

26 September 2017
English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Bureau

Thirty-sixth meeting

Warsaw, 4-5 July 2017

Minutes of the thirty-sixth meeting

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The thirty-sixth meeting of the Bureau under the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents was held in Warsaw at the invitation of the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection.
2. The following Bureau members were present: Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), Chair; Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund (Finland), Vice-Chair; Paweł Dadasiewicz (Poland), Vice-Chair; Michael Struckl (Austria); Senad Oprasic (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Aléxandros Kiriazis (European Union); Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany); Torill Tandberg (Norway) and Martin Merkofer (Switzerland). Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic) was absent. Mr. Leo Iberl (Germany), Chair of the Working Group on Implementation, also attended the meeting.
3. The meeting was serviced by the secretariat to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
4. The Bureau adopted without changes the provisional agenda (CP.TEIA/2017/B.3/Agenda), as prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chair.

II. Review of the long-term strategy

5. The Bureau dedicated the first day of its meeting to determining elements for the revised and extended long-term strategy, including a vision for the Convention. The session was facilitated by Ms. Wagello-Sjölund.
6. The Bureau requested the secretariat to circulate the draft elements for the vision and long-term strategy, as developed at the meeting, for comments by 12 July 2017 to all participants. The Bureau also requested the secretariat to prepare, based on the feedback received, a first draft of the strategy. In addition, a drafting group was established to further develop the long-term strategy for discussion at the next Bureau meeting. Mr. Dadasiewicz, Mr. Kiriazis, Mr. Merkofer and Ms. Wagello-Sjölund volunteered to be part of that drafting group.
7. The Bureau decided to continue the discussions on the long-term strategy, the vision and their implementation at its next meeting, once a first draft of the strategy was available. Another half-a-day could be dedicated at the next meeting for that discussion.

8. The Bureau also discussed the development of a communications or marketing strategy, a recommendation resulting from the deliberations of the small group on financing. The Bureau decided to establish the small group and tasked it with the development of a first draft of the marketing or communications strategy for circulation to all Bureau members by the end of November 2017. Half-a-day could be devoted at the next Bureau meeting to discuss the draft communications or marketing strategy. Ms. Karba, Mr. Struckl and Ms. Tandberg volunteered to be part of the small group on financing.

III. Proposed amendment to the Convention

9. In the light of the decision taken by the Conference of the Parties to revisit the proposed amendment to the Convention at its tenth meeting, the Bureau had decided at its thirty-fourth meeting (Geneva, 30-31 January 2017) to make informal enquiries regarding the proposal. At this meeting, the Bureau reported on such enquires and considered that these were not sufficient. The Bureau therefore agreed that high-level letters be sent by the secretariat to support timely preparation for discussion and possible decisions to be taken by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Bureau requested the secretariat to send a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Russian Federation and to the European Union and its Member States at respectively appropriate levels to enquire whether their positions remained unchanged or whether there was readiness to adopt the amendment with art. 9 (Russian Federation) or without it (European Union and its Member States). The Bureau left it to the secretariat whether to send the letters to the Russian Federation and the European Union and its Member States simultaneously. For transparency, the secretariat was also requested to write to all other Parties informing them about the letters sent.

IV. Involvement of Parties and other stakeholders

10. The secretariat provided an update on recent publications and targeted communication with Parties and other stakeholders, reporting, among others, that the text of the Convention had been reissued in early 2017 with the new annex I and that, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, a press release with quotes from Ms. Karba and Ms. Tandberg was released. The Bureau welcomed the activities undertaken by the secretariat.

11. The secretariat informed the Bureau that it had run out of the Russian publications of the safety guidelines and good practices for tailings management facilities, pipelines and oil terminals, of which also only few English copies were on stock. The Bureau, recognizing the degree of esteem that those publications seem to enjoy, requested the secretariat to enquire with the Water Convention secretariat on their possible funding or co-funding of the reprint of the joint publications, developed by the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (Joint Expert Group). Mr. Dadasiwicz indicated that Poland might be in a position to contribute additional 10,000 USD to the Convention trust fund at the end of the year which could be used for this purpose.

