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Geneva, 4–6 December 2018

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Report of the Bureau on its activities since the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Activities of the Bureau since the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Submitted by the Bureau of the Convention

Summary

At its ninth meeting (Ljubljana, 28–30 November 2016), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents requested the Bureau to report to it at its tenth meeting on the Bureau's activities in the intersessional period (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 17).

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of its terms of reference (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1), the main responsibilities of the Bureau are, among other things, to: “(a) Carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the Conference of the Parties; (b) Take the lead in, and take initiatives to strengthen and facilitate implementation of, the Convention; and (c) Prepare the draft programme of work, monitor its implementation and take appropriate decisions, if needed, to strengthen its implementation”.

The present report details the Bureau's activities since the ninth meeting, including preparation of the draft long-term strategy for the Convention until 2030 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/5) and the draft communication, outreach and engagement strategy (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/9), implementation of workplan activities during the biennium 2017–2018 and preparations for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

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Introduction

1. The present report summarizes the activities of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) during the biennium 2017–2018 as mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting (Ljubljana, 28–30 November 2016).
2. The report is based on and includes the outcomes of the thirty-fifth meeting of the Bureau, held jointly with the thirty-second meeting of the Working Group on Implementation (Geneva, 31 January 2017), and of the Bureau's thirty-fourth (Geneva, 30–31 January 2017), thirty-sixth (Warsaw, 4–5 July 2017), thirty-seventh (Hernstein, Austria, 30–31 January 2018) and thirty-eighth (Bern, 26–27 June 2018) meetings.
3. The Bureau expressed its appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat, which serviced all of the aforementioned meetings.
4. It reflected on the process by which nominations for its membership are handled. Aware of the need for balance between geographic subregions, it encouraged the Parties to put forward their candidatures and made contacts to that end, including at subregional and national events.
5. It thanked Mr. Alexandros Kiriazis, member of the Bureau from the European Union over the past four years, for his contribution to and support for the work of the Bureau and the implementation of workplan activities. As from mid-July 2018, Mr. Kiriazis has been replaced by his successor, Mr. Rolf-Jan Hoeve, who will represent the European Commission at the thirty-ninth meeting (Geneva, 3 December 2018).

I. Preparation of documents to guide future work under the Convention: the draft long-term strategy for the Convention until 2030 and the draft communication, engagement and outreach strategy

A. Mandate

6. At its ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties agreed to review the Long-term Strategy for the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 14) and, by adopting the workplan for 2017–2018 (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1), tasked the Bureau with developing a draft long-term strategy until 2030.
7. It also mandated the Bureau to develop a targeted communications strategy to facilitate ensuring robust and sustainable financing of the Convention's activities (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para 92).

B. Activities carried out by the Bureau

8. The Bureau decided to review the long-term strategy and prepare a revised strategy in a multi-step approach, beginning with a brain-storming session during its thirty-sixth meeting (Warsaw, 4–5 July 2017) facilitated by its Finnish member, Ms. Wagello-Sjölund, in order to exchange and harmonize views on the future strategy, including its nature, shape, scope and content.

9. It was agreed that the revised strategy should provide a concise outline of the Convention's achievements, challenges, vision, and objectives until 2030. It should build on lessons learned from past activities and reflect emerging challenges to industrial accident risk management and ongoing developments in international cooperation on industrial accident prevention and preparedness and should set out an ambitious but realistic vision and related objectives.

10. The Bureau began by establishing a drafting group comprising representatives of the European Union (Mr. Kiriazis), Finland (Ms. Wagello-Sjölund), Poland (Mr. Dadasiewicz, Vice-Chair) and Switzerland (Mr. Merkofer). The group prepared an initial draft and subsequent updates, in close cooperation with the secretariat, based on discussions at meetings of the Bureau. As agreed at the thirty-eighth meeting (Bern, 26–27 June 2018), the draft was then sent to all national focal points for comment; only the Russian Federation did so. The Bureau reviewed the comments, agreed on the final version of the draft and forwarded it to the Conference of the Parties for consideration and adoption at its tenth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/5).

