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English only

Economic Commission for Europe

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

Bureau

Twenty-ninth meeting

Working Group on Implementation

Twenty-sixth meeting

Geneva, 28 and 29 (a.m.) January 2015

Minutes of the meeting

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The following members of the Bureau attended the meeting: Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia) Chair; Mr. Pawel Dadasiewicz (Poland) Vice-Chair; Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova) Vice-Chair; Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands); Mr. Pavel Forint (Czech Republic); Mr. Alexandros Kiriazis (European Union) and Ms. Torill Tandberg (Norway). The following members of the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) attended the meeting: Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (WGI Chair, United Kingdom); Mr. Evgeny Baranovsky (Belarus); Ms. Lina Buciene (Lithuania); Mr. Hrvoje Buljan (Croatia); Mr. Leo Iberl (Germany); Ms. Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia). Mr. Eero Kytömaa (Finland, Bureau member); Mr. Martin Merkofer (Switzerland, WGI member) and Mr. Pieter Westerbeek (Netherlands, WGI member) could participate only in the second day of the meeting. Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany, Bureau member), Mr. Isamil Nasirov (Azerbaijan, Bureau member), as well as Ms. Helena Fridh (Sweden, WGI member) could not participate to the meeting. The meeting was serviced by the secretariat to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), represented by Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Ms. Franziska Ilg-Hirsch, Ms. Virginia Fusé, Mr. Nikolay Savov and Ms. Claudia Kamke. Mr. Marco Keiner participated in the discussion on sustainable extrabudgetary financing.

2. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Karba and by Ms. Ashcroft, as Chairs of the Bureau and the WGI.

3. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda (CP.TEIA/2015/B.1/Agenda - CP.TEIA/2015/WG.1/Agenda) without changes.

II. Follow-up to the Eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

4. The Bureau considered several pertinent issues in follow-up to the CoP-8.

a) Representation and credentials

5. The secretariat presented a brief report on representations and credentials at CoP-8 and recalled the respective Rules of Procedure of the Convention.¹ The main elements of this report included that:

¹ Contained in "Rules of procedure of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial

- The number of Parties represented at the meeting in 2014 was significantly higher than those represented at the meeting in 2012;
- At the opening of the meeting, when presenting the report on credentials which was then adopted, 27 Parties had submitted original credentials. At the end of the meeting, the number of credentials submitted to the secretariat had slightly increased to 29;
- The secretariat had reviewed regulations and practices of other ECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) concerning reporting on credentials, which revealed that the practice by the majority of the other ECE MEAs was that officers of the Convention reported on credentials. As the Industrial Accidents Convention Rules of Procedures also refer to officers reporting on the credentials to the CoP (rule 17), the secretariat proposed that such a system be implemented as of the next CoP.

6. The Bureau discussed representation and credentials, on the basis of the presentation by the secretariat and took note of the good result achieved in ensuring a more significant representation of all Parties but four.

7. The secretariat invited the Bureau to discuss actions to encourage the submission of credentials. It recalled that the first communication on the need to provide credentials had been included in the letters sent to Ministers in July 2014, followed by numerous reminders up until before the CoP. Members of the Bureau concluded that the preparation of credentials was a duty of Parties and as such it underwent different national regulations and procedures. While the issue was considered important, the high rate of submissions did not suggest that urgent action was required.

8. The Bureau encouraged the secretariat to continue to communicate to Parties well in advance of the next CoP the need to prepare credentials. It also decided to further discuss this issue, especially the presentation of the report on credentials during the meeting, at the moment of preparing the CoP-9 in 2016.

ACTION ITEM: The Bureau to discuss the item of reporting on credentials when preparing the ninth meeting of the CoP.

b) Membership of the Bureau

9. The secretariat reported that, following the initial informal meeting of the newly elected Bureau in the margins of CoP-8 and related communication by the Chair of the Bureau, Azerbaijan decided to nominate another representative as member of the Bureau. This decision was taken in light of the English language skills needed for effectively taking part in the deliberations and discussions of the Bureau. The secretariat was in contact with the focal point from Azerbaijan and was to provide information to the Bureau members as soon as it would receive a communication at regard.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to inform the Bureau about developments concerning the Bureau member from Azerbaijan.

