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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context

Seventh session

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Third session

Minsk, 13–16 June 2017

Report of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on its seventh session and of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on its third session

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I. Introduction

1. The seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) was held from 13 to 16 June 2017 in Minsk. It was held in conjunction with the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

2. The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol) convened in joint and individual meetings throughout the sessional period. The present report details the work of both sessions. The Meetings of the Parties refer to both bodies meeting in a joint session. For practical reasons, the decisions and the Minsk Declaration adopted at the sessions are being issued in addenda to the present report.

A. Attendance

3. The meeting was attended by delegations from the following member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE): Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan. The European Union was represented by the European Commission. Statements on behalf of the European Union and its member States were made by the Commission, and by Malta and the Netherlands, which held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2017 and the first half of 2016, respectively. Mongolia, Morocco and Viet Nam, as States Members of the United Nations, were also represented.

4. Representatives of the Convention secretariat attended the meeting. Representatives of two United Nations bodies also attended the meeting: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and the World Health Organization (WHO). Two international financial institutions were represented: the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; and the European Investment Bank. The following intergovernmental organizations took part: the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Nuclear Energy Agency; the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia; and the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were represented: Bahna (Belarus); Caucasus Environmental NGO Network; CDDC "AkNiet" (Kazakhstan); Central and Eastern Europe Bankwatch Network; Ecoclub (Ukraine); Ecoforum of NGOs of Uzbekistan; Ecoglobe (Armenia); Ecohome (Belarus); Ecoline Environmental Assessment Centre (Russian Federation); Ecopravo (Belarus); European ECO Forum; Friends of the Earth Europe (Belgium); Green Network (Belarus); Greenpeace (Netherlands); International Association for Impact Assessment; International Public Association of Ecologists, Minsk Branch (Belarus); Irish Environmental Network (Ireland); Justice and Environment (Czechia); Krasnoyarsk Regional Public Environmental Organization "PLOTINA" (Russian Federation); Lori Development Centre (Armenia); Minsk Cycling Community (Belarus); Naurzum BioNet (Kazakhstan); Stockholm Environment Institute (Tallinn Centre); Studio D – Centre for Development and Dialogue; World Heritage Institute in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan); World Wide Fund for Nature

(WWF) Russia. In addition, academics from Hokkaido University (Japan) and the Swedish University of Agricultural Science attended the meeting.

B. Organizational matters

5. The Chair of the Bureau, Mr. Georges Kremlis (European Commission), opened the meeting. The Secretary to the Convention and the Protocol informed the delegations that the Bureau under the two treaties had recommended that Mr. Kremlis be elected as Chair of the general segment of the joint sessions. The Meetings of the Parties elected Mr. Kremlis accordingly.

6. The Vice-Prime Minister of Belarus, Mr. Vladimir Semashko welcomed delegates.

7. The Meetings of the Parties adopted their agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/22–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/6),¹ which had been prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Bureau.

8. The Meetings of the Parties noted the informal report on the credentials of the representatives of Parties attending the sessions.

9. The secretariat informed the Meetings of the Parties of the status of ratification of the Convention and its two amendments and the Protocol. The Parties welcomed the information that, with the imminent ratification of both the Convention amendments announced by Denmark, the second amendment would enter into force in the next few months (i.e., 90 days after the deposit by Denmark of its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations). In that regard, the secretariat was requested to publish the amended text of the Convention after the entry into force of the second amendment to the Convention. Regarding the first amendment to the Convention, however, the Parties noted with concern that eight further ratifications were still needed for the first amendment to the Convention to have effect, allowing all United Nations member States to accede to that instrument. Consequently, they urged Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom to take the necessary steps to ratify it. Representatives of Armenia and Greece reported on progress in the ratification of the first amendment and delegates from Azerbaijan and Belgium reported on both amendments, with Azerbaijan expecting to ratify them by the end of 2017. In general terms, the Meetings of the Parties supported the Bureau in urging all Parties that had adopted the amendments or the Protocol but not yet ratified them to proceed promptly with their ratification.

II. Outstanding issues

10. The Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol discussed a number of outstanding issues prior to the high-level segment.

¹ All meeting documentation for the four-day session, the programmes of the side events and other information, such as presentations that were provided to the secretariat and a list of participants, are available from <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45098#/>.