11. The Bureau also decided to establish a small drafting group comprising representatives of Austria (Mr. Struckl), Norway (Ms. Tandberg) and Slovenia (Ms. Karba, Chair) to prepare the draft communication, engagement and outreach strategy. Based on an initial draft prepared by the secretariat, the drafting group – and subsequently the Bureau – commented on the draft and agreed on a final version to be forwarded for consideration and adoption at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

12. As mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 92), the Bureau began to “develop a targeted communications strategy to facilitate ensuring robust and sustainable financing of the Convention's activities” while addressing also the need to help focal points and other stakeholders to provide information on the Convention to governments (including donors); industry; operators and business associations; international organizations and forums; the general public; non-governmental and civil society organizations; and academia by providing a toolbox of communication, outreach and engagement options (including key messages, outreach and engagement methodologies and channels of communication).

II. Implementation of the Long-Term Strategy for the Convention

13. At their joint meeting (Geneva, 31 January 2017), the Bureau and the Working Group on Implementation, together with the secretariat, discussed ways to implement the Long-Term Strategy for the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/22, annex I), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting (The Hague, 8–10 November 2010). The Bureau's subsequent work under the five priority areas of the Strategy and its performance of the linked tasks under the workplan for 2017–2018 (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add. 1) are described in the following sections.

A. Involvement of the Parties and other stakeholders

1. Efforts to involve the Parties and other stakeholders

14. The Bureau encouraged the continued use of communication materials (online training, cartoons and films on the Convention) as an effective means of raising awareness and improving understanding of the provisions of the Convention in the ECE region and beyond.

15. The Bureau welcomed the preparation of new communication and awareness-raising materials in support of countries' efforts to improve their industrial safety and management of industrial accident risks:

(a) *Cross-border concerns, shared strategies*,¹ a brochure on the Convention prepared by the secretariat in 2017;

(b) *Guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects*,² prepared by the secretariat of the Industrial Accidents Convention and that of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment in 2017 with contributions from the Committee on Housing and Land-Management;

(c) *Words into action guidelines: Man-made and Technological Hazards*,³ produced under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (Sendai Framework) in 2017 with contributions from the secretariat of the Industrial Accidents Convention and other members of the Interagency Coordination Group on Industrial Accidents;

(d) *International efforts for industrial and chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response*,⁴ prepared by the Interagency Coordination Group on Industrial Accidents in 2017.

16. The Bureau also welcomed the following videos prepared by the secretariat:

(a) *From Sandoz to Sendai: from managing disasters to managing risks*,⁵ launched on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction in 2017 with statements by representatives of Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Tajikistan, the secretariat, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River;

(b) *The benefits of enhanced coordination and cooperation between land-use planning and industrial safety*,⁶ a video prepared in 2018 as an introduction to the seminar on land-use planning and industrial safety (Mechelen, Belgium, 16–17 May 2018).

17. The Bureau welcomed the in-kind contribution from Sweden that had made it possible to reprint publications, including *Cross-border concerns, shared strategies and Safety Guidelines and Good Industry Practices for Oil Terminals*,⁷ *Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Pipelines*⁸ and *Safety Guidelines and Good Industry Practices for Tailings Management Facilities*,⁹ in English and Russian.

18. Aware of the importance of working visits to countries and other stakeholders, the Bureau:

(a) Welcomed the high-level awareness-raising mission to Ukraine (Kyiv, 19 April 2018), in which the Bureau members from the European Commission, Germany, and Slovenia and the focal point for the Republic of Moldova participated;

¹ Available at www.unece.org/index.php?id=45209.

² Available at www.unece.org/index.php?id=47851.

³ Available at www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/54012.

⁴ Available at www.unece.org/index.php?id=46270.

⁵ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XAGek6fH8E&feature=youtu.be>.

⁶ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3PjrBkNXOw&feature=youtu.be>.

⁷ Available at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications.html>.

⁸ Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41068>

⁹ Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36132>

(b) Supported the secretariat's holding of meetings with partner organizations and stakeholders in order to raise awareness of the Convention and its linkages with the relevant policies of those organizations and to seek support and partners for joint activities such as meetings with the Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and various Directorates-General of the European Commission.

2. Progress achieved and remaining challenges

19. During the biennium 2017–2018, the Bureau, aware of the importance of the (re)engagement of Parties, continued to support the preparation of communication materials, participation in relevant forums and organization of working visits. These activities have enhanced the visibility of the Convention and involved a growing number of Parties and stakeholders.

20. Going forward, the challenge is to maintain the involvement of Parties and stakeholders and to increase its quality.

21. The Bureau encourages the Parties to use guidance and other documents and the outcomes of activities, plan and organize additional activities and continue their involvement in activities under the Convention.