c) Membership of the Working Group on Implementation

10. The secretariat recalled that, at CoP-8, the Russian Federation indicated that it would nominate a member of the Working Group on Implementation. Following this decision and a follow-up discussion with the Head of Delegation of the Russian Federation, the secretariat sent a formal letter to the Russian Federation in December 2014, requesting that the new member be nominated as soon as possible. The secretariat reported that at the time of the meeting it had received confirmation from the Russian Federation about the

nomination of a member for the Working Group. Internal procedures were delaying the communication of the name of the person.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to communicate the name of the WGI member of the Russian Federation to the WGI, once communication from the Russian Federation is received.

d) Election of the Chair of the Working Group on Development

11. The Bureau, in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Development (Decision 2004/4 adopted at the third meeting of the CoP) took note of and welcomed the availability of Mr. C. Dijkens to continue serving as Chair of the Working Group on Development.

e) Activities of the Bureau 2015-2016

12. The Chair of the CoP invited the Bureau and Working Group members to reflect on the challenges outlined in the report of the former Bureau to the CoP and to present in a tour de table the roles they would be ready to take on in addressing these challenges in the coming biennium. The following challenges and opportunities were identified and related recommendations made, clustered by topic:

13. Sustainable financing

- Financial sustainability of the Convention including the provision of contributions by Parties in line with the sustainable financial mechanism and economic strength
- The need to prioritize activities should the resources in the trust fund not increase in the biennium.
- Opening of the Convention to other countries beyond the ECE could provide opportunities to apply for additional financial resources.

ACTION ITEM: Members of the Bureau and the WGI to consider exploring additional options which may be available in their countries for financing activities under the Convention, including in liaison with other national authorities and development cooperation agencies.

14. Implementation of the Convention and compliance

- Fostering the implementation of the Convention also beyond the Assistance Programme countries including in EU member states. Important was the role of the Working Group on Implementation in this respect.
- As implementation of the Convention was linked with compliance, it needed to be assessed how both implementation and compliance could contribute to supporting (prospective) Parties to strengthen industrial safety by means of the implementation of the Convention.

ACTION ITEMS: WGI to further discuss the implementation of the Convention beyond the beneficiary countries of the Assistance Programme. WGD, in cooperation with WGI, to assess whether to introduce a compliance mechanism and to consider its potential role in supporting Parties to enhance industrial safety levels.

15. Assistance Programme

- The work carried out under the Assistance Programme was important and therefore adequate resources should be provided. Projects should be needs driven and focus on implementation. Intense work is still needed to promote the development of self-assessments, action plans and project proposals.
- Assistance Programme countries should show an enhanced level of engagement. This could be proven through the submission of project proposals following the strategic approach and the co-financing of activities as well as showing active

participation throughout the project implementation. The web-page on financing for the Assistance Programme² made available by the secretariat could be a starting point for beneficiary countries to search for the financing of activities.

16. Development of the Convention

- The work on the development of the Convention was the priority in this biennium - time and resources need to be allocated accordingly.

17. Strategic partnerships

- Synergies with other international organizations and programmes dealing with similar issues as the Convention should be continuously strengthened. Linkages with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Chemical Conventions would be worth further exploring. At the same time, synergies with other ECE MEAs need to be considered, not only at the ECE, but also the national level.

ACTION ITEMS: To encourage:

- A. strive to involve other actors such as industry in the Convention's activities;***
- B. to liaise with other Ministries and authorities in the respective countries to enhance the visibility of the Convention nationally, and in other communities internationally (e.g. with the post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction framework).***

Members with roles in other international fora to propose and work towards enhancing respective linkages and synergies, where feasible.

18. Exchange of information

- Sharing information and good practices was considered important. The importance of sharing knowledge with and cooperating with strategic partners in this regard was stressed.

19. On the basis of this discussion, members of the Bureau and WGI committed to an active involvement in the work of the intergovernmental bodies, as well as the Assistance Programme and the promotion of the Strategic Approach. They also agreed to work towards creating and reinforcing synergies with other MEAs and international organizations, and to make efforts to secure sustainable financing for the implementation of the Convention in the 2015-16 biennium and beyond.

III. Financing and overall implementation of the workplan

20. The secretariat reported on the pledges indicated by Parties at, in advance of or following CoP-8. It furthermore presented specific financial and in-kind contributions expected for dedicated workplan activities in the biennium. The pledges for financial contributions received so far totalled approx. USD 675,600 for the biennium. An additional contribution through the Environment and Security (EnvSec) initiative of approx. USD 276,000 was yet to be confirmed. Several in-kind contributions had been confirmed by Parties, including by Germany for the projects carried out with in-kind financing as indicated in the workplan.

