

**Bureau of the Conference of the Parties** (eighth meeting)

**Working Group on Implementation** (fourth meeting)

Joint meeting, 15 December 2005

## **MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING<sup>1/</sup>**

### **Introduction**

1. A joint meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) and the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) was held on 15 December 2005 in Geneva, following the High-level Commitment Meeting.
2. The following members of the Bureau and the WGI attended the meeting: Mr. Ryszard Grosset (Poland), Chairperson of the CoP; Mr. Lajos Katai-Urban (Hungary) Vice-Chairperson; Mr. Bernard Gay (Switzerland), Chairman of the WGI; Ms. Anahit Aleksandryan (Armenia); Mr. Nikolay Savov (Bulgaria); Mr. Cristiano Piacente and Mr. Massimo Cozzone (Italy); Ms. Irma Gurguliani (Georgia); Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), Mr. Tomas Trcka (Slovakia) and Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia). Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak (UNECE), Secretary of the CoP, Mr. Lukasz Wyrowski and Ms. Virginia Fusé (UNECE) also attended.
3. Mr. Armin Heidler (Austria); Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic), Mr. Leo Iberl (Germany), Ms. Judit Mogor (Hungary); Mr. Sergey Mokrousov and Mr. Dmitri Poletaev (Russian Federation) and Tobias Biermann (European Commission) were not able to attend.

### **I. Outcome of the High-level Commitment Meeting**

4. Mr. Grosset and Mr. Gay and other members of the Bureau and the WGI expressed their satisfaction on the successful outcome of the High-level Commitment Meeting (HLM), which met its objectives. In particular, they welcomed that 17 out of 19 EECCA and SEE countries adopted the declaration and expressed strong commitment to implement the Convention. The support pledged by Central and West European countries for the further implementation of the programme was also highly valued.
5. Satisfaction was expressed that the HLM was very well attended by high-level representatives of the EECCA and SEE countries and Central and West European countries. At the same time concern was expressed that some important regional players in the field of industrial safety, e.g. Canada and the United States, were not represented. The absence of one of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference of the Parties at the HLM was also of concern.

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<sup>1/</sup> Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson of the Conference of the Parties and the Chairman of the Working Group on Implementation.

## **II. Organization of fact-finding missions**

6. Mr. Wyrowski provided more insight on how the secretariat intends to organize and coordinate the fact-finding missions. He referred to a conference room paper (CRP.1), circulated at the HLM, which contained a concept of the missions.

7. The Bureau and WGI extensively discussed the concept paper and provided the secretariat with valuable views concerning the organization and coordination of the fact-finding teams: (i) possible composition; (ii) possible elements for the terms of reference; (iii) the need to draw up a basis for a common approach (common questionnaire or reporting structure); (iv) feedback/reporting; and (v) coordination.

8. The Bureau invited the WGI to join it in providing further guidance to the secretariat in fulfilling its role to organize and manage the programme's activities, including the fact-finding missions. At the same time it mandated the secretariat to take operational decisions (selection of teams; matching them with countries to be visited; definition of missions' itineraries and schedules; coordination with authorities of countries to be visited) in consultation with the Chairperson of the CoP and the Chairman of the WGI.

9. To this end, the Bureau and the WGI requested the secretariat to:

(a) Draw up draft terms of reference for the fact-finding missions on the basis of CRP.1 and the guidance provided at this meeting;

(b) Prepare a draft questionnaire/reporting structure, which would ensure that all teams use a common approach in their evaluation of the implementation of basic tasks under the Convention, among others, on the basis of an earlier input provided by Mr. Savov and Mr. Winkelmann-Oei; and

(c) Provide the fact-finding teams with the available information related to the implementation of the Convention by the country to be visited and facilitate the exchange of information between the members of different teams.

10. The two documents mentioned in paragraph 9 (a) and (b) should be disseminated among the members of the Bureau and the WGI within a consultation round. Their final versions should then be communicated to the focal points under the Convention.

11. The secretariat was also asked to ensure that the fact-finding teams submit their reports shortly after their missions and that these reports are made available to the Bureau and the WGI.

12. The Bureau and the WGI entrusted Mr. Grosset and Mr Gay to discuss the preparation of a report on the results of the preparatory phase of the assistance programme to be submitted to the CoP at its fourth meeting. The secretariat was invited to support this process.

## **III. Reporting on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendations of the Hamburg seminar**

13. Mr. Gay recalled that the deadline for submitting national reports on the implementation of the Convention within the third round of reporting was 31 January 2006. He

welcomed the additional commitment of 8 EECCA and SEE countries, which were not Parties, to submit a report, although he noted that this will be an additional challenge for the WGI. The fifth meeting of the WGI, at which work on the third report on the Convention's implementation will commence, will, therefore, be delayed and take place on 3-5 April 2006 and not in March, as previously indicated.

14. Mr. Ludwiczak reported on the status of reporting concerning the implementation of recommendations of the Hamburg seminar. He informed that only nine, out of twenty-five Central and West European countries submitted their reports. He stated that this weak result does not match the high rates, which are observed within the reporting on the Convention's implementation.

15. The Bureau expressed concern and decided to act to improve the situation – it invited the Chairmen of both governing bodies (CoP and the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention) to address a joint letter requesting the countries that did not report to comply with earlier decisions concerning the Hamburg process.

#### **IV. Recent and future meetings under the CoP**

16. Mr. Ludwiczak reported on the outcome of the second consultation for points of contact designated within the UNECE IAN System and the first meeting of the task force to review the communication procedures held in Rome on 19-21 October 2005 (Report – CP.TEIA/2005/11).

17. The Bureau and the WGI expressed its appreciation to the Italian authorities – the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry for Environment and Territory – for organizing the two meetings in Rome.

18. The Bureau was also informed about the following future meetings:

(a) Workshop on the prevention of accidents of gas transmission pipelines, The Hague, 8-9 March 2006 (Information notice – ECE/CP.TEIA/SEM.1/2006/1);

(b) Fourth meeting of the Steering Group to draw up the draft guidelines/best practices for pipelines, The Hague, 10 March 2006;

(c) Second meeting of the Working Group on the Development of the Convention to be held in Geneva (dates will be communicated shortly);

(d) Fifth meeting of the WGI, Vienna, 3-5 April 2006; and

(e) Seventh meeting of the Joint Expert Group, Geneva, 10-11 April 2006.

19. The Bureau decided to hold its ninth meeting on 22-24 May 2006. It would begin in the afternoon of 22 May and end after a morning session on 24 May 2006.

20. The Chairperson, in cooperation with the Secretary and Mr. Piacente, will select the venue for the ninth meeting of the Bureau (Geneva, Rome and Warsaw were the options). The secretariat will communicate the venue in due time.

21. One half-day session would be devoted to issues of common interest to both the Industrial Accidents and the Water Conventions (work of the joint expert group, safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines; implementation of the Hamburg seminar recommendations, civil liability protocol). Therefore, the secretariat was asked to contact the Chairman of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention to work out the details of such a joint meeting.

**V. Other business and closing**

22. Mr Katai-Urban informed that Hungary and Romania are planning to organize an international response exercise in mid-June 2006. Further details will be provided as soon as they are agreed between the two countries.

23. Mr. Grosset closed the joint meeting.