

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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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

Implementation of the GHS: :

Reports on the status of implementation

Expected alignment with GHS of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Note by the secretariat

1. The Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 2000. Only member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) may become Parties at present, though the opening of the Convention to all Member States of the United Nations is to be evaluated in the period to autumn 2014. ECE provides the secretariat.

2. The 40 Parties to the Convention are: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as the European Union (EU) as a regional economic integration organization. Canada and the United States of America signed the Convention in 1992 but have not ratified their signatures.

3. The Convention helps its Parties to prevent industrial accidents that can have transboundary effects and to prepare for, and respond to, accidents if they occur. The Convention therefore requires that certain measures be taken with respect to hazardous activities. The Convention also encourages its Parties to help each other in the event of an accident, to cooperate on research and development, and to share information and technology.

4. In the meaning of the Convention, a hazardous activity is any activity in which one or more hazardous substances are present or may be present in quantities at or in excess of the threshold quantities listed in annex I to the Convention, and which is capable of causing transboundary effects. Annex I to the Convention identifies categories of substances and preparations, as well as named substances, together with threshold quantities.

5. Annex I was amended by decision 2006/2 of the Conference of the Parties in 2006 (ECE/CP.TEIA/15/Add.1).

6. At its seventh meeting, held in Stockholm on 14–16 November 2012, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention requested the Working Group on the Development of the Convention to again draft a revised annex I, this time to bring it into line with the United Nations Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of Classification and

Labelling of Chemicals (ST/SG/AC.10/30/Rev.4) and to maintain consistency with the corresponding EU legislation.¹ It decided that the proposed amendment should be circulated to the Parties not less than 90 days in advance of its next meeting, to be held in autumn 2014.

7. The Working Group on the Development of the Convention is expected to meet once in 2013 and once in 2014. Between the two meetings, a drafting group is expected to prepare a text for consideration by the Working Group and, subsequently, by the Conference of the Parties in autumn 2014.

8. **GHS Sub-Committee experts from countries Party to the Convention are encouraged:**

- (a) to coordinate with their colleagues responsible for the Convention or, in the case of EU member States, the Seveso Directive; and
- (b) to offer their expertise in the process of amendment of the Convention.

9. Further information on the Convention is available at www.unece.org/env/teia.

¹ Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC, also known as the “Seveso III Directive”.