21. The secretariat concluded its report by highlighting that at the time of the Bureau meeting, insufficient funds were available to implement all workplan activities in 2015-2016 and that significant further efforts were needed to ensure financing for the implementation of the workplan with an overall budget of approx. 3.2 million USD (financial and in-kind).

² <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/areas-of-work/assistance-programme/financing.html>

22. On the basis of this overview, the Bureau discussed the overall financial situation of the trust fund. It noted the importance of considering in-kind contributions expected, when determining additional financial resources needs. It recognized the importance of engaging in steps to mobilize additional funds in order to ensure the implementation of the 2015-2016 workplan. These funds could originate from additional sources at the national level from Parties which already, or from other Parties which not yet contribute financially to the trust fund. Bureau and WGI members agreed to engage in efforts to mobilize additional financing sources within national government structures, incl. development cooperation.

ACTION ITEM: Bureau, in line with Sustainable Financial Mechanism, to actively encourage Parties to provide support at least at a level reflecting their economic strength. Bureau members to engage in efforts to mobilize additional financing sources within national government structures, incl. development cooperation and to report at next Bureau meeting.

23. The Bureau also noted the importance of maintaining the small group on financing to discuss financing possibilities to work towards ensuring sustainable and predictable long-term financing. Following the retirement of Mr. Gunnar Hem (Norway), the Bureau agreed that the small group on financing comprised the following members: Ms. Sandra Ashcroft (UK), Mr. Chris Dijkens (Netherlands), Ms. Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), Ms. Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova), Mr. Eero Kytömaa (Finland)³, Ms. Torill Tandberg (Norway). The Bureau agreed that the small group on financing should meet in a cost-efficient manner back-to-back with the Bureau meeting in summer 2015. Furthermore, it was proposed that a possible training or workshop on fundraising be organized at an appropriate time.

ACTION ITEM: The small group on financing to consider project financing including through international, national and private development cooperation agencies and organizations (including the relevant European Union bodies and programmes) and to determine actions to work towards ensuring sustainable predictable financing. The small group to consider the organization of a training or workshop on fundraising at an appropriate time.

24. The secretariat shared its plans to proceed with sending letters in accordance with the Sustainable Financial Mechanism, referring to the adopted workplan, and inviting Parties to provide contributions. The Bureau suggested that the letters invite Parties to consider national financing sources beyond the government authorities addressed. It could also encourage Parties to enhance coordination with focal points for the other ECE MEAs with regard to sustainable financing. In line with the Bureau's decision at its meeting in June 2014, the letters should be addressed to the Ministers of the competent authorities.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to send letters to the Ministers of competent authorities, inviting financial contributions, in line with the Sustainable Financial Mechanism.

25. The secretariat presented an overview of the staff resources required to implement the workplan. The workplan 2015-2016 as adopted by CoP-8 included as human resource requirements three extrabudgetary (XB) staff, further 1.5 UN regular budget (RB) positions (secretary and programme assistant), in order to ensure the carrying out of envisaged workplan activities. Maintaining three extrabudgetary staff was necessary in order to absorb the work required to service all subsidiary bodies, implement the Assistance Programme, partnership, outreach, communication activities, funds mobilization and reporting duties. This required the continuation of a position of a Junior/Associate Expert/Environmental Affairs Officer. This position had been financed by Germany for three years initially, and was being financed through Convention's trust fund for a fourth year until end-October 2015, as per a decision of the Bureau in June 2013.

³ Membership of the small group on financing confirmed on the 2nd day of the Bureau meeting.

26. Taking into account the responsibilities of professional secretariat staff, the Bureau took note of the secretariat's workload, as per its decision at its meeting in June 2013. The Bureau recognized that a high priority of the work in 2015-2016 had to be accorded to the preparation and servicing of the Working Group on Development in light of CoP-8 decisions. It also recognized that the finalization of the Danube Delta project, further to other activities under the Assistance Programme, was important in the biennium.

27. Against this background and the decision by CoP-8 by adopting the 2015-16 workplan, the Bureau agreed with maintaining a third professional XB position for the 2015-16 biennium. At the same time, the Bureau stressed that the activities to be included in the workplan 2017-2018 and the programme's future overall scale will be indicative with regard to resource requirements of the secretariat. This will have to be evaluated in particular in light of the future activities by the Working Group on Development and under the Assistance Programme.

