

**Joint meeting of the Bureau (Nineteenth meeting)
and the Working Group on Implementation (Fifteenth meeting)**

Geneva, Switzerland, 30 June 2011

**REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE BUREAU AND
THE WORKING GROUP ON IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) held their joint meeting in Geneva (Switzerland) on 30 June 2011 with the main objective to discuss the progress in implementing the Long-term strategy.
2. The following members of the Bureau attended the meeting: Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands), Chairperson of the CoP, Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), Mr. Bernard Gay (Switzerland), Vice-chairpersons, Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic), Ms. Irma Gurguliani (Georgia), Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), Mr. Sergey Kozlenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Tobias Bierman (European Commission).
3. The following members of the WGI participated in the meeting: Ms. Anahit Aleksandryan (Armenia), Mr. Vadim Lozhechko (Belarus), Mr. Hrvoje Buljan (Croatia), Mr. Massimo Cozzone (Italy), Mr. Gunnar Hem (Norway), Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova), Mr. Tomas Trcka (Slovakia), Ms. Ann-Sofie Eriksson (Sweden), and Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom).
4. Secretariat was represented at the meeting by Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak (Chief, Transboundary Cooperation Section), Mr. Lukasz Wyrowski and Ms. Virginia Fuse.
5. Mr. Cristiano Piacente (Italy) and Ms. Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia), members of the Bureau and Mr. Francisc Senzaconi (Romania), member of WGI, informed in advance the secretariat that they could not participate to the meeting.

2. Implementation of the Long-term Strategy

6. The task force on strategic partnerships and mechanism for sustainable financing, the secretariat and the Chair reported on the work accomplished with regard to (a) plans and strategy for establishing partnership and increasing countries/parties involvement in the work of the Convention, (b) elements designed for the financial mechanism, (c) the existing process used for identification of specific subjects/demands/needs of Parties for which workshops or seminars are suggested, and (d) arrangements for sharing the responsibilities between the Bureau and WGI for the management of the Assistance Programme.

(a) Plans and strategy for establishing partnership and increasing countries/parties involvement in the work of the Convention

7. The task force identified a number of organisations with which an attempt should be undertaken for establishing strategic partnerships. The organisations had been split into two groups: (i) priority partners and (ii) partners, with the focus for establishing or expanding cooperation to be given initially to the first group.

8. UNECE Conventions, European Commission (EC), United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, United Nations Environment Programme – Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Chemical Accident Programme, The European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) – HSE department, and European Process Safety Centre (EPSC) were recognized as priority partners.

9. The International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UN ESCAP) as well as other Regional Commissions, and Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound management of Chemicals (IOMC) were recognized as partners.

10. With regard to expanding cooperation with other UNECE Conventions, the task force suggested that the Chair of the Convention should call for a meeting with other four Conventions' Chairs and the Chair of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) to discuss common issues between the Conventions, including the Five Conventions' project. The meeting should be proposed shortly after the Astana Ministerial Conference (21-23 September 2011).

11. With regard to all other priority partners a two step-approach was suggested, including (a) convening bilateral meetings and (b) follow with a joint-partner meeting. The bilateral meetings, if capacities allow, should be undertaken before the end of 2011. In preparing to the meetings, the task force would clearly specify for each partner: the area for cooperation, the contribution sought from the partner and the Convention's contribution to the partner. The task force would also agree on the teams for each of the bilateral meetings.

12. The Bureau and WGI welcomed the progress in the work towards establishing partnerships. Some members suggested that the focus should be mainly given to the industry and industrial associations and therefore appreciated to see CEFIC and EPSC among the priority partners.

13. The Bureau and WGI requested the task force to proceed with the organization of the bilateral meetings and to report on the progress at the next meeting.

(b) Elements designed for the financial mechanism

14. The task force identified the following elements crucial for establishing a sustainable financial mechanism:

- The workplan core activities and the costs of secretariat extra-budgetary staff are to be covered by Parties through voluntarily financial and in-kind contributions;
- The Assistance Programme activities are to be covered through voluntarily in-kind and financial contributions from Parties or through their project funds, EC or other partners/industry project funds;
- The contributions are to be differentiated as substantial, expected and additional contributions:

(i) The substantial voluntarily contributions are the basis for the implementation of the workplan; a contribution is recognized as a substantial one for a Party if it exceeds the amount of a reference contribution calculated for that Party; the reference contribution is an amount calculated as a fraction of the biennial workplan applying the United Nations rate of assessment;

(ii) The expected voluntarily contributions are the necessary support for ensuring full implementation of the workplan; the contribution is calculated as a fraction of the difference between the costs of the workplan and the substantial contributions applying the United Nations rate of assessment for a Party; the expected contribution is to be calculated only for those Parties that would not provide substantial contributions;

(iii) Additional contributions are sought from available project funding from Parties, industry, European Commission, Programmes or Initiatives especially for Assistance Programme activities.

