Draft decision on financial arrangements under the Convention

Contribution by the EU and its Member States

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat and especially the Bureau for preparing the draft elements of possible financial arrangements and also wish to thank the Secretariat for the opportunity to comment on this draft.

We could support the draft elements of possible financial arrangements subject to the following changes:

1. In Preamble, at the end of the third para we propose to add the words: “and recalling discussions at each previous Meeting of the Parties on financial arrangements under the Convention about the need to establish financial arrangements based on the goals of stability, predictability and an equitable sharing of the burden.”

2. In the Preamble, concretely in the last paragraph, we propose the deletion of the current paragraph in brackets commencing “Believing that alternative options ...” and the removal of the brackets from the preceding paragraph.

3. Recalling earlier discussions during 20th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (WGP 20) on this topic, the EU and its Member States have not changed their previous approach on financing and therefore we are not in a position to support a mandatory scheme of contributions. We wish to maintain the current interim voluntary scheme of contributions at this moment. The words “[Establishes a mandatory scheme of contributions]” should therefore be deleted and the square brackets in the previous part of the sentence should be removed.

4. Since we cannot support the introduction of a mandatory scheme in para 1, we also cannot as it stands now, approve subparagraphs 1(b), 1(c) and 1(d) which relate to the use of the UN Scale of Assessments as a basis for distributing the burden between the Parties. In line with this approach, we also cannot support the Annex showing the indicative contributions for 2018, which should be deleted.

5. With regard to para 1[(b)], we believe that no Party should contribute less than USD 1000, as contributions below that amount are likely to entail costs higher than the actual contribution. In order to ensure consistency with the position that contributions are voluntary, we propose to add the words “where a contribution is made” between the words “is expected” and “to contribute”.

6. After paragraph 9, we would like the inclusion of a paragraph, similar to that included in decision V/7 at paragraph 10, that makes reference to operational costs. This was of considerable assistance to the EU and its Member States in reviewing the Convention Work Programme and we consider that this should now be a standard feature of future financial information. Some text is suggested as follows:

“Requests from the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, an estimation of the operational costs needed for the effective functioning of the Convention, which should be clearly distinct from the cost of other activities which are subject to the availability of resources;”