



# 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

#### Twenty-first meeting

Geneva, 4–6 April 2017

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

#### Adoption of the agenda

### Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-first meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on  
Tuesday, 4 April 2017\*

## I. Provisional agenda

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

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\* As part of the accreditation procedures for meetings at the United Nations Office at Geneva, delegates are requested to register online before 20 March 2017 through the following link: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=PYfTtZ>. Participants requiring a personal invitation letter for visa purposes should click on the “visa required” option and register for the meeting as early as possible, taking into account the period required to obtain the visa. Participants applying for financial support should register before 15 February 2017 and submit the completed financial support form to the secretariat by e-mail ([public.participation@unece.org](mailto:public.participation@unece.org)) before the same date. On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website, <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>). In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 2650.



3. Substantive issues:
  - (a) Access to information;
  - (b) Public participation in decision-making;
  - (c) Access to justice;
  - (d) Genetically modified organisms.
4. Procedures and mechanisms:
  - (a) Compliance mechanism;
  - (b) Capacity-building and awareness-raising.
5. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages
6. Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017, including financial matters.
7. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums.
8. Other substantive preparations for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties:
  - (a) Agenda of the sixth session;
  - (b) Programme of work for 2018–2021;
  - (c) Financial arrangements under the Convention;
  - (d) Reporting requirements;
  - (e) Declaration.
9. Practical preparations for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
10. Other business.
11. Adoption of outcomes.

## II. Annotations

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 10–10.10 a.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be invited to adopt the agenda for its twenty-first meeting, as set out in the present document.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 10.10–10.15 a.m.*

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Aarhus Convention, the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer

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<sup>1</sup> All documentation for the session will be made available on a dedicated web page on the Convention's website (<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp21.html>).

Registers. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect to these instruments in their countries. The Working Group is expected to take note of these developments.

### **3. Substantive issues**

#### **(a) Access to information**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 10.15–11 a.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the fifth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Information (Geneva, 10–11 October 2016) and recent developments with regard to electronic information tools. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information regarding relevant developments. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on access to information, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

#### **Documentation**

Report of the Task Force on Access to Information on its fifth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/4)

Draft decision on promoting effective access to information (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.1)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

#### **(b) Public participation in decision-making**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April 11–11.45 a.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (Geneva, 15–16 December 2016). Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on public participation in decision-making, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

#### **Documentation**

Draft decision on promoting effective public participation in decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.2)

Report of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making on its seventh meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/5)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

#### **(c) Access to justice**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the ninth and tenth meetings of the Task Force on Access to Justice (Geneva, 14–15 June 2016 and 27–28 February 2017, respectively). Delegations will be invited to provide additional information regarding

relevant developments in this area. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on access to justice, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its ninth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/6)

Draft decision on promoting effective access to justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.3)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

**(d) Genetically modified organisms**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 12.30–1 p.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the round table on public awareness, access to information, and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms (Geneva, 15–17 November 2016). Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area, in particular related to the issue of ratification of the Convention's amendment on the application of the Convention to decisions on whether to permit the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and to discuss future activities in this area, based on the draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021.

**Documentation**

Report on the second round table on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/8)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.5)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

**4. Procedures and mechanisms**

**(a) Compliance mechanism**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 3–3.45 p.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee and the procedure for the preparation of draft decisions on compliance matters. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

The Working Group will also be invited to consider relevant sections of the draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021, prepared by the Bureau.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2016/3)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.5)

**(b) Capacity-building and awareness-raising**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 3.45–4.30 p.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on capacity-building activities carried out since the the Working Group's twentieth meeting (Geneva, 15–17 June 2016). The Working Group is expected to take note of the developments and to discuss the future work in this area.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.5)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

**5. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 4.30–5.15 p.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations regarding promotion of the Convention in other regions, including regarding accession by States that are not members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.5)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

**6. Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017, including financial matters**

*Timing: Tuesday, 4 April, 5.15–6 p.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017, prepared by the secretariat, taking into consideration the discussion under the previous agenda items. Delegations will be encouraged to notify the Working Group of their planned financial contributions.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Convention's work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/7)

**7. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 April, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.*

The agenda for the thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums will be developed in close cooperation with the country leading this

area of work and the Chair of the thematic session.<sup>2</sup> The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.4)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/3)

**8. Other substantive preparations for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

**(a) Agenda of the sixth session**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 April, 3–3.45 p.m.*

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft provisional agenda prepared by the Bureau for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Budva, Montenegro, from 11 to 14 September 2017. The session will include a joint high-level segment with the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers on 14 September 2017. The Working Group is expected to mandate the Bureau to finalize the provisional agenda for submission to the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Draft provisional agenda for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.8)

**(b) Programme of work for 2018–2021**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 April, 3.45–5 p.m. and Thursday 6 April, 10–10.50 a.m.<sup>3</sup>*

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 prepared by the Bureau, also considering outcomes of the discussion under previous agenda items, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.5)

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<sup>2</sup> The programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

<sup>3</sup> Discussion on agenda items 8 (b) and 8 (c) will continue on Thursday, 6 April, from 10–10.50 a.m., as required.

(c) **Financial arrangements under the Convention**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 April, 5–6 p.m. and Thursday 6 April, 10–10.50 a.m.*

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on financial arrangements prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on financial arrangements under the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.6)

(d) **Reporting requirements**

*Timing: Thursday, 6 April, 10.50–11.10 a.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the status of submission of national implementation reports. The Working Group will also be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on reporting requirements prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session.

**Documentation**

Draft decision on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.9)

(e) **Declaration**

*Timing: Thursday, 6 April, 11.10 a.m.–12.30 p.m.*

The Working Group will be invited to consider a draft declaration prepared by the Bureaux of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol. The Working Group will be invited to mandate the Convention's Bureau to finalize the draft declaration in cooperation with the Protocol's Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Parties to both instruments at the joint high-level segment.

**Documentation**

Draft joint declaration (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/L.7)

**9. Practical preparations for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

*Timing: Thursday, 6 April 12.30–12.55 p.m.*

The host country and the secretariat will provide information on practical preparations for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

**10. Other business**

*Timing: Thursday, 6 April 12.55–1 p.m.*

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

## **11. Adoption of outcomes**

*Timing: Thursday, 6 April 3–4 p.m.*

The Working Group will discuss and approve the outcomes of its twenty-first meeting.

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