A. Issues relevant to the Convention and the Protocol

1. Adoption of the workplan

11. The secretariat presented draft decision VII/3–III/3 on the adoption of the workplan for the period 2017–2020 (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/1), informing the Meetings of the Parties of a few adjustments to the workplan and to the “waiting list” tables (annexes I and II to the draft decision) concerning mainly activities for the Central Asian countries, further to requests by the countries concerned. The Chair then facilitated the finalization of the workplan table, based on information provided by the delegations.

12. The Implementation Committee Chair explained that the Committee’s proposal to develop guidance or criteria on the application of the Convention to the extension of the lifetime and the long-term operation of nuclear power plants were needed to facilitate its consideration of a growing number of information-gathering cases on that topic being brought before it. After deliberations, the Meetings of the Parties decided on the preparation of draft terms of reference for such possible guidance by an ad hoc working group composed of the lead countries, Germany and the United Kingdom, and volunteering States Parties, including: Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Finland (to be confirmed), France, Greece (to be confirmed), Italy (to be confirmed), Luxembourg, Poland (to be confirmed), Portugal (to be confirmed), Slovakia, Spain, and Ukraine. The Meetings of the Parties invited Parties to confirm their participation and other Parties interested in contributing to this work to notify the secretariat by 30 September 2017. It agreed with the European Commission’s proposal that the European Commission would provide secretariat services to the group. The Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment was mandated to discuss and consider adopting the terms of reference at its seventh meeting (Geneva, 28–30 May 2018) based on the outcomes of a workshop to be organized by the ad hoc group during that meeting, with the participation of the Implementation Committee, civil society and possibly IAEA and the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency. The Meetings of the Parties agreed that the ad hoc group should meet at least twice prior to May 2018 to work on the draft terms of reference, starting with a meeting scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2017. The Meetings of the Parties also mandated the Working Group to decide on the possible subsequent extension of the membership of the ad hoc group to include also intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

13. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on the revised annexes I and II to draft decision VII/3–III/3 and agreed to forward the draft decision for consideration at the high-level segment.

2. Budget, financial arrangements and financial support

14. The Chair recalled that at their previous sessions (Geneva, 2–5 June 2014) the Meetings of the Parties had adopted a financial strategy to improve the stability and predictability of the sources of funding for the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/20/Add.3–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/4/Add.3, decision VI/4–II/4, annex II). The secretariat presented the report on the budget and financial arrangements in the period since the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/3–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/3), noting that all Parties had fulfilled the pledges they had made at the previous session. However, the secretariat highlighted the continuous insufficiency and unpredictability of the voluntary contributions and the overreliance on only three major donors, which put the functioning of the secretariat at risk. Owing to the savings made during the intersessional period, the secretariat could report a surplus of approximately

\$3,300 that would be added to the operating reserve. The Meetings of the Parties expressed their satisfaction with the use of the Convention and Protocol's trust fund. They also invited ECE to seek regular budget funding to ensure sufficient additional secretariat staffing, in particular for servicing the work related to the review of compliance.

15. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on a revised version of the budget table in the annex to draft decision VII/4–III/4 on the budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/1). They decided that, in addition to organizational activities and support to implementation of the Convention and the Protocol, the budget for 2017–2020 would cover the development of a long-term strategy and an action plan in case no in-kind contributions were available for that purpose, and provided that sufficient funding was available for the “priority 1” activities. It was then agreed to forward draft decision VII/4–III/4 with the revised budget table for consideration at the high-level segment.

16. The delegations pledged contributions to the budget of the Convention and its Protocol for the period extending from mid–June 2017 to the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties foreseen in 2020 (see annex). The secretariat noted that the total value of the pledges represented only some 60 per cent of the budget agreed by the Meetings of the Parties and that, therefore, further contributions would be necessary to cover the budgeted activities. To facilitate the monitoring of the pledges by the secretariat, delegations were invited to specify the schedule (years) for the payment of the pledged contributions during the next period, and their currency.

3. Guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects

17. The Meetings of the Parties agreed to forward draft decision VII/5–III/5 on guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/1) without changes to the high-level segment, along with the related general and technical guidance documents (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/6–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/6 and ECE/MP.EIA/2017/11–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/10, respectively), which had been revised by the Working Group at its sixth meeting (Geneva, 7–10 November 2016) and later reviewed by the Bureau. The secretariat explained that, as the two guidance documents had been prepared jointly with the ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention), the Working Group's revisions had been forwarded for consideration also by the Conference of the Parties and the Bureau under that Convention. Those bodies had had no objections to the texts as agreed by the Working Group, nor had they proposed further amendments. As a next step, the two treaty secretariats would publish the two parts of the guidance document as a single joint publication. The delegation of France informed the Meetings of the Parties that it wished to make minor modifications to the examples contained in the technical guidance concerning its own country and that it would provide them directly to the secretariat to be taken into account prior to publishing the guidance.

18. Finally, the secretariat reported on a follow-up event planned to be organized under the Industrial Accidents Convention in spring 2018 to promote the application of the guidance, to which the constituencies under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol were also invited to contribute. The Bureau had considered that invitation and decided not to formally include a joint follow-up activity in the draft workplan, but had suggested instead that the focal points and the Bureau members under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol would be given an opportunity to provide input and to attend the event, as they deemed fit. The Meetings of the Parties supported the Bureau's suggestion and invited the secretariat to disseminate the information on the follow-up event when available.

4. Development of a strategy and an action plan for the future application of the Convention and the Protocol

19. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on the development of a long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/1, draft decision VII/7–III/6) as part of the workplan, subject to the identification of in-kind input or funding for a consultant (see also para. 15 above). The Chair noted that in the view of the Bureau it would be preferable that those documents be drafted by volunteering representatives of Parties rather than by external consultants. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on a revised version of draft decision VII/7–III/6 on the development of the strategy and the action plan that would be forwarded for consideration at the high-level segment.

5. Declaration

20. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on a revised version of the draft Minsk declaration (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/2–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/2) that would be forwarded for consideration at the high-level segment, adding also thanks to the Government of Belarus for its generous hospitality in hosting the two sessions.

6. Nominations of officers and tentative calendar of meetings

21. The secretariat presented an informal list of nominations for members of the Bureau, officers of the Working Group and members of the Implementation Committee (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/INF.7). The list was amended during the session as follows: Switzerland withdrew its nomination to the Implementation Committee and was replaced by Azerbaijan. While still wishing to serve in the Bureau, the delegate from Spain withdrew her candidacy for the Bureau's chairmanship. As none of the other candidates for the Bureau were willing to chair, the Meetings of the Parties agreed to extend the term of office of the outgoing Bureau Chair, Mr. Kremlis, at least until the next ("intermediary") session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (see para. 27 below), thanking him for his readiness to stay on.

22. The Meetings of the Parties recalled that: (a) the Chair and two Vice-Chairs of the Implementation Committee would be elected from among that body's members when the Committee first met in its new composition (Geneva, 5–7 September 2017); (b) the Chair and the first Vice-Chair of the Implementation Committee should be from a Party to both the Convention and the Protocol; and (c) the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Working Group and the Chair and the first Vice-Chair of the Implementation Committee should serve also as members of the Bureau.

23. The Meetings of the Parties also noted that, in accordance with the Committee's operating rules as amended in 2014 (see ECE/MP.EIA/20.Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/4.Add.1, decision VI/2, annex II), each elected Party should not only nominate a permanent member, but should also appoint an alternate member for the same term of office. Those elected Parties that had not yet done so (Azerbaijan and Belarus), were invited to inform the secretariat of the name of the alternate member in advance of the Committee's upcoming session in September.

24. The Meetings of the Parties noted the informal schedule of planned meetings for the next intersessional period contained in document ECE/MP.EIA/2017/INF.8.

B. Issues relevant to the Convention

1. Review of compliance with the Convention

25. The Chair of the Implementation Committee, Mr. Felix Zaharia (Romania), introduced draft decision VII/2 on the review of compliance with the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/8) prepared by the Committee. He highlighted the revisions to annex I of the draft decision regarding Belarus, which the Committee had agreed at its ad hoc session on 12 June 2017: namely, the deletion of questions one and five from the list of outstanding technical and scientific questions. The Committee had found responses to those two questions in the relevant IAEA Site and External Events Design (SEED) mission report, which had been made available to it in early June.

