also suggested amending parts of the Rules of Procedure of the Convention.

49. The Bureau expressed its appreciation for the proposal presented and generally supported it. It thoroughly discussed the draft and requested the secretariat to update it on the basis of the discussions, and to circulate an updated version by the end of July to the Bureau, to allow further comments to be sent to the secretariat by mid-August. It also requested the secretariat to edit and proceed with the legal scrutiny the Terms of Reference. The Bureau also requested the secretariat to verify whether the Bureau could propose to the Conference of the Parties an amendment of the Rules of Procedure.

4.3 Accession by Member States from outside the UNECE region

50. Because of time constraints, the Bureau decided to contribute by e-mail to the document to be prepared by the secretariat, based on the request by the Working Group on Development, on possible approaches to addressing the budgetary implications of a possible opening of the Convention. The Chair asked Bureau members to actively contribute to these email consultations.

ACTION ITEMS:

- ***The secretariat to:***
 - ***Encourage focal points to nominate members from countries with economies in transition as members of the small group of experts on land-use planning established under the Working Group on Development***
 - ***Review the terms of reference of Bureau and the Working Groups on Implementation and Development to ensure consistency among them, proceed with their editing and legal scrutiny***
 - ***Review the rules of procedure and inform the Bureau whether it could propose amendments to them***
- ***Bureau members to:***
 - ***Provide final comments on the terms of reference circulated by the secretariat and express their opinion concerning the possible update of the rules of procedure***
 - ***Share their views on the content of the document on the budgetary implications of the opening of the Convention.***

5. Implementation of the Convention

51. The secretariat and the Chair of the Working Group on Implementation reported on the status of implementation of activities under the workplan related to the Working Group.

52. In particular, the Chair of the Working Group reported on the outcome of the Group's last meeting (Geneva, 30 June–1 July 2015) and the priorities identified in implementing the assistance activities under the workplan: the finalization of the Danube Delta Project and organization of a meeting in partnership with the National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management under the UNECE Water Convention to address important institutional aspects regarding the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention in Kazakhstan. The Working Group also recommended exploring the possibility for future cooperation with OPCW for the organization of training sessions on annex I, with the possibility of obtaining resources for the travel of participants to such meetings.

53. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation also reported on the discussion concerning the monitoring of the implementation of areas for follow-up identified in the previous reporting round, for which the Working Group asked the secretariat, with the support of the Group's Vice-Chair, to assess to which extent the areas for follow-up were included in the workplan. Should this not be the case, a further discussion was to address the elements not included in the workplan.

54. The Chair of the Working Group also informed the Bureau about the preparation of the eighth reporting round on the implementation of the Convention that was to be initiated in August or September 2015 and about the finalization of the revision of the reporting format and the guidelines for reporting.

ACTION ITEM: The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation to update the Bureau on the items above at future meetings

6. Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

55. The co-Chair of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG) (from Germany for the Industrial Accidents Convention) informed Bureau members about activities that JEG had implemented to date. In particular he mentioned the testing of the application of the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters within the Danube Delta Project and a JEG meeting that was held back-to-back with the final project workshop on improving the safety of tailings management facilities in Ukraine in May 2015.

56. The co-Chair informed participants about the finalization of the above checklist after the testing of its application, which was to be presented to the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention (Budapest, 17–19 November 2015). He also expressed concern with regard to the title of the document, which had previously been discussed by JEG, stating that it should reflect that elements of guidance were included in the document which contained the checklist. In addition, the co-Chair reported that a side event on accidental water pollution was envisaged in the margins of the Water Convention's upcoming Meeting of the Parties. The Bureau welcomed the implemented and planned activities of JEG.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions, in cooperation with the JEG co-Chairs to confirm the name of the checklist on contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters

7. Consultation of the points of contact for the Industrial Accidents Notification System

57. The secretariat informed the Bureau on behalf of Mr. Dadasiewicz that Poland was ready to host a consultation of the points of contact in 2016, while not being in a position to provide financing for the travel of participants from countries with economies in transition. In the current budgetary situation of the trust fund, and in the absence of dedicated financial contributions, the activity could not be carried out as a face-to-face meeting. The activity could only be carried out, with Polish leadership, through an online consultation of the points of contact. The Bureau expressed its appreciation for Poland for offering to host the next meeting of the points of contact, while recognizing that the financial situation of the trust fund did not provide for organizing this activity through a meeting, rather than an online consultation.

8. Long-term goals and 2017–2018 workplan

58. The Bureau touched upon the need to discuss the long-term goals under the Convention. Among the elements for discussion was the need to encourage Parties to increase their ownership of the workplan, so that its implementation could be fully supported in-kind and financially through an enlarged base of donors. In consideration of the fact that the trust fund did not hold enough resources to implement the workplan adopted at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the need to discuss further the implementation of the sustainable financing mechanism was considered to be a priority. The Bureau agreed that a dedicated discussion should be held during the next Bureau meeting on the long-term goals under the Convention and the role of the Bureau in this regard.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair, to insert in the agenda of next Bureau meetings an item to discuss long-term goals for the Convention.

9. Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

59. This agenda item could not be discussed.

10. Proposed schedule of meetings

60. The Bureau decided to meet for two days on 3 and 4 December, back-to-back with the sixth meeting of the Working Group on Development.

11. Other business

61. No other business was discussed.

12. Closure of the meeting

62. The Chair thanked the Bureau members and the secretariat for the participation and closed the meeting on 9 July 2015.