B. Exchange of information

1. Enhancement of the exchange of information

22. The Bureau welcomed the organization under the Convention of two major seminars on topics attracting the interest of Parties from all of the ECE subregions.

23. It recognized the importance of carefully choosing the topics of seminars based on the needs expressed by Parties and of thorough preparations for them. It therefore appreciated the work of the secretariat in preparing for the aforementioned seminar on land-use planning and industrial safety and of the small group that had led preparations for the seminar on risk assessment methodologies (Geneva, 4 December 2018), to be held during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

24. The Bureau monitored the planning and implementation of and took note of the conclusions of the seminar on land-use planning and industrial safety, which had been organized by the secretariats of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Committee on Housing and Land Management, the government of Flanders (Belgium) and the European Investment Bank. It appreciated the focus on practical examples, and particularly the fact that the seminar had brought together land-use planning and industrial safety experts and competent authorities.

25. The Bureau established a small group comprising its members from Austria (Mr. Struckl), Slovenia (Ms. Karba, Chair) and Switzerland (Mr. Merkofer) and a member of the Working Group on Implementation from Switzerland (Mr. Gonzalez) in order to prepare for the seminar on risk assessment methodologies in cooperation with the secretariat. It supported the group's proposal that, rather than simply providing an opportunity for Parties to share their experience in performing risk assessments in the context of industrial accidents, the seminar should seek to identify the factors leading to the adoption of a particular risk assessment methodology.

26. The Bureau was informed of and expressed support for the activities led and financed by Germany with a view to raising knowledge of industrial safety at universities in Ukraine with a specific focus on tailings safety (finalization of the Project on Raising Knowledge among Students and Teachers on Tailings Safety (Dnipro, Ukraine, 16–17 May 2017)). It

also welcomed the role of its German member (Mr. Winkelmann-Oei) in leading activities on the prevention of accidental water pollution, including as co-Chair of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, and the financial and in-kind support for those activities provided by Germany. The Bureau was informed about the activities led by the Joint Expert Group, including the development of safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of fire-fighting water and the organization of transboundary response exercises between Germany and Poland under German leadership (Slubice, 5–6 September 2017) and on the Danube River, organized under Hungarian leadership (near Budapest, 2 October 2018). The Bureau welcomed the progress made by the Expert Group on Fire-water Retention, established by the Joint Expert Group, in developing the safety guidelines and finalizing them for presentation to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Astana, 10–12 October 2018).

2. Progress achieved and remaining challenges

27. During the biennium 2017–2018, the Bureau continued to support the exchange of information and the promotion of seminars and project results by building on its previous activities.

28. The promotion and use of (tailored) good practices has been shown to be a (cost-) effective way to improve implementation of the Convention and help countries to overcome challenges at the national level and to reach the internationally agreed disaster protection goals set out in the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, while the exchange of information should continue to focus on the needs and interests of the Parties and on emerging issues related to the prevention of industrial accidents.

29. The Bureau encourages the Parties to continue to share information on lessons learned from implementing the Convention and to engage actively in planning and organizing the exchange of information as a lead country or by providing financial or in-kind resources.

C. The Assistance Programme and other assistance activities

1. Facilitation of implementation and ratification of the Convention by beneficiary countries of the Assistance Programme

Evaluation and improvement of the Assistance Programme

30. At its ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties endorsed a three-step approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of the Assistance Programme (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 62). To that end, the Bureau:

(a) Welcomed the efforts of the Working Group on Implementation to reach out increasingly to beneficiary countries as envisaged in Step 1;

(b) In cooperation with the Working Group, asked the secretariat to request the Programme's beneficiary countries to provide high-level feedback on their progress and specific assistance needs as envisaged in Step 2. The Bureau then decided to discuss the replies to the letters sent by the secretariat¹⁰ with the Working Group at the first joint meeting

¹⁰ For the replies received, see annex II to the Note prepared by the Chair and the Vice-Chairs of the Working Group on Implementation of the activities of the Working Group in 2017–2018 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/11).

held in early 2019 in order to prepare, well in advance, for their discussion at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2020.

Implementation of assistance activities

31. The Bureau was informed about the implementation and outcomes of the Project on Strengthening the implementation of and accession to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents in Central Asia, for which funding had been received from the Russian Federation, and recognized its importance as the first assistance project implemented in Central Asia under the Convention.