26. The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention deliberated on the general part of draft decision VII/2, and notably subparagraphs 5 (a) to (d). The Committee Chair pointed out that the Committee's opinions referred to in those subparagraphs were intrinsically linked with the later parts of the draft decision regarding individual Parties. Several written proposals to amend draft decision VII/2 regarding individual Parties were also distributed and/or projected onto a screen during and in the margins of the plenary session for consideration of the Meeting of the Parties, including those from Belarus and from the European Union regarding Belarus; from the European Union regarding the United Kingdom; and from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Ukraine concerning their own countries.

27. Following deliberations, the Meeting of the Parties agreed that further efforts were needed to reach consensus on draft decision VII/2, and decided to finalize its deliberations at an "intermediary" session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention to be convened in Geneva at a date to be determined, but tentatively scheduled for late 2018 or early 2019. It further agreed that that session could also address additional issues that might arise. It mandated the Implementation Committee to review draft decision VII/2 and to prepare a revised draft for the intermediary session, taking into account the work already carried out and the progress achieved before and during the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties. It entrusted the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, to prepare the draft agenda and to identify a date for the intermediary session. The European Union and its member States stated that, while understanding the need for the postponement of the deliberations, they nevertheless regretted that it was required. They thanked the Implementation Committee for its considerable work over the past intersessional period and during the session. They also stressed that the progress made during the session should be communicated to the Implementation Committee for its consideration and that all the Parties to the Convention should also reflect on the progress achieved prior to the intermediary session.

28. Further to the information provided by Ukraine, the Meeting of the Parties welcomed the endorsement by Ukraine of its new law on environmental impact assessment setting the national legal framework to implement the Convention. It also noted the proposal of Ukraine that the Meeting of the Parties agree on the revised part of draft decision VII/2 regarding the Danube-Black Sea Deep Water Navigation Canal in the Ukrainian sector of the Danube Delta (Bystroe Canal Project), which the members of the Implementation Committee informally agreed in the margins of the seventh session, but which the Meeting of the Parties had no time to consider during the plenary session. Finally, the Meeting of the Parties noted the suggestion by Ukraine to mandate the Bureau and the Implementation Committee to prepare proposals for the consideration of the Meeting of the Parties at its intermediary session on the submission of future compliance decisions for each individual compliance issue separately, instead of compiling and submitting them in one official document as a single draft decision. Ukraine suggested that as a good practice, a procedure which was used under the ECE Convention on Access to

Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) with a view to facilitating the adoption of at least some decisions regarding individual Parties. The Bureau and the Implementation Committee were also to propose relevant amendments to the rules of procedure of the Meeting of the Parties and the operating rules of the Implementation Committee, as needed.

29. The Meeting of the Parties also noted the amendment proposals from Azerbaijan to draft decision VII/2, and invited the Implementation Committee to take them into account when revising the draft decision in advance of the intermediary session, and basing itself on the discussions that it had already held on those proposals in the margins of the plenary session. Finally, the Meeting of the Parties noted the proposal from Armenia not to reopen the issues that the Implementation Committee had already agreed.

2. Reporting and review of implementation of the Convention

30. The secretariat presented draft decision VII/1 on reporting and review of implementation of the Convention (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/7), informing the delegations that the report from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was still overdue. The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention agreed to forward the draft decision to the high-level segment without amendment.

3. Application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities

31. The Chair introduced draft decision VII/6 on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities (see ECE/MP.EIA/2017/7), and referred the delegations to the related documents: good practice recommendations on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/10); and an informal document containing practical examples of the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/INF.6). The Meeting of the Parties agreed on a revised version of the draft decision that would be forwarded for its consideration at the high-level segment.

32. The Meeting of the Parties also requested the secretariat to arrange for the publication of the good practice recommendations and to include in its annex the practical examples from the informal document mentioned above.

C. Issues relevant to the Protocol

1. Reporting and review of implementation of the Protocol

33. The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol agreed to forward without amendment draft decision III/1 on reporting and the review of implementation of the Protocol (see ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/7), after learning that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had not in the meantime reported and should still be urged to do so.

2. Review of compliance with the Protocol

34. The Chair of the Implementation Committee introduced draft decision III/2 on the review of compliance with the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/8). Further to a proposal by the European Union, the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol agreed on a revised text of paragraph 4 of the draft decision, regarding the European Union, and decided to forward the draft decision for its consideration at the high-level segment.