12. The Bureau also discussed possible working visits and high-level missions to Parties and other stakeholders. It was agreed to prioritize a mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, possibly in May 2018, as a follow-up to the high-level mission and expert workshop in 2014 which had to be partly cancelled due to floods in the country. The secretariat was asked to check whether such a mission could be combined with possible missions planned by other UNECE multilateral environmental agreements. In addition, the Bureau agreed that a mission to Ukraine could be organized, possibly in early 2018, pending a reply of the country to a letter sent by the secretariat earlier this year to encourage Ukraine's accession to the Convention. The Bureau also considered holding a high-level meeting for Kazakhstan, back-

to-back with the subregional workshop in Central Asia, tentatively scheduled for September 2018.

V. Exchange of information

13. The secretariat provided an update on the outcomes of the recent meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Minsk, 13-16 June 2017) that relate to the cooperation on land-use planning and industrial safety. In particular the secretariat reported the following:

(a) The meetings of the governing bodies endorsed the general part and took note of the technical part of the guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects;

(b) Additional comments were provided by France on its own example in the French version of the technical guidance and it was agreed that such be taken into consideration when publishing the guidance;

(c) Parties were invited to promote the implementation of the guidance and cooperation and consultation among land-use planners, environmental assessment experts and industrial safety specialists;

(d) The Espoo secretariat was requested to publish the guidance, which was planned for the second half of 2017, jointly with the Industrial Accidents Convention secretariat.

The Bureau welcomed the endorsement and note-taking of the guidance by the Espoo Convention, while regretting the lack of a mandate to support the implementation of the follow-up activity to the joint guidance, included in the workplan for the Industrial Accidents Convention.

14. In addition, the secretariat provided an update on its contacts with the European Union/European Investment Bank and Belgium (Flanders) regarding the organization of a follow-up activity on land-use planning, included in the Convention's workplan for 2017-2018. The secretariat reported that the European Union/European Investment Bank remained committed to support the follow-up activity with 35,000 EUR for a consultant, as expressed at the ninth meeting of the Parties, and that Belgium (Flanders) had confirmed its readiness to also act as lead party and to host a land-use planning seminar in the first half of 2018. Initial discussions about the concept had been held, suggesting that the seminar should bring together industrial safety experts and land-use planners, be focussed on practical case studies and that a survey to Focal Points could be prepared to identify case studies to be presented.

15. The Bureau welcomed that the European Union/European Investment Bank and Belgium (Flanders) would lead the implementation of a follow-up activity on land-use planning. It suggested looking into the outcomes of the last survey on land-use planning to identify case studies, rather than approaching Focal Points again with another survey. The Bureau also asked that the concept note for the land-use planning seminar be shared with its members for information.

16. Mr. Merkofer presented a concept paper for the planned seminar on risk assessment methodologies, expected to be held in the framework of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, with the aim to exchange information and share experiences and good practices among UNECE member States. Mr. Merkofer explained that a meeting of the small group on risk assessment¹ was planned for September 2017 in Bern to identify countries to be

¹ The small group is comprised of Mr. Michael Struckl (Austria), Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia) and Mr. Raphael Gonzalez and Mr. Martin Merkofer (Switzerland).

approached and that the secretariat would also join that meeting for continuity and to avoid duplication with the land-use planning seminar. A more detailed programme of the seminar, including countries and speakers, would become available at the end of the year.

17. The Bureau thanked Mr. Merkofer for his presentation and welcomed the work done by the small group on risk assessment. It supported the focus on hazardous activities under the scope of the Convention, emphasizing that the petrochemical industry should not be overlooked in the seminar preparations. The Bureau expressed full trust in the small group and asked to be informed about the further preparations for the seminar at its next meeting.

18. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei, Co-Chair of the Joint Expert Group, informed the Bureau about activities being led by the Joint Expert Group, notably the development of safety guidelines and good practices for fire-water retention and the organization of two transboundary response exercises between Germany and Poland (September 2017) and on the Danube River (spring 2018). He also reported on the outcomes of a project on enhancing knowledge on tailings safety at universities in Ukraine, finalized in May 2017, and on two new projects on tailings safety to be led by Germany, with one in the Caucasus starting in the fourth quarter of 2017 and another one in the Danube Basin planned for 2018, in cooperation with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei also mentioned that a project on tailings safety could be envisaged in Central Asia for 2019-2010.