ACTION ITEM: The Bureau to evaluate secretariat resource needs in its preparation of 2017-18 workplan.

28. The secretariat further stressed the need for extra-budgetary resources to support the administrative work under the Convention. In order to strengthen this capacity, in particular to provide support to the delivery of outputs by XB staff, a 50% XB position for a programme assistant had been envisaged in the workplans for the 2013-14 and 2015-16 bienniums.

ACTION ITEM: The Bureau to consider ways to encourage Parties to provide financing to support administrative resource needs.

29. The secretariat presented the draft note "Secretariats to ECE MEAs – the way forward" elaborated by the management of ECE and shared for comments with the Bureaux of the ECE MEAs. Because of the increase of activities in the Convention's workplan, the workload and functions of the secretariat, since the adoption of the ECE MEAs, increased. The paper proposed to address the issue by identifying core and non-core activities required to service the ECE MEAs, and advocated for predictable sustainable financing by Parties for the core activities.

30. This approach could ensure the continuous functioning of the secretariats including the servicing of subsidiary bodies established by the governing bodies. Additional non-core or assistance activities could then be financed through additional voluntary contributions incl. for projects.

31. The Bureau shared its reflections on the note. Overall, it stressed that predictable and sustainable financing was crucial and welcomed the secretariat's paper as it included many interesting options for a possible way forward and improving efficiency e.g. by increasing synergies between the secretariats. The Bureau questioned, however, whether individual bodies of MEAs would be the right forum to discuss changes in funding mechanisms effectively. It appreciated the secretariat's plan to further discuss the note with the Chairs of the governing bodies of the other ECE MEAs in April 2015, before presenting it to the ECE Executive Committee (ExCom), and stressed the importance of coordination at the national level. Mr. Kiriazis reported that coordination on this matter at the European Commission had been initiated and detailed comments taking into account all 5 MEAs would be provided in writing. The Bureau further suggested that the note should contain reference to effective measures already taken and planned to further increase the efficiency of the use of resources. Cost-saving measures including the use of telecommunication resources should be considered and further elaborated on. Actions to increase secretariat's efficiency shall be considered in parallel with the process of organizing a high-level discussion on ensuring sustainable financing.

32. The secretariat reported on the continued reflections with regard to increasing the efficient use of resources, beyond those referred to in the note. A dedicated meeting had

been organized by the Environment Division in 2014 and respective follow-up actions were implemented. The secretariat further drew the attention to the Bureau to the fact that the sustainable financial mechanism would need to be amended in order to implement predictable financing for core activities. The Bureau agreed to further consider this aspect following the meeting of the Chairs of the ECE MEA governing bodies on 13 April 2015.

***ACTION ITEMS:** The secretariat to reflect comments by the Bureau in the revised note. The Bureau to consider an amendment of the sustainable financial mechanism following agreement on the note by the ECE MEA Chairs and the Executive Committee.*

IV. Involvement of Parties and other stakeholders

33. The Bureau and the WGI were informed about planned activities in this priority area, such as the promotion of communication materials developed in the last biennium (online training, cartoons and film on the Convention) and their intended use for capacity-building activities. The meeting took note of the information provided, considering the continued use of the materials as an excellent way to raise awareness and improve the understanding of the provisions of the Industrial Accidents Convention in the ECE region.

34. In terms of working visits to other stakeholders, the opportunities outlined below presenting themselves in 2015 were considered by the Bureau.

Sendai Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), 14-18 March 2015, Japan

35. The secretariat informed participants that ECE was to be represented by the Executive Secretary and the ECE focal point for Disaster Risk Reduction at the Sendai Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), 14-18 March 2015, Japan. The secretariat also provided information that it contributed to the ECE participation by providing material for a website and a brochure to be distributed at the meeting.

36. The secretariat called for support by Bureau members to promote the Convention at the Conference by liaising with the members of the delegations in their own countries.

***ACTION ITEMS:** The Bureau and WGI members to liaise with colleagues participating to the Sendai Conference with reference to the Convention. Bureau members to report at the next meeting on advocating the work of the Industrial Accidents Convention at Sendai.*

Environmental Emergencies Forum organized by the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, 1-3 June 2015, Oslo

37. The secretariat reported on the possible representation of the Convention during the Environmental Emergencies Forum, to be held on 1-3 June in Oslo and the preliminary discussions with the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit about the expected involvement of the Convention secretariat. The Forum would discuss prevention, preparedness and response to environmental emergencies, including industrial accidents, and would include representatives from governments, industries, academia, aid agencies, and civil society. The meeting considered the Environmental Emergencies Forum as an opportunity to highlight the Convention's work in the areas of industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response.

