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

Ninth meeting

Ljubljana, 28-30 November 2016

Report of the Conference of the Parties on its ninth meeting

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Introduction

1. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) was held from 28 to 30 November 2016 in Ljubljana. The decisions and other outcomes adopted at the meeting may be found in an addendum to this report (ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1).

A. Attendance

2. The ninth meeting was attended by delegations from the following Parties to the Convention: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

3. Delegations from the following ECE member States not Parties to the Convention also attended: Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

4. Representatives of two United Nations organizations participated in the meeting: the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and the World Health Organization (WHO) European Centre for Environment and Health. Representatives of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, together with the Chair of the Interstate Council on Industrial Safety of the Commonwealth of Independent States, attended also. In addition, the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions and industry associations were represented: the European Technology Platform on Industrial Safety; the European Virtual Institute for Integrated Risk Management; the International Youth Association for Training and Inter-employment Programs (Georgia); Journalists for Human Rights; the Public Awareness and Monitoring Centre (Armenia); the National Mining University (Dnipro, Ukraine); the Spanish Technology Platform on Industrial Safety; and Zoë Environment Network (Switzerland).

B. Organizational matters

5. The outgoing Chair of the Conference of the Parties, Jasmina Karba (Slovenia), opened the meeting.

6. Irena Majcen, Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, made an opening speech.

7. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECE welcomed delegates and made opening remarks.

8. The Conference of the Parties adopted its agenda (ECE/CP.TEIA/31 and Corr.1).

9. The Conference of the Parties took note of the report on the status of ratification of the Convention and its Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters (Protocol on Civil Liability) (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/2), including information on whether Parties had designated competent authorities and points of contact, as required under article 17 of the Convention. The number of Parties to the Convention remained unchanged (41), and there had been no change in the status of the Protocol (not in force). There had, however, been an

increase in the number of ECE countries designating competent authorities (from 40 to 44) and designating points of contact (from 35 to 43)

10. The Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat to report in a similar manner at the next meeting.

11. An outgoing Vice-Chair, Pawel Dadasiewicz (Poland), reported on the credentials submitted by the representatives of the Parties, with only Montenegro failing to provide credentials. Albania, Denmark and Monaco, all Parties to the Convention, were not represented at the meeting. The Conference of the Parties accepted the report on credentials and noted that the number was sufficient to take decisions at the meeting.

I. Fostering implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

12. The meeting began with a seminar, organized jointly by ECE and OECD, to discuss how the work of the two organizations on industrial and chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response could contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the goals and priority actions set out in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework).

13. The seminar comprised four sessions. The opening high-level panel was moderated by the ECE Deputy Executive Secretary and included senior officials from Bulgaria, Slovenia, UNISDR and OECD. The remaining sessions were moderated by the outgoing Chair of the Working Group on the Development of the Convention (Working Group on Development), the President of the Slovenian Committee for Protection against Natural and Other Disasters and the outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Implementation. Torill Tandberg (Norway), member of the outgoing Bureau of the Convention and Chair of the Bureau of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents, provided closing remarks.

14. The Conference of the Parties welcomed the joint seminar with OECD and requested that an informal Chairs' summary be annexed to the meeting report (see annex). The Bureau was requested to consider the matters raised in the seminar when reviewing the Long-term Strategy for the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/22, annex I) and drafting the workplan for 2019-2020.

II. Report of the Bureau on its activities since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

15. The Chair presented the report of the Bureau (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/3) on its activities since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 3-5 December 2014), highlighting the progress made and the challenges remaining for each of the five priority areas of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention.

16. The Chair said that the Bureau wished to be mandated to develop a revised long-term strategy until 2030, aligned with the relevant international developments, enriched with new elements, such as gender balance, and linked with a strategy for the Convention's opening. The reasoning behind such a proposal was to:

- (a) Encourage Parties to increase their ownership of the workplan;
- (b) Garner full support in-kind and financially for workplan implementation;

(c) Further implement the sustainable financial mechanism for the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/24, annex I);

(d) Consider the impact of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda on future Convention activities.

17. The Conference of the Parties took note with appreciation of the report of the Bureau and requested the in-coming Bureau to prepare a similar report for the next meeting on the activities carried out in the biennium 2017-2018.

III. Amendment of the terms of reference of the Bureau and the Working Group on Development and the rules of procedure

18. The Chair recalled that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had requested the Bureau to review the terms of reference of the Bureau and the subsidiary bodies in order to reflect current practice. The Chair presented the draft amended terms of reference of the Bureau (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/4). The changes would, among other things, limit membership of the Bureau to representatives of Parties and clarify the role of the Bureau vis-à-vis the working groups. Having corrected a typographic error in the draft, Parties adopted the amended terms of reference of the Bureau (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1).

19. The Chair next presented the draft amended terms of reference of the Working Group on Development (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/5). The changes included formalizing the short name of the Working Group and clarifying that the body was open-ended. The Conference of the Parties decided that a reference to relevant legislation adopted by the European Union and other Parties would not be included, and adopted the amended terms of reference of the Working Group on Development (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1).

20. The Chair explained that, in reviewing the terms of reference of the different bodies and considering current practice, the Bureau had become aware of inconsistencies with the rules of procedure for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and specifically with rule 22 on the Bureau and rule 23 on subsidiary bodies. The Chair presented draft amendments to those two rules (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/6), drafted by the Bureau. The changes would, among other things, define a nomination procedure for membership, specify the need to consider gender balance alongside geographical balance when electing members, define a procedure for replacing members who were unable to complete their terms of office and allow the definition of a working language. The meeting adopted the amendments to the rules of procedure for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention as presented (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1).