III. Panel discussion on the contribution of the Convention and the Protocol to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

35. A panel discussion on the contribution of the Convention and the Protocol to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, organized by the secretariat, was facilitated by Ms. Alda Ozola from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia. Representatives of Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations shared insights and good practice regarding the contribution of the two treaties to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and proposed ways to further promote their role in that respect.

36. The Chief of the ECE Environment for Europe and Sustainable Development Section gave an overview of the global implementation process for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), emphasizing the role of the United Nations regional commissions, including ECE, in that process. He focused on the contribution of the ECE multilateral environmental agreements to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and their targets, concluding that all of them, and in particular the Espoo Convention and its Protocol, could considerably facilitate the achievement of several targets under most Sustainable Development Goals at the national level in the countries of the region.

37. Mr. Matthias Sauer (Germany) spoke about the contribution of the Convention and its Protocol and of the ECE Aarhus Convention to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, with an emphasis on their role in promoting transparency and access to information, public participation and stakeholder involvement, including in transboundary consultations, and in access to justice. In January 2017, Germany had adopted a Sustainable Development Strategy, translating all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals into national policy goals in an effort to implement the 2030 Agenda in the national context. The Strategy's implementation would be monitored by a Council for Sustainable Development. The speaker also described the role of "sustainability tests" to assess draft legislation, and presented the results of such a test applied to the new national environmental impact assessment legislation. The test had concluded that the new act would significantly contribute to sustainable development, and thus support the implementation of the national Sustainable Development Strategy.

38. In his presentation, Mr. Piotr Otawski, an independent expert from Poland, emphasized the preventive role that environmental assessment procedures played, although the scope and the scale of that role were at times difficult to determine. In his view, the applicability of strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment as tools for achieving sustainability goals depended on the attitude of the national authorities towards environmental protection, on the domestic legal framework, and on the overall awareness of the public of environmental issues. Reflecting on the Polish experience, he provided examples of the contribution of the environmental assessment to several specific Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing, among others, the potential of strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment to address climate change adaptation. In terms of public participation in the assessment processes, access to justice was a key factor in attracting the public to participate. The practice in Poland showed that proper public participation in environmental assessment processes, increased the overall transparency of the processes and the quality of the strategic environmental assessment or environmental impact assessment documentation and influenced the conduct of the processes by the authorities. Consequently, both strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment could contribute to promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies, i.e., Sustainable Development Goal 16.

39. Ms. Alexandra Antsugai of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development explained that, through the application of the obligatory environmental and social performance requirements to the projects it financed, its “Green Economy Transition” approach and policy dialogue, the Bank supported countries in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in a number of areas. She highlighted the cooperation between the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Espoo Convention and its Protocol, and mentioned that the Bank’s internal policies and procedures on environmental assessment also required the application of the Espoo Convention principles for the projects with potentially significant transboundary environmental impacts. She referred to several specific examples of the Bank’s Strategic Environmental Reviews — e.g., of the Ukrainian Sustainable Energy Lending Facility and the Kazakh Renewable Energy Financing Facility — that had contributed to the promotion and application of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment. She highlighted the increasingly vital role that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development’s policy reform activities played and stressed the need to further raise the profile of “green finance” and to assist countries in their implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

40. Ms. Maria Partidario of the International Association for Impact Assessment and Co-Chair of its Sustainable Development Goals Task Force highlighted the conclusion of the Association’s 2017 Annual Conference (Montreal, Canada, 4-7 April 2017): impact assessment was important to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and that should be made clearer. Reflecting on the possible benefits and disadvantages of considering the Sustainable Development Goals within strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment, she noted that, at the project level, while such consideration could contribute to more objective-led and more relevant assessments, the focus on the Goals might also make assessments less context specific and less effective. To help increase the relevancy of environmental impact assessments, it was therefore important to create incentives for the project proponents and national authorities to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the strategic and policy level, she emphasized that it was urgent to start applying the Sustainable Development Goals. She introduced seven recommendations for the consideration of Sustainable Development Goals in impact assessments, involving the translation of those Goals that were relevant to a project or plan into context-specific criteria and subsequently applying them as benchmarks.