19. The Bureau welcomed the leadership of Mr. Winkelmann-Oei in the activities on preventing accidental water pollution led by Germany and the Joint Expert Group, expressing its support for the implementation of these activities. Regarding the safety guidelines and good practices for fire-water retention, the Bureau asked Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to share a draft of the guidelines with the Bureau members for discussion at the next meeting.

VI. Strategic partnerships

20. The secretariat reported on the provision of inputs to a publication entitled *Words into Action Guide on Man-made/Technological Hazards*, being produced under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was in the process of finalization. The secretariat also highlighted upcoming meetings of strategic partners in the second half of 2017, among others, the meeting of the Working Group on Chemical Accidents of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Paris, 10-12 October 2017) and the Environment and Emergencies Forum (Nairobi, 26-28 September 2017) organized by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The secretariat also reported about the holding of a special session on the Convention on 31 May 2017 in the framework of the 15th International Forum on Industrial Safety (St. Petersburg, 30 May-2 June 2017), organized by the GCE Group.

21. Mr. Kiriazis informed participants about the finalization of the brochure developed by the inter-agency coordination group on chemical and industrial accidents, under OECD's leadership. He also informed the Bureau members that unfortunately the 5th interagency coordination group meeting, that was to be held under the chairmanship of the European Union in May 2017, had to be cancelled last minute due to a lack of participation. Mr. Kiriazis explained that he would set up a phone call with the core group shortly to discuss the organization of the next meeting, indicating that it would be unlikely that such a meeting could be held in Brussels. Mr. Kiriazis also provided an update on the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Cancun, Mexico, 22-26 May 2017), stressing that there was major interest from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Global Platform and recommending that the secretariat check which NGOs had been present, so that they could be taken on the Convention mailing list and kept informed about future activities.

22. Ms. Tandberg provided an update on the activities of OECD, reporting that the OECD Guiding Principles for Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response were currently being revised, and that subsequent to an ongoing survey on NATECH accidents a workshop on that topic was planned for 2018. She reported that excellent progress had been made in a project on ownership change in hazardous installations and that a guidance document on the topic would be adopted at the OECD meeting in October 2017. Ms Tandberg also mentioned that the focus of the Special Session for 2018 would be on Latin American countries, which might be a good opportunity for the Convention to reach out to countries outside the UNECE region.

23. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat, Mr. Kiriazis and Ms. Tandberg, encouraging continued cooperation and coordination of joint activities with partners.

VII. Financing and review of the sustainable financial mechanism

24. The secretariat reported on the receipt of financial contributions to the Convention's trust fund and expected contributions, explaining that it continuously kept track of in-kind contributions by Parties, including by Germany for the projects carried out as indicated in the workplan. It reported that the trust fund situation had improved compared to the last Bureau meeting in January, due to the receipt of additional contributions in the course of the year, in particular the contribution by the Russian Federation for the ongoing project in Central Asia, whereas overall the contributions by Parties remained significantly below expectations as per the workplan adopted for 2017-2018. The secretariat also reported on its fundraising efforts, notably the submission of several project proposals for which a decision was expected later this year.

25. The Bureau took note of information provided by the secretariat, including that a number of workplan activities remained unfunded, such as the development of an implementation guide. The Bureau discussed how to ensure adequate financing for the implementation of the adopted workplan taking into account elements of the Sustainable Financial Mechanism. It recognised that the mechanism was linked with the long-term strategy that was currently being revised and consequently agreed to address the issue of sustainable and predictable financing of the Convention in more detail at the next Bureau meeting, once a draft long-term strategy was available.

VIII. Non-core activities, including assistance activities to support countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe

A. Assistance Programme

26. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the implementation of the project on strengthening implementation of and accession to the Convention in Central Asia, including the development of an implementation guide in Russian for Central Asian countries. It welcomed the good progress made in the project, demonstrated, among others, by the submission of Kyrgyzstan's self-assessment and action plan.