IV. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties

21. The Chair presented a list of the outgoing members of the Bureau, who had been elected or re-elected at the eighth meeting: Chris Dijkens (Netherlands); Pawal Dadasiewicz (Poland) (Vice-Chair); Pavel Forint (Czechia); Ms. Karba (Slovenia) (Chair); Aléxandros Kiriazis (European Union); Eero Kytömaa (Finland); Ismail Nasirov (Azerbaijan); Svetlana Stirbu (Republic of Moldova) (Vice-Chair); Ms. Tandberg

(Norway); and Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany).¹ The Conference of the Parties expressed its thanks to the outgoing Bureau for its work.

22. The delegation of Armenia stated that there was a need for geographical balance and rotation in the membership of the Bureau.

23. Following a proposal by the delegation of Norway, the Conference of the Parties re-elected Ms. Karba as its Chair and re-elected Mr. Dadasiewicz and elected Ms. Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund (Finland) as the Vice-Chairs. On the basis of information provided by the Chair, Parties elected or re-elected other members of the Bureau as follows: Mr. Forint (Czechia); Mr. Kiriazis (European Union); Mr. Martin Merkofer (Switzerland); Mr. Senad Oprasic (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Mr. Michael Struckl (Austria); Ms. Tandberg (Norway); and Mr. Winkelmann-Oei (Germany).

V. Development of the Convention

24. The Chair reminded delegates that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had asked the Working Group on Development to draft an amendment to the Convention to address a number of provisions and issues. Those issues included the opening of the Convention to all Member States of the United Nations and the strengthening of the provisions on public participation.

25. At the same time, the Working Group on Development had been asked to develop guidance to: (a) clarify and strengthen reporting obligations; (b) introduce a mechanism for the review of compliance; (b) update the terms of reference of the subsidiary bodies; (c) clarify provisions on land-use planning; and (d) clarify the scope of mutual assistance.

A. Activities of the Working Group on Development

26. The outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Development, Mr. Dijkens, presented the Working Group's activities in the period 2015-2016, referring to the reports of the Working Group's fifth, sixth and seventh meetings (ECE/CP.TEIA/WG.1/2015/2, ECE/CP.TEIA/WG.1/2015/7 and ECE/CP.TEIA/WG.1/2016/2). Two bodies had been established to support the activities of the Working Group between sessions through electronic consultations: a small group of legal experts; and a small group of experts on land-use planning. A workshop on land-use planning had been held (Geneva, 13 April 2016).

27. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties emphasized that the Working Group had discussed the question of safeguards to avoid any adverse budgetary implications related to the possible opening of the Convention.

28. The meeting took note of the activities of the Working Group on Development and thanked its Chair for his leading role.

B. Amendment to the Convention

29. The Chair introduced a draft decision on amending the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/7). The outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Development

¹ Subsequently, Azerbaijan and Finland nominated Yashar Karimov and Wivi-Ann Wagello-Sjölund, respectively, as replacement members of the Bureau.

highlighted the Working Group's key conclusions on the amendment. The rapporteur of the small group of legal experts, Mr. Erol Mertcan (United Kingdom), presented the draft decision in more detail, including the draft amendment itself. The proposal comprised amendments to articles 1, 4, 9, 18, 26 and 29 and to annex VIII to the Convention.

30. The Chair explained that, subsequent to its development by the Working Group, the amendment had been proposed by a number of Parties to the Convention: the European Union and its member States; Norway; the Republic of Moldova; Serbia; and Switzerland. The amendment had been submitted to the secretariat in accordance with rule 32, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure, and had been circulated to the Parties to the Convention through diplomatic and other channels by the secretariat in accordance with article 26, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

31. The delegation of the Russian Federation requested that the parts of the proposal be decided upon separately, in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure. Parties agreed with that request and considered the proposal article by article, in turn, in accordance with rules 38 and 39.

32. Parties approved the proposed changes to articles 1 and 4 of the Convention. The representative of the Russian Federation did not support the amendment of article 9 on information to, and participation of the public. Parties approved the proposed changes to articles 18 and 26. Parties also agreed on the amendment of article 29, with respect to the opening of the Convention and the applicability of all amendments to new Parties. A representative of Germany was nevertheless not convinced that it made sense to open the Convention without adopting the revised article 9. Parties approved the proposed changes to annex VIII to the Convention.

33. The Conference of the Parties then considered the proposal as a whole. Representatives of Norway and Switzerland expressed their support for the amendment. The representative of the European Union emphasized the importance of the Convention conveying a message to the outside world in terms of its values, indicated a need for further discussion on the principles to be shared with the worldwide community and wished to revisit the amendment at the next meeting. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed regret that the Conference of the Parties could not approve at the present meeting the amendment opening the Convention to countries beyond the region. The delegation of Norway underlined the need to continue to discuss the amendment of the Convention and to find a way forward. A representative of Switzerland expressed regret that it was not possible to adopt the whole amendment or at least a part of it after the long, intensive and constructive negotiations in the Working Group on Development. Finally, the Conference of the Parties was not able reach consensus on the proposed amendment and decided to revisit the matter at its next meeting.

C. Guidance by the Conference of the Parties

34. The Chair presented the deliberations and conclusion of the Working Group on Development regarding the clarification of the scope of mutual assistance, as set out in article 12 of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties noted the deliberations of the Working Group on Development and agreed that the scope of mutual assistance applied only to accidents with potential transboundary effects.

35. The outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Development introduced the work on guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects.

The representative of the European Investment Bank,² the lead organization for the activity, presented the process for developing the guidance document.

36. Mr. Struckl, rapporteur of the small group of experts on land-use planning, presented the Working Group's review of the guidance, including by means of the joint ECE workshop on safety and land-use planning organized under the Industrial Accidents Convention, the ECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. The secretariat provided an overview of the structure of the draft guidance, which had been split into two parts (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/10-ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/8 and ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/9).

37. The secretariat noted that comments made on the guidance by a subsidiary body to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol. The Conference of the Parties took note of that information.