15. The mechanism is to specify the procedure for a call for contributions. With the call each Party is to be informed on the contribution level vis-à-vis the biennial workplan. For Parties providing substantial contributions the level of past years contributions is to be referred to, and for the other Parties the reference contribution is to be included.

16. The mechanism is to also establish a procedure (fund-raising visits) for involving Parties as donors into implementation of the biennial workplans.

17. The Bureau and WGI welcomed the defining of the basic elements for the sustainable financial mechanism and requested that the mechanism is described in a document for further assessment. The task force was also invited to specify in the mechanism a procedure for prioritisation of activities for cases where insufficient resources would be available for the full implementation of a workplan.

18. The Bureau and WGI following an initial exchange of views agreed to discuss at their next meeting the issue of the cost-effectiveness of the activities implemented under the Convention including the effectiveness of the secretariat in providing necessary support. The secretariat offered to present additional background data in this respect. The Bureau and WGI also agreed to further consider evaluating the effectiveness of the Assistance Programme on the basis of the progress achieved by its beneficiary countries. Conducting such an evaluation by the Bureau and WGI or an external agency might be suggested to the Conference of the Parties.

(b) Process used for identification of specific subjects/demands/ needs of Parties for which workshops or seminars are suggested

19. The secretariat presented the process elements which have led to decisions for organization of workshops under the Conventions since 2006. The subjects for those workshops were either recommended by WGI or requested/suggested by a Party. The recommendations from WGI were based on the conclusions drawn from the evaluation of the national implementation reports and addressed issues with which Parties had been facing problems according to WGI. These recommendations were presented to the Bureau for including them into Convention's workplans. The suggestions from Parties addressed specific interests of those Parties and were presented at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

20. The Bureau and WGI agreed that the process for deciding on subjects for workshops was functioning well and did not see any need for changing it. At the

same time it was stressed that new elements can be added to the process if such would be worked out jointly with partner organisations, pending establishment of strategic partnerships.

(d) Arrangements for sharing the responsibilities between the Bureau and WGI for the management of the Assistance Programme

21. The Chair reported that he analysed together with the Vice-chairs and the Chair of the WGI all the tasks for the Bureau and WGI with regard to the Assistance Programme and its Strategic Approach. It was recognized that handing some of the task by both bodies jointly, and in particular the monitoring of application of the Strategic Approach and monitoring of progress achieved, may not be the most effective way of working. It was also recognised that a better assessment of expected workload, especially with regard to the monitoring tasks, would be crucial for deciding on the sharing of responsibilities and establishing specific way of working. Such assessment should be done in connection with the response of the beneficiary countries to their obligation for submission of the self-evaluation reports, due in September 2011. Finally, it was suggested that before a long-term solution would be worked out and applied, an interim way of working may be implemented through creating a small group consisting of members of the Bureau and WGI to handle some specific Assistance Programme tasks on behalf of the two bodies.

22. The Bureau and WGI agreed with the presented analysis. It was decided to make the assessment of the expected workload in September 2011 and subsequently to implement the interim way of working. The long-term solution should be further discussed during the joint meeting scheduled for November 2011.

3. Implementation of the 2011-2012 workplan

23. Brief information was provided on the outcome of the projects/meetings organized in the first half of 2011 and on the progress in arranging for activities in the period until November 2011:

Core business:

24. Mr. Winkelmann reported on the work of the steering group responsible for organising the workshop on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Sandoz accident. He informed, in particular, about the agenda elaborated by the group and the progress in identifying speakers.

25. The secretariat informed on the establishment of the Joint Expert Group for elaboration of a methodology on joint contingency planning for transboundary rivers and presented briefly the ideas discussed by the Group at its first meeting (Geneva, 31 May 2011) for the outline and content of the methodology.

26. The secretariat also reported on the preparations to the workshop on cost-effectiveness, to be held jointly with the European Commission and Government of Poland on 12 October 2011 in Warsaw. The workshop would focus on formulating concrete solutions to influence the development of national or international systems for achieving better cost-effectiveness for major accident prevention.

27. Mr. Hem informed that the WGI, following its mandate received from the Conference of the Parties, reviewed and improved the reporting guidelines as well as incorporated the references to the indicators and criteria in both the

guidelines and the reporting format. Secretariat added that the sixth round was to be initiated before September 2011.

Assistance Programme:

28. Mr. Buljan reported on the on-site inspection project for Croatia, Serbia and the FYR of Macedonia. He said the project was very useful for the three countries to gather experience with evaluation of safety reports and with using the results of the evaluation in conducting inspection at the industrial site. This experience would be crucial for further improving the policy for major hazard prevention. He also valued the checklist methodology developed within the project and thanked Germany and the secretariat for the support provided. Finally, he informed that all three countries would be interested to repeat the inspection at different sites under the Assistance Programme.