***ACTION ITEM:** The secretariat and Bureau members represented at the Environmental Emergencies Forum to report at the next meeting of the Bureau.*

Response exercise, HarbourEx15" Oslo, Norway 27-29 April 2015

38. Ms. Tandberg announced the organization of the response exercise "HarbourEx15" to be held in Oslo, 27 to 29 April 2015. The exercise would be followed by a seminar on

lessons learned to take place in autumn of the same year. Ms. Tandberg invited Bureau and WGI members, as well as the secretariat to attend both events and indicated that she would circulate further information.

IMPEL (EU Network for Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law) 11th Seminar on Lessons Learnt from Industrial Accidents Lille, France, 2 – 3 June 2015

39. The secretariat reported having been invited to a seminar on “Lessons learned from industrial accidents” held under the auspices of the European Union Network for Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), 2-3 June 2015, thanks to a proposal by Chris Dijkens as former Chair of the Bureau that the Convention be represented.

40. The Convention was allocated a total of one hour for a general presentation and one presentation on a more specific topic to present the transboundary aspect in practice. For the specific subject, the secretariat had, following consultations with selected members of the two bodies and the IMPEL secretariat, suggested that a representative of Belarus present the transboundary exercise between Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania, which had been presented at the Seminar during CoP-8.

41. The members of the two bodies welcomed the first participation of the Convention in this forum. Suggestions for enhancing cooperation with IMPEL were additionally provided.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to report at the next Bureau meeting.

GCE Forum of the Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 2-5 June 2015 including a specific segment on the Convention, as proposed by GCE.

42. The secretariat informed the Bureau and WGI that the Convention, as in previous years, was invited to take an active part in the GCE International Forum on Industrial Safety. The forum would take place in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, on 2-5 June 2015. At this occasion, the secretariat was invited, following a suggestion by Chris Dijkens as former Chair of the Bureau, to cooperate with the GCE in the organization of a specific segment on the Convention. The meeting welcomed the opportunity of organizing a segment on the Convention at the forum. Ms. Karba and Ms. Ashcroft agreed to be involved in the preparation of the segment.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to liaise with Ms. Karba and Ms. Ashcroft regarding the organization of a specific segment on the Convention during the GCE Forum and to organize the segment in cooperation with GCE.

Global Chemical Safety and Security Summit accompanied by Global Chemical Safety and Security Fair

43. Mr. Dadaiewicz suggested adding to the list of events under this agenda item the Global Chemical Safety and Security Summit, accompanied by a Global Chemical Safety and Security Fair. Both events were to take place in Poland from 16 to 18 November 2015.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to include the Fair in the online meetings list.

V. Exchange of information

Guidance document on the amended Annex I

44. The secretariat reported on the planned work regarding the development of a Guidance document on the implementation of Annex I of the Convention. The activity, financed by Norway, was included in the workplan of the Convention for the biennium 2015–2016. The Guidance document would target national competent authorities and operators of hazardous activities by providing explanations and advice on the use of Annex

I as well as good practices from Parties and useful information sources. Norway had provided financing for three years to develop this guidance document through a consultancy.

45. The secretariat asked the Bureau and the WGI for recommendations for a consultant, who could prepare the draft guidance document. It was envisaged that in the development of the draft Guidance document, the feedback and outcomes of the sub-regional capacity-building activities on the amended Annex I, –be included.

46. The meeting suggested that a small steering group of experts should be established to provide guidance on the development of the guidance document and review it. The use of innovative IT tools such as webinars to gather feedback on the draft Annex I guidance document or to present it in its final version could be explored by the secretariat.

ACTION ITEMS: The Bureau to provide suggestions for candidates to develop guidance on Annex I as consultant. The secretariat to request focal points to nominate members of a small group of experts on Annex I guidance once timelines are established. The secretariat to explore the possibility of using webinars for feedback on the draft and promotion of the final Annex I guidance document.

Raising knowledge on industrial safety at universities

47. Mr. Iberl informed participants that Mr. Winkelmann was to report about the project “Raising knowledge on industrial safety at universities” financed and implemented by Germany at the next Bureau meeting.