38. The Conference of the Parties took note of the guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects, as presented, and entrusted the Bureau with its finalization on the basis of the points raised at the meeting and also the comments of the subsidiary body to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol.

39. The Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat to publish the guidance in print and electronic forms in the three official languages of ECE, taking into account the relevant deliberations of the Meetings of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol at their seventh and third sessions, respectively (Minsk, 13-16 June 2017).

40. The Conference of the Parties invited ECE member States and other interested United Nations Member States to use the guidance.

VI. Implementation of the Convention

41. The outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Implementation, Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom), reported on the Working Group's work in the period since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Conference of the Parties took note of the activities of the Working Group on Implementation in the biennium 2015-2016.

A. Report on implementation of the Convention

42. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation presented the eighth report on the implementation of the Convention (2014-2015) (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/10). The report had been prepared by the Working Group based on the national implementation reports received from Parties and committed countries. By the deadline for reporting (31 January 2016), 32 out of 41 Parties and 1 of the 5 committed countries had reported; since then, all Parties except for Bosnia and Herzegovina had reported, although 4 of the 5 committed countries had still not reported.

43. A delegate of Georgia reported on the drafting of new legislation relating to industrial accidents and noted that Georgia expected it would accede to the Convention within two years. A representative of Azerbaijan informed Parties about changes made to the competent authorities for the Convention, which were intended to ensure that in future the country would be better able to coordinate activities in line with the Convention.

² The European Investment Bank is part of the European Union.

44. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties drew the attention of delegates to the Working Group's invitation to countries to contact it, through the secretariat, to discuss the implementation of specific aspects of the Convention. The Chair of the Working Group then presented a draft decision prepared by the Working Group and the Bureau on strengthening the implementation of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/11).

45. The Conference of the Parties adopted the eighth report on the implementation of the Convention. It recommended specifically, in line with the report, continuing the collection of good practice examples through the national implementation reports, and called upon Parties and committed countries to highlight good practices and guidelines, including by providing weblinks, in their national implementation reports for the next reporting round to help disseminate such good practices.

46. The Conference of the Parties also adopted decision 2016/1 on strengthening the implementation of the Convention (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1) and requested the Working Group on Implementation to prepare a further decision on strengthening the implementation of the Convention for the next meeting.

B. Reporting requirements under the Convention

47. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties recalled that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had requested the Working Group on Implementation to prepare a draft decision on reporting obligations in order to clarify those requirements, including with regard to the periodicity and public availability of national implementation reports. The Chair of the Working Group presented a draft decision submitted by that body on reporting requirements under the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/12). The draft included a proposal to extend the reporting cycle from two to four years, a change that delegates welcomed.

48. The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2016/2 on reporting requirements under the Convention (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1) and requested the Working Group on Implementation to prepare a ninth report on implementation on the basis of national implementation reports for the eleventh meeting, in 2020.

C. Terms of reference of the Working Group on Implementation

49. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties noted that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had also requested the Working Group on Development to address the issue of the review of compliance. The Working Group had concluded that there was a need for additional analysis of the needs for and benefits of introducing a compliance mechanism for the Convention. It had recommended that the terms of reference of the Working Group on Implementation be updated to ensure that it could support Parties and committed countries in strengthening their implementation of the Convention most effectively. The Chair of the Working Group on Implementation then presented the Working Group's deliberations regarding the introduction of a compliance mechanism and the conclusions reached.

50. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties further recalled that at its eighth meeting the Conference of the Parties had requested the Bureau to review the terms of reference of the Convention's subsidiary bodies in order to reflect the current practice and roles. For the Working Group on Implementation, the opportunity had been taken to ensure also that the body would be able to support Parties and committed countries most effectively in strengthening their implementation of the Convention's provisions, as recommended by the Working Group on Development, and to align its terms of reference with the other subsidiary bodies and with the rules of procedure.

51. The secretariat presented the proposed revised terms of reference of the Working Group on Implementation (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/13). Following an intervention by a representative of the Russian Federation, Parties agreed to make clear in the terms of reference that Parties, committed countries and other reporting countries would respond on a voluntary basis to certain requests by the Working Group.

52. The Conference of the Parties adopted the amended terms of reference of the Working Group on Implementation, as revised in the meeting (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1).

D. Election of the members of the Working Group on Implementation for the period 2017-2020

53. The Chair presented a list of the outgoing members of the Working Group on Implementation, elected or re-elected at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties: Sandra Ashcroft (United Kingdom); Evgeny Baranovsky (Belarus); Lina Buciene (Lithuania); Hrvoje Buljan (Croatia); Helena Fridh (Sweden); Leo Iberl (Germany); Martin Merkofer (Switzerland); Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia); and Peter Westerbeek (Netherlands). The Russian Federation had also nominated a representative (Anna Tsarina), whose name was communicated following the meeting. The Working Group had subsequently elected Ms. Ashcroft as its Chair and Ms. Milutinovic as its Vice-Chair.

54. The Conference of the Parties expressed its thanks to the outgoing members of the Working Group for their work, and especially the Chair for her excellent leadership during the past four years.

55. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties pointed out that members of the Working Group would be elected for a period of four years, to 2020. The amended terms of reference aligned the term of office of the members of the Working Group with the four-yearly reporting cycle.

56. The Conference of the Parties then elected or re-elected the following members of the Working Group on Implementation: Mr. Buljan (Croatia); Mr. Pavel Chukharev (Belarus); Ms. Fridh (Sweden); Mr. Gonzalez (Switzerland); Mr. Iberl (Germany); Ms. Rachel McCann (United Kingdom); Ms. Milutinovic (Serbia); Ms. Tsarina (Russian Federation); Ms. Laura Vizbule (Latvia); and Mr. Westerbeek (Netherlands).

VII. Assistance to countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe

57. The Chair recalled that countries with economies in transition had benefitted from assistance activities within the framework of the Convention and, since the third meeting, from the Assistance Programme.