29. Ms. Stribu informed about launching the Danube Delta project at the kick-off meeting in Kiev on 11 May 2011 for the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and with participation of Romania. She also reported that the project countries were preparing to the first technical workshop under the project to discuss and evaluate the hazard management policies in the three countries. The evaluation would include the application of the indicators and criteria of the Convention.

30. Ms. Karba reported on the outcome of the workshop on the use of indicators and criteria for the implementation of the Convention. She stressed the good and active participation of all the beneficiary countries. She also said that the workshop proved that the indicators and criteria is a useful instrument for the countries for assessing the level of implementation but also that further activities, at regional level, might be necessary in the future to coach the national experts in proper application of the indicators and criteria. Finally she thanked the numerous members of the Bureau and WGI involved into workshop for their contributions. The secretariat added that the workshop was organized from the funds available from ENVSEC (Environment and Security) Initiative.

31. Mr. Cozzone informed about the Awareness-raising workshop on the Convention for Turkmenistan. The workshop was organised jointly with the UNECE Espoo Convention¹. It was well attended and therefore allowed a detailed presentation of the requirements but also benefits from acceding to both Conventions to a wide range of representatives of different authorities dealing with industry and environment in Turkmenistan. The workshop showed that Turkmenistan was opening to international cooperation and that the local experts were interested in gaining more knowledge in the area of prevention, preparedness and response to industrial accidents. At the same time it was clear that some time would be needed for Turkmenistan to be fully integrated into the work of the Convention.

32. The secretariat reported on the preparations to the national training sessions for identification of hazardous activities for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The secretariat informed that a joint session would be arranged for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and that the sessions should take place during October and November. The specific dates were under discussion with the focal points of the three countries.

33. The Bureau and WGI welcomed the outcome of projects and workshops organized in the first half of 2011 and the progress in arranging for the activities to be held in the second half of the year.

¹ Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context

4. Publication on 20 years of the Convention

34. The secretariat informed about an offer received for developing the publication on 20 years of the Convention. The offer suggested a presentation to contain three main chapters: (i) on the events leading to the elaboration of the Convention, (ii) the achievement since the Convention was signed, and (iii) the vision for the future. In addition it suggested containing throughout the text stories on the Convention by the region as well as opinions of public on the importance of industrial safety.

35. The Bureau and WGI did not support the elaboration of a wide-ranging hard copy publication. It was decided that a publication focussed on progress achieved should be developed. It should be especially designed for friendly online use with only a limited number of hard copies made available. The secretariat was requested to work with the agency for developing the publication as discussed.

5. Other business

36. Based on an example of a project proposal received from an Armenian Non-Governmental Organisation aiming at building awareness of young specialists in Armenia in the area of industrial safety, the Bureau and WGI agreed that within the Assistance Programme they have the mandate to consider only requests for assistance submitted by countries' competent authorities.

37. Mr. Gay suggested that a project consisting of training sessions for young specialists on industrial safety could be very valuable across Europe and should be considered in the future.

38. Mr. Biermann informed that the call for funding with Directorate General Humanitarian Affairs and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) for organization of field exercises was finally open only in June 2011. He strongly suggested that an attempt was made to apply within the call for funding to be used within the crisis management of the Danube Delta project.

39. The Bureau and WGI requested the European Union member countries involved in the Danube Delta project to use the opportunity offered with the call of DG ECHO and to join forces in applying for funds.

40. Mr. Ludwiczak reported about the progress with regard to the Five Conventions project for Central Asia. He thanked for comments received from the members of the Bureau and welcomed the overall support expressed for the project. At the same time he informed that the implementation of the project was subject to availability of extrabudgetary funding.

41. Mr. Ludwiczak informed that Germany decided to provide a Junior Professional Officer to the secretariat who would support the work under the Convention's Assistance Programme. He thanked Germany through Mr. Winkelmann and stressed that with the additional person, to start from November 2011, the secretariat would be better positioned in replying to the growing demands of the beneficiary countries under the Assistance Programme.

42. The Bureau and WGI expressed appreciation to Germany for providing Junior Professional Officer to support the work under the Assistance Programme.

43. Continuing on the subject of secretariat human resources, Mr. Ludwiczak informed that the establishment of the P4 extrabudgetary post was in progress and that within relatively short time the post should be open for applications.

44. The Chair reported on his discussion on the Convention with representatives of the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) of the United States and an agreement that a letter should be sent to the EPA from the secretariat inviting to consider renewed involvement in the work of the Convention.

45. Ms. Gurguliani informed that she would be no longer available to serve in the Bureau due to other commitments. The Ministry of Environment should inform the secretariat on the successor in due time.

6. Closing of the meeting

46. The Chair thanked all the members of the Bureau and WGI for active participation and closed the meeting.