Exchange of experience and good practices among Parties and to promote the continuous organization of bilateral exercises for preparedness

48. The secretariat suggested that the above-mentioned workplan item be addressed through 1) the organization of another seminar on enhancing industrial safety in the ECE region at CoP-9 in 2016; and 2) the planned implementation of table-top and field exercises within the framework of the Danube Delta project involving the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

49. The meeting welcomed the results of the seminar carried out during CoP-8 and expressed its support for the organization of a similar event on enhancing industrial safety in the ECE region at CoP-9 in 2016. Taking stock of the feedback received from participants in the seminar, it was decided that the seminar was to last one entire day, possibly the day before the meeting of the CoP.

50. It was furthermore recommended that the seminar could be carried out jointly with partner organizations, e.g. with OECD or the EU Joint Research Centre, in order to take advantage of synergies and to address pertinent issues relevant to all member States/Parties. The participants also welcomed the table-top and field exercises that were to be organized between the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine within the framework of the Danube Delta project which were scheduled to be carried out in 2015.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat, in cooperation with the respective Chairs, to discuss with OECD and the EU Joint Research Centre the possible joint organization of a seminar on enhancing industrial safety at the ninth meeting of the CoP.

51. Ms. Tandberg informed meeting participants that through the European Commission's Directorate General Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) there were several possibilities for financing response exercises. Bureau and WGI members discussed the possibilities to use dedicated EU or other financing sources to finance bi- or multilateral exercises for preparedness under the 2015–16 workplan. Members of the Bureau and WGI as well as the secretariat were encouraged to investigate further possibilities for organizing and financing such activities. Slovenia was identified as a potential lead country for activities on preparedness and response.

ACTION ITEMS: Members of the Bureau and WGI, in cooperation with the secretariat, to investigate further possibilities for organizing and financing bi- or multilateral exercises for preparedness. Ms. J. Karba (Chair, Slovenia) to investigate options as a potential lead country for preparedness and response and report at the next Bureau meeting.

52. With regard to exchange of information, Mr. Kiriazis remarked that different information sources on industrial safety were available on different websites hosted by the organizations with a mandate on industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response. He suggested that this issue be discussed in the framework of the next Inter-agency coordination meeting and that consideration could be given to consolidating existing information resources in a common portal.

ACTION ITEM: To discuss at the Inter-agency coordination meeting (May 2015) ways and means to make information by the different agencies more easily accessible including through a possible joint information portal.

VI. Strategic partnerships

53. Bureau and WGI members discussed the implementation of activities under this work area, and how to accord priority, in light of their financing.

Sharing of good practices for safety and land-use planning; development of guidance on safety and land use planning, in cooperation with ECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment and the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management

54. The secretariat informed the Bureau and WGI about the development of guidance on safety and land use planning, in cooperation with ECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment and the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. This activity is financed in-kind by the European Investment Bank (EIB) as announced during the CoP. EIB would finance a consultant to carry out the work.

55. Mr. Dijkens recalled the Joint seminar on land use planning around hazardous industrial sites (The Hague, Netherlands, 11–12 November 2010), organized jointly by the Convention and the Committee on Housing and Land Management and recommended that the Guidance document take account of the conclusions and recommendation of the above-mentioned workshop.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat, in cooperation with the EU Bureau member, to ensure that reference to the conclusions and recommendation of the joint seminar in The Hague (11-12 November 2010) is taken into account in the work of the consultant under the EIB consultancy.

Activities to raise awareness of the risk of complacency, to ensure prevention and maintain a high level of safety, with partners.

56. The secretariat informed the Bureau and the WGI about a one-day evaluation workshop addressing complacency (Chisinau, 27 March 2015), to be financed by Finland as part of the Danube Delta project, through which it planned to address the workplan item “Activities to raise awareness of the risk of complacency, to ensure prevention and maintain a high level of safety, with partners.” Finland was the lead party for this activity. At this stage in time, no further information had been received from Finland as to the financing of other activities under the workplan item.

Publishing and promoting the checklist for harmonized contingency planning for accidents with potential impacts on transboundary waters and its application

57. The secretariat informed the Bureau and WGI that, in accordance with the decisions taken by the CoP at its eighth meeting and Sweden’s commitment to act as a lead country,

the checklist for harmonized contingency planning for accidents with potential impacts on transboundary waters was to be published in 2016, following the testing of its application in the framework of the Danube Delta project (March 2015) and its review by the 7th Meeting of the Parties of the ECE Water Convention (November 2015). The meeting welcomed this approach and the in-kind financing and support from Sweden for this activity.