A. Progress report on assistance activities carried out in 2015-2016

58. The Chair drew attention to the progress report on the implementation of assistance activities in 2015-2016 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/14). The secretariat, on behalf of the outgoing Bureau and Working Group on Implementation, reported on the outcomes of assistance activities organized in the framework of the Assistance Programme and other capacity-building activities since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including:

(a) The project on hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta for the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine;

- (b) A subregional workshop for Central Asia on annex I to the Convention;
- (c) A meeting of the Steering Committee on the National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in Kazakhstan, with a focus on the prevention of accidental water pollution from tailings facilities;
- (d) A workshop on industrial accidents prevention in Montenegro.

59. A representative of the Republic of Moldova presented the results of the Danube Delta project, which had been completed in 2015, and called for the current draft joint contingency plan and trilateral agreement to be finalized and formalized and for a follow-up project. The delegates of the other two countries involved in the project, Romania and Ukraine, also made statements, with the representative of Ukraine emphasizing his country's interest in developing international cooperation to address crisis management in the Delta region.

60. The Conference of the Parties endorsed the progress report on the assistance activities carried out during the biennium 2015-2016 and requested the secretariat to prepare a similar report for the next meeting

B. Assessment of the Assistance Programme's effectiveness and future development

61. The Chair introduced a document on the effectiveness, results and options for the further development of the Assistance Programme (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/15). The Working Group on Implementation, in cooperation with the secretariat, had carried out an analytical review to determine whether the information available was sufficient to document and assess the Programme's effectiveness and also to determine whether there was a need for an independent external evaluation of the Programme.

62. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties, the outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Implementation and the secretariat presented the results of the analytical review and the review of the Programme's effectiveness, the challenges encountered in its implementation and possible options for its further development. The proposed next steps were:

(a) **Step 1:** The Working Group on Implementation should pursue in its next term a more rigorous approach to monitoring the Assistance Programme, in accordance with its updated terms of reference, in order to collect further information on and improve the implementation of the Convention by beneficiary countries of the Assistance Programme;

(b) **Step 2:** The Bureau, in cooperation with the Working Group, should request high-level feedback from beneficiary countries with regard to their progress made and specific needs for future assistance. Based on that feedback and the conclusions and observations set out in the background document (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/15), the Bureau, in cooperation with the Working Group, should consider the further development of the Assistance Programme with regard to its design and appeal for both beneficiary countries and donors, including the possibility of organizing a high-level meeting in the framework of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(c) **Step 3:** Following the implementation of steps 1 and 2, the Conference of the Parties could revisit the issue at its eleventh meeting in autumn 2020.

63. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information presented on the assessment of the Assistance Programme's effectiveness, endorsed the proposed next steps and decided to revert to the matter at its next meeting. It also tasked the Bureau and

secretariat, when reviewing assistance activities, to make proposals on how project management, including the procurement and management of funds, could be improved.

64. The Chair announced the start of a large project in Central Asia with financial support from the Russian Federation. Preliminary preparations had been completed, and activities on the ground would be carried out during the next two years. Representatives of the Russian Federation and Kyrgyzstan then introduced the project “Strengthening industrial safety in Central Asia through the implementation of and accession to the ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents”. The representative of Kyrgyzstan said the Government considered the project both important and necessary, and noted that an inter-agency working group had been established to consider accession to the Convention. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on the project.

VIII. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Industrial Accident Notification System

65. The secretariat presented an informal report on a connectivity test of the ECE Industrial Accident Notification System (15 January 2016) and an online consultation of the points of contact (15 February 2016). The activities had demonstrated that there was a need for training on the System, continuous exercises on the bilateral and multilateral levels and a possible joint consultation event with the European Union Emergency Response Coordination Centre.

66. The Conference of the Parties took note of the outcomes of the connectivity test of the Industrial Accident Notification System and the consultation of the points of contact. It also called upon all Parties and invited other States to keep the contact details of their points of contact, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, up to date and to carry out and participate in tests of the System.

IX. Prevention of accidental water pollution

A. Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

67. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei (Germany), a Co-Chair of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (Joint Expert Group), reported on Joint Expert Group meetings and other activities carried out since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and presented the Group’s workplan for the next two years. As Germany was the lead country for activities to address risk management at tailings management facilities in the framework of the Assistance Programme, he also presented the outcome of a project on improving the safety of tailings management facilities in Ukraine (2013-2015) and progress in an ongoing follow-up project on enhancing knowledge on tailings safety at Ukrainian universities. He also described planned activities to address risk management at tailings management facilities in Georgia.

68. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei said the two main thrusts of the upcoming work of the Joint Expert Group were the development of guidance for fire-water retention and the carrying out of transboundary response exercises on the Oder and Danube Rivers.

69. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties reported that the Bureaux of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) had already

approved the Joint Expert Group's workplan. The workplan had been incorporated into the draft workplan for the Convention (see chapter XIII below).

70. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided by the Co-Chair of the Joint Expert Group and the activities carried out. It also took note of the Group's workplan for the biennium 2017-2018 also included in the Convention's workplan for that period.

71. In addition, and to ensure that the necessary regular budget resources would be made available, the Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat, in due course and subject to their approval by the Conference of the Parties, to publish the expected guidance for fire-water retention and other guidelines or good practices on addressing industrial accidents, disasters and water pollution, in print and electronic forms in the three official languages of ECE.

B. Checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters

72. The Chair recalled that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had taken note of the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters and had recommended its use. It had also asked the secretariat to publish the checklist, following its testing in the framework of the Danube Delta project and its review by the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention at its seventh session in 2015.

73. A representative of Sweden, the lead country for the activity, reported on the publishing and promotion of the checklist. The Conference of the Parties welcomed the publication of the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters.