32. It welcomed the progress made by all of the Central Asian countries under the Project as seen from, among other things, the submission of national self-assessments and action plans by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The Bureau complimented the national project coordinators and welcomed the Convention's increasing importance in Central Asia as a result of the secretariat's project management efforts and the support of experts from Belarus and the Russian Federation.

33. It also welcomed the holding of two subregional workshops – for South-Eastern Europe (Zagreb, 21–23 February 2017) and for Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Minsk, 11–13 April 2017) – on industrial accidents prevention with funding from Norway and financial contributions from Germany and the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) instrument of the European Commission. The Bureau noted that the presence of experts from the European Commission, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and the support provided by the host countries, Belarus and Croatia, had contributed greatly to the success of the workshops.

34. The Bureau further welcomed the pilot project to strengthen the safety of mining operations, in particular tailings management facilities (TMFs), in Kazakhstan and beyond in Central Asia, implemented in 2018 and 2019 thanks to an additional dedicated financial contribution from Switzerland.

35. The Bureau took note of the Project on Assistance in safety improvement of tailings management facilities in Armenia and Georgia (November 2017–November 2019),¹¹ implemented under the Convention's workplan with funding from the Federal Environment Ministry of Germany Advisory Assistance Programme, and welcomed the envisaged synergies between TMF projects in various regions.

36. It paid tribute to the efforts of beneficiary and donor countries to implement these projects and stressed the need to promote their outcomes and make all supporting materials and presentations available. It supported the secretariat's proposal to organize a panel discussion at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in order to highlight outcomes, achievements and lessons learned, focusing specifically on key achievements in Central Asia and reflecting on the linkages between the activities, the Sendai Framework and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

2. Progress achieved and remaining challenges

37. During the biennium 2017–2018, the Working Group on Implementation continued to keep the Bureau informed about the activities implemented under the Programme and the secretariat's monitoring thereof. The Bureau member from Germany (Mr. Winkelmann) also briefed the Bureau on the implementation of assistance activities carried out through an in-

¹¹ In the 2017–2018 workplan (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1) and the draft 2019-2020 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/7), the Project is listed as: "Project on Improving the Safety of Tailings Management Facilities in the Caucasian Region – Training and Legislative Options".

kind contribution through direct funding from his country. The Bureau appreciated the active engagement of beneficiary countries in the implementation of projects, improved project management by the secretariat, efforts to ensure cooperation with the relevant partners in the country or region in which the projects were being carried out and ongoing search for synergies with the awareness-raising and capacity-building activities of strategic partners.

38. The Bureau recognized the importance of coordinating the capacity-building activities carried out in beneficiary countries by different organizations. It calls on the Parties involved in these activities to share information on them with the Working Group and the Bureau through the secretariat or through their members of the subsidiary bodies with a view to improving coordination in the future.

39. It invites beneficiary countries to take full advantage of the Convention's tools, make their needs clearly known so that the future Assistance and Cooperation Programme¹² can address them efficiently and effectively, and demonstrate their motivation by assuming ownership of assistance activities and making financial and in-kind contributions in order to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved.

D. Strategic partnerships

1. Enhancement of the Convention's relevance through strategic partnerships

40. The Bureau supported continued cooperation with traditional and new strategic partners, recognizing that such cooperation allows international and regional organizations and agencies active in the field of industrial accident prevention and preparedness to more effectively explore opportunities for cooperation while avoiding overlapping and duplication.

41. It took note of the continued implementation and outcomes of the joint activities, meetings and other forms of cooperation, including:

(a) At the Inter-agency coordination meeting on industrial accidents, organized by the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre (Cardiff, United Kingdom, 29 May 2018);

(b) With the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents, especially in implementing the Special Session on Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Latin American countries (Paris, 23–25 October 2018), which may offer an opportunity for outreach under the Convention, and the joint United Nations/OECD Workshop on [natural-hazard triggering technological disasters (NATECH)] Risk Management (Potsdam, 5–7 September 2018);

(c) Between chairs and representatives of the governing bodies of the ECE multilateral environmental agreements on their activities related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

42. The Bureau particularly welcomed the outreach by the secretariat and its member from the European Union (Mr. Kiriakis) to the European Commission, including the Commission's Directorates-General for Environment, for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, and to the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative.

