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COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally
Harmonized System of Classification
and Labelling of Chemicals

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CAPACITY BUILDING

Activities of the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and UNITAR/ILO/OECD WSSD GHS Partnership

Transmitted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

1. This document provides an update regarding activities in the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and the WSSD GHS Partnership for the period July-December 2009.

UNITAR/ILO global GHS capacity building programme activities

Country-based activities

2. Vietnam has completed phase 2 of the GHS project. In this phase, a sectoral implementation plan was developed. The country undertook awareness raising activities including GHS training sessions for the different stakeholders of the project. Vietnam has begun Phase 3 of the project which will be completed at the end of December.

3. Laos PDR completed the situation and gap analysis report as well as a strategy for GHS implementation by sector. The country requested an extension of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on a no-cost basis. This extension will allow the country to complete the project by end of the year.

4. Uruguay has completed its training and capacity building project to support implementation of the GHS.

5. Jamaica initiated the project "*Training and Capacity Building for the Implementation of the GHS*" and held a project inception meeting on 28 October as well as a training workshop on GHS comprehensibility testing on 29-30 October in Kingston. The training provided the opportunity to pilot test the revised comprehensibility testing training materials UNITAR developed. UNITAR is now updating these materials based

on Jamaica's feedback and will submit the updated version to the PAG for further comment and review.

6. UNITAR is working with the SAICM Secretariat to initiate project activities in The Gambia (approved for funding through the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund (QSPTF) in the 6th Round) and Zambia (Project approved in the 5th Round), as well as Barbados for a project on strengthening capacities for SAICM implementation and supporting GHS capacity building (approved in the 7th Round).

7. Also with support of the QSPTF, Bahrain will undertake a project on capacity building for integrated and sustainable chemicals and hazardous waste management. One of the project components is related to the implementation of the GHS. This component will focus on integrating the GHS into development planning and sustainability of chemicals and management programs, as well as reviewing national legislation and preparing recommendations for alignment with GHS requirements.

8. The project activities for these countries will start early in 2010.

Regional activities

9. The European Union has approved a second phase project for activities in countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including China beginning in early 2010. National GHS capacity development projects will be supported in four ASEAN member countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand). National support activities will also take place in the People's Republic of China (PR China). Regional capacity development activities will involve all 10 ASEAN Member States, as well as China and selected countries from central and East Asia.

10. UNITAR was invited by the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia and the Arab League to hold a GHS Day during the "*Regional Symposium on Sound Management of Chemicals in Arab States*" held from 26 to 29 October 2009, Damascus, Syria. The aim of the GHS Day was to help countries of the region to start the processes of designing their national GHS implementation strategies through presenting experiences of some countries outside the region.

11. A Sub-Regional GHS conference is scheduled to take place in September 2010. This project is funded by the Governments of Switzerland and Germany as well as the European Union, and with support of WHO and significant Chinese government participation; invited participants are expected to come from countries of Central, East and South-east Asia (countries such as Japan, Korea and Mongolia may also participate).

Guidance, training and resource materials

12. UNITAR has completed a draft of the "Introductory GHS Training Course" and complimentary powerpoint which will together serve as training materials for this basic course. It is expected that these draft materials will be pilot tested at several venues in the next year before being updated and finalised. UNITAR, along with a group of expert

volunteers from various government agencies and stakeholder groups continue to work to further develop “Course 2: Classifying Chemicals According to the GHS, and GHS Labels and SDS”. This group is in the process of reviewing course materials by lesson, in order to provide the most in-depth feedback to the training materials.

13. A Pilot Testing Workshop for the “Development of Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling (GHS) Training Modules in the Context of Africa” took place on 28-29 July 2009 in Ibadan, Nigeria. The workshop brought together about 60 participants from business and industry, public interest groups, and labour union, as well as representatives from the Government and University. The workshop was organized on the context of the Basel Convention Initiative “Toward a non-Toxic Environment in Africa”. The workshop was organized with the collaboration of The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Environment, the African Region Basel Convention Coordinating Centre, The Secretariat of the Basel Convention and UNITAR and ILO, with the financial support of the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI).

14. Based on feedback from country experiences, UNITAR continues to update the guidance document “Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy”.

Other matters

15. UNITAR/ILO continue to greatly appreciate the efforts of the Programme Advisory Group (PAG) and the GHS Training Course Review Group for their time and expert inputs to our projects and activities.

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

16. UNITAR would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland, GTZ, the Government of Germany, and the European Union for financial support to UNITAR/ILO implemented Partnership activities, including the Partnership Secretariat, national GHS implementation projects, and regional and global workshops. Other in-kind contributions, such as that from US OSHA, are also kindly acknowledged.

17. GHS capacity building activities organized by UNITAR/ILO continue to be funded by extra-budgetary resources. UNITAR/ILO welcome suggestions and proposals from the SCEGHS regarding how ensure sustainable funding to meet the growing demand for GHS capacity building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

18. UNITAR will continue to update the SCEGHS on these and other activities over the course of the next year.
