

# EIGHTH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE AARHUS CONVENTION

Brussels  
Tuesday, 1 March 2005  
13.30 – 18.00

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR OUTCOMES

### **Attendance:**

*Bureau members:* Marc Pallemmaerts (Belgium, Chair), Federica Rolle (for Giuliana Gasparini, Italy), Saltanat Abdikarimova (Kazakhstan), Mona Aarhus (Norway)

*NGO observer:* John Hontelez (European ECO Forum)

### **I. Preparations for the Second meeting of the Parties:**

#### 1.1. High-level segment

Bureau discussed the composition of the two panels: (1) Successes, failures and lessons learned: key challenges in implementing the Convention and (2) Global and regional developments on issues related to principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, based on a proposal prepared by the Secretariat. It amended the proposal and asked the Secretariat to proceed with the invitation letters to panellists, consulting with the Chair on any related issues.

#### 1.2 Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

Secretariat informed the Bureau that the report on the implementation of the guidelines on GMOs was due to be finalised. In total, 13 countries had responded.

#### 1.3 Compliance mechanism: preparation of draft decision

The Secretariat presented advanced copies of the draft report of the Compliance Committee to the MoP plus addenda and the report of the Committee's seventh meeting plus the addenda containing the Committee's findings and recommendations on specific cases. The Bureau discussed and approved a draft decision on compliance on the basis of a preliminary draft prepared by the secretariat and agreed to forward it to the meeting of the Parties.

#### 1.4 Reporting mechanism

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the synthesis report on the implementation of the Convention was due to be finalised in the near future.

#### 1.5 Public participation in international forums (PPIF)

The draft decision on PPIF annexing the draft guidelines had been amended prior to the Bureau meeting at the meeting of an informal 'friends of the chair' group comprising members of the Bureau and other representatives of Parties and Signatories. The Bureau decided to submit the document, as amended, to the Meeting of the Parties subject to further consideration by the Working Group of the Parties (WGP) at its fifth meeting.

The Bureau considered a letter from the Chairperson of the Espoo Convention concerning the proposed guidelines. It was agreed that Chairperson would prepare a reply to the letter. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to ensure that the draft decision on the PPIF together with the annexed

guidelines were distributed to the Secretaries of the UNECE MEAs as soon as possible. The Secretariat confirmed that it would make a presentation on the PPIF guidelines at the upcoming meeting of the Espoo Convention Working Group on EIA (April 2005).

#### 1.6 PRTR options for rules of procedure and compliance mechanism: role of the MoP

The Bureau felt that it would be appropriate for MOP-2 to take note of the progress made by the PRTR Working Group at its second meeting (April 2005) in developing rules of procedure and a compliance mechanism for the PRTR Protocol.

## **2 Date and venue of next Bureau meeting**

It was not considered necessary to schedule a Bureau meeting prior to WGP-5. If it was later considered to be necessary, one could be convened nearer the time. Otherwise, ad hoc meetings could be convened as needed when in Almaty (e.g. on Sunday evening 22 May 2005).

## **3. Any other business.**

### 3.1 Financial arrangements

The Bureau decided to insert a footnote in the draft decision on financial arrangements, specifically asking MOP to reconsider the necessity of establishing a task force on financial arrangements.

### 3.2 Election of the Bureau

The Chairperson informed the meeting of his intention not to stand for re-election as a Chairperson and as a Bureau member at MoP-2. He requested other Bureau members to inform him and the Secretariat about their plans in this respect.

### 3.3 WGP-5

Bureau discussed arrangements for possible drafting groups on the Declaration, GMOs and PPIF.