74. The Chair then further recalled that, at the previous meeting, there had been discussion of a recommendation by the Working Group on Implementation to consider producing common emergency plan guidelines to improve cooperation between neighbouring countries. However, one of the conclusions of the eighth report on implementation had been that there was no longer a need to develop emergency plan guidelines at present, as the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters had met the demand identified in the previous reporting round.

C. Protocol on Civil Liability

75. The secretariat provided an update on the three actions to assist countries with economies in transition to ratify the Protocol on Civil Liability agreed at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (The Hague, 8-10 November 2010). The first action had been completed in advance of the seventh meeting (Stockholm, 14-16 November 2012). At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had noted that no funds had been made available to carry out the second of the three actions and that no expressions of interest had been received. There had not been any further developments since the eighth meeting.

76. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on the steps to be taken to support the entry into force of the Protocol on Civil Liability.

X. Priority areas of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention

77. Turning to priority areas of the Long-term Strategy, the Chair noted that, although five priority areas were defined in the Strategy, two of those — the Assistance Programme

and financing — would be discussed under other agenda items (see chapters VII and XII, respectively). The remaining three issues addressed the involvement of Parties and other stakeholders, the exchange of information and strategic partnerships.

78. The secretariat reported on events in which members of the Bureau or the secretariat participated to promote and increase understanding of the work under the Convention, as also listed in the Bureau's report on its activities. The secretariat also reported on working visits and high-level meetings to Parties, specifically:

- (a) A visit by the Chair and the secretariat to different directorate-generals of the European Commission in January 2016 to raise awareness of the Convention;
- (b) The admittance of the Convention secretariat as an observer to meetings of the Interstate Council on Industrial Safety (Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, 14-15 September 2016).

79. The secretariat also reported on the use of other targeted communications, including:

- (a) Press releases or news articles;
- (b) The attendance of Elyx — the Digital Ambassador of the United Nations — at the trilateral field exercise in the Danube Delta (1-3 September 2015);
- (c) Promotion of the online training course on industrial accidents;
- (d) A joint op-ed on the Convention by the Executive Secretary of ECE and the Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, published in several newspapers across Europe (November 2016).

80. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on the involvement of Parties and other stakeholders and on the exchange of information.

81. The secretariat presented the following recently published promotional and training materials:³

- (a) *An Overview of Methodologies for Hazard Rating of Industrial Sites* (published November 2016);⁴
- (b) *The Checklist for Contingency Planning for Accidents Affecting Transboundary Waters, with Introductory Guidance* (ECE/TEIA.CP/34) (published November 2016);
- (c) *Safety Guidelines and Good Industry Practices for Oil Terminals* (ECE/CP.TEIA/28) (published October 2015);
- (d) *Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Pipelines* (ECE/CP.TEIA/27) (republished, May 2015);
- (e) A promotional brochure on the Industrial Accidents Convention, *Cross-border Concerns, Shared Strategies: Why Transboundary Cooperation Matters in Preventing Industrial Accidents* (ECE/CP.TEIA/34) (published, January 2017);
- (f) Postcards on the linkages between the Convention and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework (August 2016);
- (g) The Russian version of a film on the Convention (autumn 2016).⁵

³ Publications and brochures published under the Convention can be accessed online from <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications.html>.

⁴ ECE and the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC), JRC Scientific and Policy Reports (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2016).

⁵ Available on the Convention's home page (<http://www.unece.org/env/teia.html>).

In addition, the secretariat had actively promoted a user-friendly version of the indicators and criteria in the benchmarks document⁶ (published in December 2014).

82. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on the educational and training materials developed under the Convention.

83. The Secretary to the Convention provided an overview of the work carried out in cooperation with strategic partners. The work included cooperation in the framework of the inter-agency coordination group on industrial accidents, which had met twice in the period since the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Paris, 7 May 2015, and Geneva, 15 April 2016). In addition, there had been cooperation with UNISDR, regarding an implementation guide for the Sendai Framework, and with the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals.

84. It was also recalled that the Convention cooperated with other ECE bodies at the annual meeting of the representatives of the governing bodies of the ECE environmental conventions and the Chair of the ECE Committee of Environmental Policy and the annual meeting of the compliance and implementation bodies under the ECE environmental conventions.

85. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on strategic partnerships.

XI. Use of financial and in-kind resources in 2015-2016

86. The Convention Secretary presented a report on the use of financial and in-kind resources under the Convention in 2015-2016 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/16). He listed the financial contributions, providing updates as necessary to the information in the pre-session document, and identified those Parties contributing, whether financially or in-kind. While there had been an increase in the number of Parties contributing financially, many Parties had not contributed at all. In addition, the increase in the number of Parties contributing had not resulted in a significant increase in the total amount of contributions. There had been a steep drop in the balance in the trust fund in 2015, which had subsequently been stabilized through a reduction in assistance activities and secretariat staffing from three to two staff in 2016. On a positive note, significant funding had been provided by the Russian Federation for the project in Central Asia (see section VII.B), with funds transferred in 2016 but expenditure foreseen only in 2017-2018.

87. The Conference of the Parties endorsed the report on the use of financial and in-kind resources and asked the secretariat to prepare a similar report, to the extent possible, for the next meeting.

88. The Conference of the Parties also:

(a) Welcomed the increase in the number of Parties contributing financially and encouraged an even wider participation by the Parties;

(b) Welcomed also the sustained financial contributions by a number of countries to support the work under the Convention through financial contributions, while also recognizing the in-kind contributions provided by Parties;

⁶ *Benchmarks for the implementation of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents* (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/6), available from: <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/ap/tools.html>.

(c) Particularly welcomed the contribution by those countries having contributed financially for the first time during the current biennium, and encouraged them to maintain their engagement;

(d) Encouraged Parties not yet contributing financially in line with their economic strength, or higher, to consider such contributions, including for ensuring adequate human resources in the secretariat.

