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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Meeting of the Parties to the
Convention on Access to Information,
Public Participation in Decision-making and
Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers
(Second meeting, Geneva, 27 – 30 January 2003)

**ELEMENTS FOR A DRAFT RESOLUTION ON POLLUTANT RELEASE AND
TRANSFER REGISTERS**

Prepared by the secretariat at the request of the Chairman

We, the Signatories to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters,

Resolve to strive for the early entry into force of the Protocol and to apply the Protocol to the maximum extent possible pending its entry into force;

Request the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention to actively promote and to keep under review the ratification of the Protocol and its interim application pending the convening of the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, inter alia by:

(a) Establishing the Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol, as a subsidiary body to the Convention, to identify and carry out activities that need to be undertaken pending the entry into force of the Protocol, to prepare for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, taking into account article 6, paragraph 2, and article 18 of the Protocol, and to report to the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on progress made in respect of the ratification of the Protocol;

(b) Giving full recognition within the work programme of the Convention to activities proposed by the Meeting of the Signatories, including in the allocation of resources;

Call upon Signatories and other States to make voluntary financial contributions, within the framework of the financial arrangements of the Convention or otherwise, to ensure that sufficient financial means are available to carry out the activities in the work programme of the Convention which are related to the Protocol;

Invite other donors to give high priority to projects aimed to further the implementation of the Protocol;

Acknowledge the active and constructive role played by intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations in the development of the Protocol and invite them to participate in the same spirit in the Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol and any related subsidiary bodies;

Acknowledge furthermore that non-governmental organizations and other key actors will play a crucial role in the implementation of the Protocol at national level and resolve to ensure appropriate involvement of civil society in the development of pollutant release and transfer registers;

Emphasize that capacity building for public authorities, the private sector and non-governmental organizations is essential for the effective implementation and application of the Protocol and urge of these sectors to use existing mechanisms promoting capacity building and exchange of experience, such as the Aarhus Convention Capacity Building Service;

Welcome in this regard the emergence of the Virtual Classroom as a specific tool facilitating communication, education and capacity building in the field of pollutant release and transfer registers, including through exchange of information on good practices;

Resolve to seek close cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the European Union and the Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America;

Note that elements such as inputs, products and use of water, energy and other resources are referred to in article 5, paragraph 9, of the Convention as elements which may be included in pollution registers, and request the Parties at their first meeting to explore possible means to integrate information on these elements in pollutant release and transfer registers established under the Protocol;

Recognize that further work is needed to promote compatibility of national pollutant release and transfer register systems, in particular with respect to the requirements for reporting on transfers and to thresholds determining the reporting obligation for specific facilities, and urge the Parties to work towards greater harmonization among systems to further increase comparability of data;

Invite interested States to sign and ratify or accede to the Protocol in order to promote the availability and comparability of environmental information throughout the world and thereby contribute to the effective implementation of chapter 19 of Agenda 21;

Invite furthermore interested States which have not yet done so to accede to the Convention.