27. The secretariat reported on the successful holding of two subregional workshops on chemicals management and the identification and notification of hazardous activities, in cooperation with partners, for the countries of South-Eastern Europe (Zagreb, 21-23 February 2017) and the Caucasus and Eastern Europe (Minsk, 11-13 April 2017). The workshops had resulted in a number of findings for the Bureau's discussion and possible follow-up, including

the update of the location criteria and inconsistencies in the terminology of annex I to the Convention compared with the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. The Bureau requested the secretariat to share in writing further information on the possible follow-actions from the subregional workshops for discussion at its next meeting. It also suggested that in the future donor countries be informed about the date and venue of workshops financed from earmarked resources provided by the donor.

28. The Bureau welcomed the efforts made by the secretariat to initiate a follow-up to the Danube Delta project, resulting into the submission of a related proposal with Romania's project lead under the 2017 Call on Prevention and Preparedness by the European Union's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO). The project, if successful, would be implemented between January 2018 and December 2019 by Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, in cooperation with the secretariat. The Bureau also welcomed the efforts by the secretariat to support the implementation of the Strategic Approach, among others, through the submission of a project proposal to Norway in March 2017 on establishing National Policy Dialogues on Industrial Safety in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

29. The secretariat reported that, following the request of the Joint Meeting (Geneva, 31 January 2017), it had sent high-level letters to the Assistance Programme beneficiary countries regarding the effectiveness of the Programme in early May 2017. Due to the lack of responses to date, the Bureau agreed to postpone the discussion on the feedback received and the further development of the Assistance Programme to its next meeting.

B. Other assistance activities

30. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat on its actions undertaken to garner support for other assistance activities foreseen in the workplan, notably the submission of a project proposal to the Russian Federation on improving tailings safety in Kyrgyzstan.

C. Awareness-raising in and outreach to other regions

31. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat on a presentation delivered in June 2017 to a delegation from the City University of Hong Kong – comprised of business representatives from China and other Asian countries – who visited UNECE as part of a partnership agreement to learn more about UNECE's work on sustainable development, including its norms, standards and multilateral environmental agreements.

32. Two representatives from the International Centre for Chemical Safety and Security (ICCSS) informed Bureau members about the organization of the 2nd Global Summit on Chemical Safety and Security (Shanghai, China, 19-20 September 2017), inviting the Convention's participation in a three-hour session, a booth representation and a key note speech free of charge. Mr. Dadasiewicz, recalling that the first Summit had been held in 2016 in Poland, informed Bureau members that he would most likely attend this year's Summit, which he considered a good opportunity for the Convention to reach out to other regions. The secretariat informed participants that there might be a possibility for it to receive funds other than from the Convention trust fund that could be used to ensure its participation in the event. Following its discussion, the Bureau welcomed the readiness of Mr. Dadasiewicz to represent the Convention in his capacity as Vice-Chair, among others by making a presentation on the Convention at the Summit, should his participation be confirmed. The secretariat could also participate, should it identify additional funds.

D. UNECE Industrial Accident Notification System

33. The secretariat informed the Bureau about its contacts with DG ECHO regarding the possible joint organization of a consultation for Points of Contact of the UNECE Industrial Accident Notification System and the Emergency Response and Coordination Centre (ERCC) of the European Union, explaining that a teleconference was planned to be held after the summer break to discuss this possibility. The Bureau took note of the information provided and requested to be kept informed about the outcome of the discussion.

IX. Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

34. The Bureau agreed that the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties would be held from 4-6 December 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland. In view of the Conference of the Parties in 2018, the Bureau requested its members to start looking for possible candidates for the Bureau, with a view to discuss proposals for candidates, including contacts made at the subregional workshops or other events, at the next meeting to ensure the early identification of candidates and a well-balanced geographic representation.

X. Proposed schedule of meetings for 2018

35. The Bureau agreed on the following schedule of meetings in 2018:

- (a) 30-31 January 2018, Hernstein (Austria)
- (b) 26-27 June 2018, Switzerland, venue outside Geneva to be confirmed
- (c) 3 December 2018 (pm), Geneva (Switzerland)

XI. Closure of the meeting

36. The Chair closed the meeting on 5 July 2017 at 5.30 p.m.