Strategic partnerships with other organizations

58. Bureau and WGI members discussed the importance of specifically targeting as a priority organizations with which strategic synergies could be built. At the same time, the members of the two bodies agreed that it was also important to consider opportunities arising from the work that strategic partners were already undertaking. The possibility of enhancing cooperation with OECD was highlighted. OECD was currently preparing the draft workplan for 2017–2020 which it planned to share with the Convention secretariat and Chair at a later stage. A joint Conference on Inspections was mentioned as one example of possible future cooperation.

ACTION ITEM: The UNECE and OECE secretariats and Chairs to consider opportunities for synergies in the implementation of the respective workplans.

59. The Bureau remarked that it was worth considering strengthening partnerships with industry associations which could act as multiplier of information and products developed under the Convention. Mr. Kiriazis highlighted the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) and the European Association of Chemical Distributors (FECC) as Brussels-based associations with which cooperation could be strengthened. He referred to the meetings of the European Commission Expert Group on the Seveso Directive (aka Seveso Expert Group) meetings as examples where such co-operation works successfully, as industry associations, as well as NGOs and the secretariat were invited to attend these meetings.

60. The Bureau stressed the importance of circulating information about events under the Convention to industry associations and to including them on the mailing list. The secretariat highlighted that participation in the GCE forum in St. Petersburg, 2–5 June 2015, will be a possibility to reach out to industry in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

ACTION ITEMS: The secretariat and the Bureau to take steps to strengthen cooperation with industry association.

61. Mr. Dijkens suggested further exploring partnership with IMPEL, explaining that, under this umbrella, a small group of volunteers/experts reviewed the implementation by countries of environmental law including aspects related to hazard and crisis management. Topics of the Convention could possibly be included in the peer reviews and linkages with the Assistance Programme considered. Such a peer review may be an opportunity to highlight good practices and opportunities for improvement. Peer reviews had taken place recently in Romania, Iceland, and Turkey.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Dijkens to explore possibilities for IMPEL peer reviews to cover aspects related to the implementation of the Convention at the national level.

VII. Development of the Convention

a) Activities by the Working Group on Development to prepare draft amendments and CoP guidance

62. The Chair of the Working Group on Development briefed the meeting on key elements concerning the Group's planned organization of work to develop amendments and CoP guidance. The planned organization of work was to include the establishment of a small group of legal experts and a small group of experts on land-use planning to support the Working Group's activities. The Bureau took note of the information presented, and

referred, in view of the Working Group's ambitious workplan, to the deliberations of the CoP that the preparation of an amendment to the Convention should have precedence over the development of guidance.

63. The Chair of the Working Group on Development highlighted the high workload for the secretariat to prepare for and service the meetings and processes to develop amendments and CoP guidance. He stressed that, in view of the above, support by the Bureau and WGI members, and by Parties, including through the nomination of members to the small groups, was needed to ensure that the time schedule set by the CoP for the negotiations could be met. He expressed his confidence that then the tasks could be completed by CoP-9 and agreed to report on the progress made by the Working Group at future Bureau meetings. The Bureau recognized the high workload for the secretariat and the need to support this work by the Parties. It stressed that meeting the objectives set and timeline outlined required the efforts of all Parties.

b) Terms of Reference of the Convention's subsidiary bodies

64. Meeting participants discussed the organization of work for the review of the Terms of Reference of the subsidiary bodies (Bureau and the Working Groups on Development and Implementation), with which the Bureau was mandated by the CoP. In view of initial discussions on this matter held at and in follow-up to the twenty-seventh meeting of the Bureau (The Hague, 16–17 June 2014), the secretariat was requested to circulate to participants the Terms of Reference with changes previously considered in order to enable a thorough discussion at the next meeting of the Bureau.

65. Mr. Kiriazis proposed that in the review the Terms of Reference in light of developments under the Convention, consideration be given to good drafting practices e.g. by looking at the Terms of Reference of other subsidiary bodies to ECE MEAs or existing guidelines. He stressed that sufficient time was needed among EU member states to coordinate and agree on a common position. Should the updated ToR be finalized by the Bureau meeting in early 2016, this would provide for sufficient time to reach agreement in the EU before CoP-9 in autumn 2016.

ACTION ITEM: The secretariat to circulate the draft updated Terms of Reference for subsidiary bodies with changes previously considered. The secretariat to circulate the ToR of governing bodies of other ECE MEAs.

