



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

Item 4. Promotion and capacity-building

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the secretariat and the Bureau for all the activities promoting and implementing the PRTR Protocol, for providing technical assistance, as well as for the preparation of the related documents.

We acknowledge the progress made in providing technical assistance through existing mechanisms and especially the effort put into strengthening synergies with other instruments, bodies and organisations. We encourage the secretariat to continue its efforts in this respect.

In order of priorities, we support the following activities to be undertaken as part of the work programme and within the scope of available funding:

- Those that directly improve implementation by the Parties such as the organization of sub-regional workshops and participation of Parties and Signatories, which were found very useful by participants, and the strengthening of links with experts from other international organizations involved in PRTR development.
- Those that encourage the development and use of PRTRs as well as electronic tools for managing PRTRs internationally. Such tools have been already been developed by the EU, ECE, OECD, UNITAR and Parties/Signatories to the Protocol.

Item 4 (b) – Synergies with United Nations Economic Commission for Europe multilateral environmental agreements and other partners

EU and its Member States believe that special attention should be put on strengthening the cooperation with the LRTAP Convention, in particular on exchange of information regarding methods for data estimation and comparability.

Item 4 (c) - Global promotion of the Protocol

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the secretariat for the organisation of side events that took place at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The information disseminated on these events sheds light on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and its implementation mainly through the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs.

We would also like to welcome the efforts and initiatives carried out by several Parties to the Protocol and other international organizations in promoting the Protocol beyond the UNECE regions.

Item 4(f) - Provision of technical assistance

The EU and its Member States believe that the document: “Technical assistance and resources” (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2012/4) provides very useful information on the different means of technical assistance available to support the implementation of PRTR Protocol, in particular regarding bilateral assistance and the use of electronic tools and materials.

We would like to thank the secretariat for carrying out the surveys on possible needs for a technical assistance mechanism, the current status of PRTR activities in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, on pollutant monitoring, diffuse releases and bilateral cooperation.

We believe that the responses received from Parties and Signatories provide significant data on these issues. They constitute useful background information for future bilateral assistance as they show specific technical needs and remaining problems related to pollutant monitoring in some countries.

The EU and its Member States would like to thank Belarus for its draft proposal on activities for promotion of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. We acknowledge the efforts done in this direction and firmly believe such efforts are worthwhile. The current draft proposal points in the right direction and we recommend developing the ideas put forward, explaining in concrete terms the programme, possible outcomes and providing an evaluation of the foreseen costs as well as the means for its implementation. Furthermore, we consider that reporting and assessment of the outcomes and the resource efficiency of the activities undertaken is important.

We are expecting to have a complete and clear proposal by Belarus for discussion at the 3rd Meeting of the WGP.