XII. Financing

89. Mr. Dijkens, the Co-Chair of the Bureau's small group on financing, presented the implementation of the sustainable financial mechanism for the Convention, adopted at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The secretariat had sent letters to Parties in 2015 and 2016 calling for financial support for the implementation of the workplan. Additional correspondence with various potential donors had been drafted, with the support of Bureau members, to raise awareness of the Convention and its Assistance Programme and explore possibilities for the funding of activities and other forms of cooperation. The Bureau Chair and secretariat had held a series of meetings with different directorate-generals of the European Commission.

90. The Co-Chair of the small group on financing also reported on its meetings, including a brainstorming event on 11 and 14 April 2016 to discuss communication and marketing techniques and the drafting of the promotional brochure on the Convention. Although there had been a dramatic increase in the number of contributors, from 7 to 20 over the past four years, the total amount being contributed had not changed significantly.

91. The Deputy Director of the ECE Environment Division underlined the limited regular budget resources to support the Convention and, consequently, the importance of extrabudgetary funds for the implementation of the workplan. The delegation of Germany recognized that, when financing projects, a proportion of funds should be assigned to the ECE secretariat. The delegation of Norway suggested that, when sending letters to Parties under the sustainable financial mechanism, it would be important to include practical information on ongoing activities.

92. The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided on financing and requested the Bureau to keep under review the sustainable financial mechanism. It also mandated the Bureau to develop a targeted communications strategy to facilitate ensuring robust and sustainable financing of the Convention's activities.

XIII. Plan of action for the Convention for the biennium 2017-2018

93. The Convention Secretary presented the document setting out the priorities, workplan and resources for the Convention for 2017-2018 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/17), explaining the basis for the activities included in the workplan and the division of the workplan into core and non-core parts. There were numerous gaps in the workplan in terms of lead countries and organizations for activities and the availability of funds. Where no lead was indicated for a workplan activity, volunteers could approach the Bureau. In the absence of information from the United Nations Environment Programme and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, reference to those organizations would be removed, whereas the Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe had confirmed in writing its wish to be engaged in the implementation of the workplan.

94. The Chair drew attention once again to the Bureau's proposal to review the Long-term Strategy.
95. Prior to the adoption of the workplan, a number of delegations pledged support, including:
- (a) Norway, which would maintain its support at the previous level, i.e., \$40,000 per annum, and would work with other authorities domestically to see if additional funding could be provided;
 - (b) The European Union, through the European Investment Bank, which would provide €35,000 in kind for the activity relating to land-use planning;
 - (c) Switzerland, which would maintain its support at the previous level, i.e., SwF 70,000 per annum, in support of the workplan and the Assistance Programme;
 - (d) The European Union, which noted its general commitment to contribute at a level of 2.5 per cent of the cost of the core activities not covered by the United Nations regular budget. However, in order to support financial sustainability and predictability as well as the effective implementation of the 2017-2018 workplan, the European Union confirmed its intention to maintain its annual contribution of €35,000 during that period, subject to the annual endorsement by its budgetary authorities;
 - (e) Czechia, which pledged \$12,760 per annum, in addition to in-kind contributions to the Joint Expert Group;
 - (f) Poland, which pledged \$10,000 in total for the period;
 - (g) Bulgaria, which pledged \$2,100 per annum, in addition to an in-kind expert contribution to a subregional capacity-development workshop.
96. The Conference of the Parties then:
- (a) Adopted the workplan for 2017-2018 and its corresponding budget, as amended (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1);
 - (b) Requested Parties, and invited other ECE member States, to participate actively in the implementation of the workplan for 2017-2018, including through taking the lead in specific projects and activities contained in the workplan;
 - (c) Welcomed the contributions to the budget pledged at the meeting by Parties and strategic partners to the Convention, and at the same time urged other Parties and ECE member States to provide voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to the Convention budget, including for ensuring adequate human resources in the secretariat;
 - (d) Mandated the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to monitor the implementation of the workplan for 2017-2018, including raising the remaining funds necessary for its full implementation;
 - (e) Further mandated the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to raise additional funds, in particular for the activities under the Assistance Programme;
 - (f) Requested Parties to make every effort to provide financial contributions in accordance with their economic strength, in line with the sustainable financial mechanism, in order to share the burden of financing the implementation of the programme of work equally;
 - (g) Requested the secretariat to manage voluntary financial contributions and, at the next meeting, to report on the use of resources;
 - (h) Requested the Bureau to draw up, with the support of the secretariat, a workplan and budget for 2019-2020 for adoption at the tenth meeting;

(i) With a view to ensuring that the necessary regular budget resources would be made available, requested the secretariat to service the meetings and other events listed in the workplan, and also to provide the meeting rooms, equipment, interpretation in the three official languages of ECE, official documents and other resources necessary. Official documents to be prepared, edited and translated in the three official languages of ECE included the agendas and reports of the Conference of the Parties and, should it meet, those of the Working Group on Development. In addition, approximately 15-20 other official documents in the three official languages of ECE should be foreseen in the biennium, in accordance with the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was expected to be held over three days, with other meetings of bodies lasting between one and two days. Further, a regional workshop might be held in Geneva.

97. The Chair of the meeting introduced a draft decision on guiding principles for financial assistance (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/18) for participation in meetings, in particular for representatives from the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2016/3 on guiding principles for financial assistance (see ECE/CP.TEIA/32/Add.1), highlighting that such assistance was dependent on the availability of funds.

XIV. Date and venue of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

98. The Conference of the Parties agreed to hold its tenth ordinary meeting in autumn 2018 and entrusted the Bureau with the possible identification of a host country, failing which the meeting would be held in Geneva.

XV. Final statements and closing of the meeting

99. The Conference of the Parties agreed on the main decisions taken at the meeting. It entrusted the secretariat to finalize the report after the meeting, in consultation with the Bureau.