VIII. Assistance Programme activities

66. The secretariat informed the Bureau and the WGI that, at the time of the meeting, there were no new or updated self-assessments, nor action plans or project proposals submitted by beneficiary countries. Bureau and WGI members expressed their disappointment that beneficiary countries did not optimise the Convention's tools to progress in enhancing industrial safety and that their interest in assistance projects appeared to be limited.

67. Bureau and WGI members discussed the possible reasons for the situation and noted the different degrees of ownership of the activities organized by the beneficiary countries. The Bureau and WGI agreed that the promotion and subsequent use of the user-friendly version of the Benchmarks document, including the Russian version, would enable beneficiary countries to use more effectively the tools under the strategic approach and to submit project proposals.

68. In addition, ownership of the beneficiary countries could be enhanced through their own financial and in-kind contributions to carry out the activities. The list of resources contained in the webpage on the financing for the Assistance Programme could be a starting point.

69. Furthermore, Bureau and WGI members stressed that efforts shall be made to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Assistance Programme. Investing in activities to reach more beneficiary countries needed to be considered, and a regional vs national approach carefully chosen, as applicable. The Programme should be managed in a way that limits the bureaucratic burden for countries to benefit from it to the extent possible, within UN rules and regulations.

70. The Chair of the WGI indicated that the Group would further discuss the implementation of the strategic approach, identifying other possible options.

71. The secretariat provided information on the envisaged activities under the Assistance Programme for 2015 and 2016. For 2015 it was foreseen to conclude the Danube Delta project. In addition, one subregional capacity building activity on the implementation of the amended Annex I would be organized for the countries of Central Asia. For 2016, the secretariat mentioned capacity building activities on the implementation of the amended Annex I for the countries of the Caucasus and Eastern Europe for which financing had been requested through the EnvSec initiative (yet to be confirmed).

72. Furthermore, the secretariat stressed that the financing for some of the activities was not yet ensured, and invited Bureau members in particular to seek resources for the financing of the field exercise and the crisis management component of the final workshop for the Danube Delta project.

73. The meeting took note of the proposed activities for 2015 and 2016. In follow-up to the high-level segment on the Assistance Programme during CoP-8, it recalled that exchange of information and good practices should not only comprise knowledge and information transfer from EU and EFTA countries to countries with economies in transition, but also among countries with economies in transition themselves and beyond.

ACTION ITEMS:

Bureau members to seek financing for field exercise and the crisis management component of the final project workshop for the Danube Delta project.

The secretariat to update the Bureau on progress regarding the implementation of the workplan activities under the Assistance programme.

The Chair of the WGI to report to the Bureau at its next meeting on the outcome of the discussion at WGI regarding increasing the ownership of beneficiary countries and encouraging beneficiary countries to prepare and submit self-assessments and action plans.

IX. Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

74. The secretariat recalled the Bureau's approval of the workplan for the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG) at its twenty-eighth meeting (Geneva, 2 December 2014) and the CoP' subsequent inclusion of the activities of JEG in its workplan for 2015–2016 at its eighth meeting.

75. In addition, the secretariat informed the Bureau and the WGI that it had received a nomination from Germany for Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei to act as co-Chair from the Industrial Accidents Convention. Mr. Peter Kovacz would continue as Co-Chair of the JEG for the Water Convention. The Bureau welcomed the nomination and appointed Mr. Winkelmann-Oei as JEG co-Chair for the biennium 2015–2016, in accordance with the JEG Strategy (2010). The Bureau also expressed its appreciation to Mr. Senzaconi for his leadership and support to JEG as its co-Chair in preceding years.

X. Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

76. The Bureau decided to discuss the hosting of the CoP at its next meeting. The meeting also agreed to hold a one-day seminar, similar to the one organized at CoP-8, back-to-back with CoP-9.

XI. Proposed schedule of meetings for 2015

77. The WGI and Bureau discussed the dates of their next meetings, to be confirmed in follow-up to the meeting⁴.

XII. Closing of the meeting

78. The Chair of the Bureau and the Chair of the Working Group on Implementation thanked the secretariat and members of the two bodies for their support in advance of and during the meeting, before closing the meeting on 29 January 2015.

⁴ Following the meeting, the Bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 8-9 July 2015. The meeting of the small group on financing was to be organized the day before the Bureau meeting (that is on 7 July 2015). The Working Group on Implementation, decided to meet on 30 June and 1 July 2015 (back-to-back with the ECE networks of the Chairs of Compliance and implementation bodies on 29 June).