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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE
PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION
AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL
LAKES

First meeting
Geneva, 17–19 January 2007
Item 14 of the provisional agenda

DRAFT DECLARATION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Submitted by the Chairperson of the Working Group on Water and Health*

1. The following draft declaration was discussed by the Working Group on Water and Health at its sixth meeting (Geneva, 31 May – 2 June 2006). It has been further elaborated by the Chairperson of the Working Group on Water and Health with the assistance of a group of representatives of Parties and non-Parties from Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Ukraine.
2. The Meeting of the Parties is expected to finalize and adopt the declaration.

* This document was submitted on the above date to allow consultation with Parties and non-Parties.

[Preamble text – references and reconfirmations]¹

We, the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health, gathered at Geneva from 17 to 19 January 2007 for our first meeting:

1. *Reaffirm* the commitments made during the adoption of the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.
2. Recalling the ultimate objective and principles of, and the commitments under, the Protocol [proposal by the United Kingdom], *confirm* our commitment to achieving the internationally agreed goals on environmental sustainability – including integrated water resources management, access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation – agreed upon in Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.
3. *Consider* that water is a primary human need and that water and sanitation are basic social services, and emphasize that public authorities must take adequate measures to make these services effective and affordable [this text, drafted by United Kingdom and Switzerland, replaces paragraph 4 of the draft in document ECE/MP.WAT/WG.4/2006/11].
4. *Recall* that the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2005–2015 the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” to implement international commitments concerning safe water and adequate sanitation.
5. *Renew* our commitments to the priorities endorsed by the fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Budapest, June 2004), in particular, to take measures to improve safe water supply and sanitation for all children of the European Region as Regional Priority Goal 1 under the Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE).
6. *Recognize* the work done by the World Health Organization’s Centralized Information System for Infectious Diseases (CISID) and underline the importance of this tool in setting realistic targets and monitoring progress in the control of water-related diseases.
7. *Acknowledge* the initiative of the Government of Norway to hold the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe, and *continue* to promote international cooperation [proposal by the United Kingdom].
8. *Note with concern* that significant populations in the region do not have sustainable access to safe water or adequate sanitation, and further *note with concern* the effects of extreme weather events, particularly floods, droughts, heat waves and cold waves in different parts of the European region, and their consequences for the sustainable management of water resources and human health [proposal by the United Kingdom].

¹ Throughout, explanatory notes are in square brackets [].

[Action points][This section could be introduced by a paragraph or statement]

9. *Invite* Parties and Signatories to the Protocol to work together towards the attainment of [proposal by the United Kingdom] safe drinking water for the entire population of the region through, *inter alia*, identifying regions with deficient water supply and sanitation and increased water-related disease burdens; taking appropriate risk management measures, such as in-house treatment of water; installing water safety plans as soon as possible to optimize risk assessment and hazard management with regard to the drinking water supply; and promoting community-based water supply and sanitation systems.

10. *Recognize* the need to extend current information systems on water supply and sanitation as a tool for national target setting, progress monitoring and reporting, as well as facilitation of comparisons between countries and regions.

11. *Express a willingness* to extend cooperation in implementing measures to anticipate, detect and prevent impacts on human health [this paragraph could incorporate a reference to the Water Convention].

12. [*Pledge*] [*Agree*] to focus on priority areas associated with commitments under the Protocol, including [text to be derived from the programme of work].

13. Considering the provisions of Article 14 on international support for national actions, *decide* to establish an Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism for facilitating financial support to project implementation in countries with economies in transition, in particular in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) [proposal by Norway].

14. *Are committed* to cooperating with the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes on all issues of common relevance, in particular on setting targets and indicators and on integrated management of small water supply and sanitation systems [proposal by Switzerland; specific targeted activities will depend on the adopted programme of work].

15. *Encourage* all Parties to promote international cooperation as identified in the Protocol

16. *Invite* donors, financial institutions and funding mechanisms that support assistance projects to give high priority to relevant joint country initiatives.

17. *Urge* all Signatories that are not yet Parties and States that have not signed the Protocol to become Parties to it as soon as possible.

[Paragraphs moved for later consideration]

We *acknowledge* the added value that the Protocol could bring to countries outside the current region, and have therefore decided to amend the Protocol to allow for global ratification.