43. It was pleased to see the increased interest in the work of the Convention expressed by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Office's willingness to

¹² The draft long-term strategy for the Convention proposes that the Assistance Programme be renamed the "Assistance and Cooperation Programme".

cooperate in helping countries to pursue the priorities and goals set out in the Sendai Framework. It welcomed the contribution of the Convention's work to the products developed under that Framework, including the secretariat's and experts' inputs to the new subchapter on industrial/chemical hazards of the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (forthcoming in 2019) and the contribution of the Bureau's Chair to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Global Risk Assessment Framework.

2. Progress achieved and remaining challenges

44. During the biennium 2017–2018, the Bureau maintained and strengthened its cooperation with its traditional strategic partners and broadened its cooperation with new ones; this gave the Convention a more prominent role, particularly in the Sendai process.

45. Future efforts will continue to focus on the search for synergies in order to increase the (cost-) effectiveness of efforts to prevent industrial accidents in the region and beyond. The Bureau will continue to play an active role in this process.

46. In particular, it invites the European Union, as a Party to the Convention, to consider enhancing its cooperation under that instrument in order to take advantage of synergies with existing programmes and tools and to play a greater role in planning and implementing future awareness-raising and capacity-building activities.

E. Financing

1. Efforts to ensure sustainable financing

47. At each of its meetings, the Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat with regard to contributions, expenditures and the balance of the Convention's trust fund.

48. It thanked the donors who had provided support for implementation of the Convention's workplan in the form of financial or in-kind contributions, including direct financing for and coordination of assistance activities.

49. It also expressed concern with regard to the relatively small number of donors, the absence of contributions from many of the Parties and the low share of pledges in advance of meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

50. It recognized the importance of both earmarked and non-earmarked funding and noted that the latter was important in order to ensure the continued delivery of core secretariat services, including meeting servicing, substantive work, coordination and liaison with the Parties and support for implementation. Earmarked contributions were also crucial to the sustainability of the Assistance Programme in the form of multi-year projects (often involving several countries).

51. The Bureau welcomed the increase in the trust fund's balance, owing primarily to the growing number of multi-year projects financed through contributions to the fund (by Norway, the Russian Federation and Switzerland) and to the engagement of these and other donors in response to fundraising and project development efforts by the secretariat. In that connection, it stressed that pursuant to the sustainable financial mechanism, adopted at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Stockholm, 14-16 November 2012), the secretariat should ensure that its resources continue to be allocated primarily to the provision of substantive support to Parties on Convention matters rather than on intensive fundraising efforts, which remained the responsibility of the Parties.

52. As requested by the Conference of Parties at its ninth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 92), the Bureau reviewed implementation of the mechanism and decided that while no

amendment to it was required at present, its implementation was unsatisfactory and should be strengthened. To that end, the Bureau:

(a) Decided that a dedicated discussion on financing would take place at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in order to raise awareness of the current situation, the need for stable, predictable contributions by all Parties and the consequences of not making the financial and/or in-kind resources required for implementation of the workplan;

(b) Re-established the Bureau's small group on financing, which had been active during the previous biennium, pursuant to the sustainable financial mechanism in order to encourage the Parties to provide financial support under the Convention. The Bureau members from Finland (Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund, Vice-Chair), Norway (Torill Tandberg), Poland (Pawel Dadasiewicz, Vice-Chair) and Slovenia (Jasmina Karba, Chair) volunteered to be members of the small group;

(c) Prepared a draft decision on fostering implementation of the sustainable financial mechanism (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/6) for discussion and adoption at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

53. With regard to preparation of workplan, the Bureau recognized the importance of attributing appropriate costs to the activities, as had been done in preparing the draft workplan for 2019–2020 (Priorities, workplan and resources for the Convention for 2019–20, ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/7). It recognized the importance of country leadership of workplan activities and of engaging lead Parties in workplan activities, preferably in advance of their implementation.

2. Progress achieved and remaining challenges

54. Sustainable and predictable financing is key to implementation of the Convention's workplan. Increased efforts to ensure sustainable and predictable financing by identifying possible additional sources of financial and in-kind resources – including ministries of foreign affairs, development cooperation agencies and other non-designated national authorities – are needed.

55. To that end, the Bureau reminds the Parties that they are primarily responsible for sustainable financing and for the implementation of commitments agreed under the sustainable financial mechanism and invites them to maintain and consider increasing their financial and/or in-kind support. In particular, it invites Parties that have not been contributing to implementation of the Convention's workplan to do so in the future.