100. The Conference of the Parties thanked Slovenia as host country for the warm welcome and the excellent arrangements.

101. The Chair thanked the delegates for their active participation and the secretariat for its meeting preparation and support, before officially closing the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Annex

Chairs' summary of the seminar

1. A seminar on fostering implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 for industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response was organized jointly by the Bureaux of the Convention and the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents. The Chairs of the two Bureaux, Ms. Karba and Ms. Tandberg, respectively, provided the following summary of the seminar.

2. The main objective of the seminar was to discuss how the work of ECE and OECD on industrial and chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response could contribute to achieving the global sustainable development agenda.

I. Setting the scene: linking industrial accidents with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework

3. The first session of the seminar was opened and moderated by the ECE Deputy Executive Secretary. He introduced the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework and emphasized the importance of an integrated approach, across sectors and with partners, to implement those complex agendas.

4. The State Secretary of Development and European Cohesion Policy of Slovenia said that a national long-term vision was under development with regard to a policy framework on the Sustainable Development Goals. International organizations played a specific role in helping the Government implement the global agreements.

5. The Deputy Minister of Environment and Water of Bulgaria described national activities linked with the implementation of national risk-reduction platforms and action plans and the assessment of risk, including the risk posed by hazardous industrial facilities. Bulgaria had carried out a peer review of the conduct of its risk assessments. In 2016, the Government had adopted amendments to the Disaster Risk Protection Act, which enhanced the role of prevention and coordination in the mitigation of the consequences of disasters. The Government had earlier approved a disaster risk reduction strategy for 2014-2020. The priorities set in the strategy had been translated into a road map that specified the activities that needed to be implemented for each priority, indicating the responsible authority and timeline, plus a review of all relevant legislation. A national programme for action had been endorsed and a general classification of risks and hazards had been carried out.

6. The UNISDR Regional Head pointed out that her organization served as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and ensuring synergies within the United Nations system on the topic. After sharing some statistics on recent disasters and the losses they had entailed, she emphasized UNISDR efforts to assist countries in monitoring what needed to be done to advance the two global agreements. Discussions had recently been concluded on indicators to reflect the seven targets of the Sendai Framework. Countries would be able to see how they were progressing in implementing the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. The Sendai Framework looked at addressing current risks and vulnerabilities and preventing the generation of future risks. The concept of risk awareness needed to be applied to all future developments to avoid society becoming more vulnerable. Learning how to work with different communities, including the private sector, was key and formed part of the work of UNISDR.

7. The Principal Administrator of the OECD Environment Directorate recalled the importance of intergovernmental organizations working closely together not just to avoid duplication, but more importantly to build synergies. OECD had been working on chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response since the late 1980s and one of its flagship outputs was the *OECD Guiding Principles for Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response* (OECD Guiding Principles).⁷ It was also important to work with the private sector in chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response, and many OECD products had benefited from inputs by the private sector, especially from operators of hazardous facilities. In addition, the level of knowledge and awareness of senior management of private sector companies should be improved.

8. The session moderator made closing remarks underlining the importance of partnerships and knowledge and experience sharing. International organizations, in particular ECE, OECD and UNISDR, could support countries in achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and Sendai priorities for action and, in particular, those relevant to industrial and chemical accidents. Finding a good mix of political will, expert knowledge, a proper policy framework, partnerships and strong institutions nationally, regionally and globally was crucial for finding solutions to existing challenges.

II. Spotlight on special issues

9. Session two, “spotlight on special issues”, was moderated by a representative of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Netherlands and outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Development, and highlighted emerging issues in the area of industrial accidents.

10. A representative of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment described how Switzerland worked with industry in retrofitting chemical industries to mitigate risks in the event of an earthquake. The rules had been defined together with industry. The owners of facilities were individually responsible, with no national fund for retrofitting. A two-step process for risk evaluation was required: a summary report, including an estimation of the magnitude of possible harm to the population or the environment; and a risk study, including a quantitative risk assessment based on multiple scenarios and an evaluation of risk acceptability.

11. A representative of the German Federal Environment Agency presented the results of an OECD project on natural-hazard triggered technological accidents (Natechs), which ran from 2009 until 2015 and was entering a second phase. The project’s scope was chemical accidents triggered by natural hazards. The main recommendations from the project included: to produce hazards maps; for possibly affected enterprises to conduct risk analyses regarding climate change impacts; to consider natural hazards in the design of installations; and to strengthen transboundary cooperation. Natechs should also be considered in the siting and land-use planning activities of the authorities and regulations should include Natech risks.

12. A representative of the Portuguese Environment Agency spoke about national experience with regard to siting and land-use planning to enhance resilience to disasters. Recently approved legislation had established a compatibility assessment procedure that aimed to assess new developments with regard to other elements in the area, taking into

⁷ *Guidance for Industry (including Management and Labour), Public Authorities, Communities, and other Stakeholders*, 2nd ed., OECD Environment, Health and Safety Publications Series on Chemical Accidents No. 10 (Paris, 2003).

account land-use planning perspectives. An integrated approach was needed when deciding to create new facilities or introducing major modifications to existing ones. Decisions were taken with due consideration to all relevant factors, such as heritage, biodiversity, noise, risk and safety.

III. Integrating global goals into national policies, initiatives and programmes for industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response

13. The President of the Slovenian Committee for Protection against Natural and Other Disasters moderated session three on integrating global goals into national policies, initiatives and programmes for industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response. Participants were invited to exchange of views and experiences on how the global commitments and goals might impact national frameworks for industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response, and the type of support that was needed by countries to facilitate the implementation of those goals.

14. A representative of the Health and Safety Executive of the United Kingdom stated that both the ECE Convention and the related European Union directive were important instruments for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In the United Kingdom there were three core issues: better anticipation of crises using a combination of science and ongoing national experience; innovation; and resilience — working together as a community at the national and international level to share experience and build up resilience to disasters. The Sendai Framework was seen from domestic and foreign policy perspectives. On the domestic side, the National Risk Assessment was used to deliver the Sendai Framework. The State worked closely with industry, trying to make that relationship a partnership, to learn from each other, to identify best practices and to turn good practice into best practice without affecting economic performance. On the foreign policy side, many development projects focused on disaster resilience.

15. A representative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety underlined that State responsibilities were coherent with the priorities set out in the Sendai Framework. For facilities, regulations were needed that pushed them to strengthen technical aspects, refit and improve their safety and monitoring systems. Enhancing disaster preparedness was also very important. Regulations needed to be updated, emergency drills needed to be performed and emergency forces for special actions needed to be established.

16. The Head of Department for Supervision of Industrial Safety of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Belarus said that the National Sustainable Development Strategy, first adopted in 1997, was the main document determining long-term development priorities. In 2015, a new strategy until 2030 had been drafted. In 2016, a new Law on Industrial Safety had entered into force, reflecting the principles of the Convention. The Industrial Safety Law aimed to improve existing policies and regulations on industrial safety and increase transparency in the work of the relevant public authorities, whose competencies were defined. It provided a classification of hazardous industrial facilities according to the types of hazard and introduced the term “potentially hazardous facility”. The Law also outlined the responsibilities of operators and the obligation to declare hazardous activities and report any accident at a facility. Belarus also had a national disaster risk reduction platform and was open to cooperation on disaster risk reduction and industrial safety.

IV. Needs and opportunities related to the implementation of the sustainable development agenda

17. Session four, on the needs and opportunities related to the implementation of the sustainable development agenda, was organized in the form of a panel discussion on the opportunities presented by the Sustainable Development Goals and disaster risk reduction commitments and how they could be used to ensure that industrial safety remained high on policymakers' agendas. The discussion also touched upon effective cooperation for industrial accidents prevention and the role of ECE and OECD in supporting countries in the field of industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response. A representative of the Health and Safety Executive of the United Kingdom, and outgoing Chair of the Working Group on Implementation, moderated the session.

18. A Technical Officer on Chemical Safety at the WHO Regional Office for Europe reminded participants that chemicals management and health were reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals and specific indicators. International Health Regulations were closely linked to other international agreements, including the Convention. At a meeting earlier in 2016, 27 States from the WHO Europe Region had discussed chemical policy and programmes to protect human health and the environment. The priorities set at the meeting included: development of policies to protect vulnerable populations; facilitation of implementation of chemical agreements; creation of mechanisms and means to raise awareness of the health impacts of chemicals, in particular on vulnerable population groups and life stages; strengthening of partnerships between State and non-State stakeholders; and ensuring the fulfilment of the role of the health sector in sound chemicals management.

19. The Secretary General of the European Technology Platform on Industrial Safety said the objective of the Platform was to defragment research investment so that the research agenda was more clearly defined to develop cooperation in answering challenges related to industrial safety. Specifically, the initiative was an instrument to help the European Commission identify the hot topics and key challenges and to have the industrial safety community suggest topics for research through the programmes of the European Commission. It promoted cooperation between different stakeholders in the field of industrial safety so that there was a community capable of understanding the challenges and proposing solutions.

20. The Deputy Director General of the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief of Slovenia explained the national system of protection against natural and other disasters. Protection and rescue plans were the responsibility of the Administration and the provisions of the Convention were taken into account when it came to planning, notification of the population, response and coordination of response (internal or international). Slovenia was highly active in South-Eastern Europe and work on disaster risk reduction was a high priority.

21. A representative of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova described how the Government's agenda foresaw complying with the global commitments. The Government worked closely with the Convention, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, OECD and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River. It was also committed to working closely with industry. The public and NGOs could provide their input to the development of policies and make comments on draft policies and legislation. International support was also very important to the country.

22. A representative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment highlighted the importance of networks between authorities and people working in the area of industrial safety. Mapping exercises were very useful to ensure

efficiency in cooperation between different parts of chemicals or environmental management.

23. A representative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety mentioned that increasing land use and growing population density were important challenges. Awareness of the related risks was low.

V. Conclusion of the seminar

24. In closing remarks, Ms. Tandberg highlighted that the background document for the seminar (ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/1), produced by the two secretariats and supported by the two Bureaux, contained many important comments on how the work of the two organizations could contribute to promoting chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response in work on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework. It was encouraging to observe that actions were progressing at the national level, as could be understood from presentations and comments by representatives of Belarus, Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Switzerland and others. Both the Convention and OECD had strong tools that could be handed over to people working under the Sendai Framework. The Convention was a strong legal instrument. The OECD Guiding Principles provided advice to public authorities, industry, the public potentially affected in the event of an accident and NGOs. OECD guidance on corporate governance for process safety⁸ should be widely used by senior leaders in industry.

25. Ms. Tandberg also emphasized the role of national risk assessments or country risk management both within the European Union civil protection area and within OECD, with a focus on both risk prevention and an approach aimed at avoiding or reducing damages before they occurred. That was consistent with placing climate change adaptation at the core of a country's strategic vision for development and was in line with the Sendai Framework, which recognized that the concept of risk awareness needed to be applied in order to prevent the generation of future risks. Cross-sectoral work was also important for reducing the probability of risks. Cross-border exercises were very important, too, and the work of ECE showed that that was a good way of promoting industrial accidents prevention and preparedness. Finally, involving private partners and conducting research were crucial to increase industrial and chemical safety.

26. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties, in closing remarks, underscored the importance of turning the discussions of the seminar into deeds and identifying specific actions.

⁸ *Corporate Governance for Process Safety: Guidance for Senior Leaders in High Hazard Industries* (Paris, OECD, 2012).