III. Preparations for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

A. Preparation of the draft decision on the amendment to the Convention

1. Mandate

56. At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties requested the Working Group on the Development of the Convention to prepare a draft amendment revising articles 1 (definitions), 9 (information to, and participation of the public), 18 (Conference of the Parties), paragraph 1, and 29 (ratification, acceptance, approval and accession) of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, paras. 40–41).

57. At its ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties was unable to reach consensus on the draft decision and decided to revisit the matter at its tenth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/32 paras. 29–33).

2. Activities of the Bureau

58. The Bureau discussed the failure to achieve consensus on the draft amendment at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and considered how to proceed.

59. Aware of its responsibility to prepare for meetings of the Conference of the Parties in an effective and transparent manner and, to that end, to reach out to and consult with the Parties and other stakeholders as appropriate, the Bureau initially decided not to take any formal steps but to make informal enquiries regarding the draft amendment.

60. In light of the outcome of those enquiries, it was decided that further action was needed. With a view to timely preparation for discussion and possible decision-making at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat was instructed to send high-level letters to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and to the European Union and its Member States, requesting them to state their positions on the matter. For the sake of transparency, it was also requested to inform the other Parties of the letters sent.

61. In reply, the European Union indicated that it needed additional time to consider the matter with its member States and the Russian Federation indicated its readiness to provide comprehensive comments on the subject matter.. An opportunity to directly engage in further discussion could however not be realized.

62. The Bureau agreed that it was important to clarify the Parties' positions, which would determine the options to be considered. It therefore decided to invite the Russian Federation and the Parties who had proposed the amendment (the European Union, supported by Norway, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Switzerland) to a preparatory meeting to be held on the morning of 3 December 2018.

B. Agenda and conduct of the meeting

63. The Bureau agreed that the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties would be held in Geneva from 4 to 6 December 2018.

64. It welcomed the secretariat's suggestion that two receptions should be organized during the Conference: one on the evening of the first day, following the seminar on risk assessment methodologies (4 December 2018) and the other at lunchtime on the last day (6 December). The receptions would provide an opportunity to highlight achievements under the Convention, including the successful completion of the first project in Central Asia and the twentieth anniversary of the Joint Expert Group, and will allow delegates to network and exchange information informally.

65. With regard to the provisional agenda for the tenth meeting, the Bureau decided that:

(a) The meeting will highlight the completion of activities requested by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting, including development of the draft long-term strategy until 2030 and of the draft communication, outreach and engagement strategy;

(b) A dedicated discussion on financing, including a roundtable discussion with the Parties, will be held on the second day of the meeting;

(c) Agenda items involving reporting on actions taken during the biennium 2017–2018, primarily for information purposes, will be taken up on the last day of the meeting;

(d) A panel discussion on assistance activities will be organized.

IV. Conclusions and observations

66. The Bureau welcomed the successful implementation of assistance activities under all sections of the Convention's workplan and the Parties' renewed interest in the Convention during the biennium 2017–2018. It was particularly pleased by the completion of the first such project to be implemented in Central Asia and by the exchange of information between the Parties and relevant partners on land-use planning and risk assessment in the context of industrial accident prevention.

67. It noted with satisfaction that the biennium had also included the initiation of activities under the Convention in non-traditional areas such as safety and security and NATECHs and that the effort to bring together and ensure the cooperation of a variety of stakeholders in the area of industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response had resulted in better coordination and higher efficiency.

68. It recognized that past efforts had increased recognition of the linkages between the Convention, the Sendai Framework and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and of the support provided to countries' efforts to meet their global commitments in the area of industrial accident prevention. The Bureau also welcomed the increased cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and recognition of the Convention as a legal instrument for technological disaster risk reduction.

69. In light of the increased commitment of all of its members and of the excellent support provided by the secretariat, the Bureau is pleased to present to the Conference of the Parties its proposal for future work under the Convention, contained in the draft long-term strategy for the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents until 2030 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/5) and the accompanying draft communication, outreach and engagement strategy (ECE/CP/TEIA.2018/9).

70. While welcoming the support for implementation of the Convention's workplan, the Bureau regretted the persistent concern about reliance on a relatively small number of donors, the absence of contributions from many of the Parties and the low share of pledges in advance of meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

71. Lastly, the Bureau welcomed the growing recognition of the Convention in the context of policymaking and governance at the national and transboundary levels and its role in expanding cooperation between countries and societies beyond the exchange of technical information.