41. Ms. Tatyana Novikova representing the NGO Ecohome addressed the importance of global partnerships as prerequisites for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although the Sustainable Development Goals were not legally binding, countries had clear incentives to create national mechanisms to implement them. With the national level planning seen as the main implementing mechanism for the Goals, the procedures under the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment were consequently of key importance for integrating the relevant objectives into national plans and programmes. One of the preconditions for the successful attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level was a national legal framework that complied with the Convention and its Protocol. Moreover, political will to address sustainability issues at the national level was important to meet the global commitments. She further elaborated on the key role of NGOs and the public and on the ensuing need for a platform for cooperation and dialogue among the various stakeholders. She concluded her presentation with several good practice examples on the use of the procedures under the Convention and its Protocol for the integration of sustainability issues in planning, mentioning in particular the role of cross-border partnerships.

42. Ms. Kaja Peterson of the Stockholm Environment Institute (Tallinn Centre) provided a detailed overview of the linkages between the Convention, its Protocol and the

Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. A number of targets had a strong link to environmental assessment both at the strategic and project levels. She also presented the “planetary boundaries” concept developed by Mr. Johan Rockström and colleagues. She explained that Sustainable Development Goals could be seen as targeting different sectors: people; the planet (or biosphere); prosperity; peace; and partnership. Goals 15 and 14, but also 6 and 13, targeted the biosphere and formed the foundation of human well-being and sustainability on the planet. Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment were tools to safeguard that foundation. The biosphere was a common good for humanity, not limited to the borders of jurisdiction, hence the importance of preventive assessments taking into account the global impact of local actions.

43. Ms. Ozola closed the panel with a brief summary of the discussion, highlighting the confirmed potential of the procedures under the Convention and its Protocol to contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The examples presented during the discussions clearly showed the applicability of strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment for promoting the implementation of the Goals, and for supporting good governance and the transition to green economy. However, the panel had also pointed out challenges potentially impeding the efficient application of strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment in that respect, which included insufficient national legislative frameworks and a lack of political support, but also a failure to consider the Sustainable Development Goals in the national and regional context. To address those potential challenges, the implementation of environmental assessments was to be improved as a key priority, and possibly requiring a review of the existing regulations and practices. Also, it was essential to properly consider the national context in Sustainable Development Goal implementation.

44. The Meetings of the Parties expressed their gratitude to the speakers and asked that the presentations be made available on the meeting web page.

IV. Review of the workplan

45. The secretariat presented an informal assessment of the implementation of the previous workplan (ECE/MP.EIA/20/Add.3–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/4/Add.3, decision VI/3–II/3, annexes I and II), as contained in informal document ECE/MP.EIA/2017/INF.3, putting an emphasis on the large number of technical assistance and capacity-building activities carried out in the period 2014–2017. Approximately 77 per cent of the workplan activities (including 100 per cent of priority 1 activities) had been implemented, and a further 14 per cent would be completed in the course of 2017, representing a total implementation rate of 93 per cent. The secretariat noted that five activities had been cancelled either by the countries that had originally requested them or owing to lack of funding. There had also been two carried over activities and several additional activities related to the workplan that had been completed during the period.

46. Representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine outlined key results from the workplan activities that had supported their national legislative reforms and capacity-building efforts for the implementation of the Protocol and the Convention, which had been realized with funding from the Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood (EaP GREEN) programme of the European Union between 2013 and 2017.

47. The Meetings of the Parties expressed their satisfaction with the implementation of the previous workplan and the related additional activities.

V. Review of compliance, implementation and the activities of the Implementation Committee

48. The secretariat reported on its finalization of the fifth review of implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/9) and the second review of implementation of the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/9), based on the comments provided by Parties during and after the meeting of the Working Group in November 2016.

49. The Chair of the Implementation Committee presented the Committee's report on its activities (ECE/MP.EIA/2017/4–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2017/4), highlighting that the complexity of the cases before the Committee and the information submitted to it by other sources had continued to increase during the past intersessional period. Consequently, the Committee had proposed the inclusion of nine, instead of eight, Committee meetings in the workplan and the budget for the intersessional period 2017–2020. The Committee had also discussed how to improve the efficiency of its working methods to address its increased workload. In order to fulfil its mandate, the Committee regularly used electronic means of communication in between its sessions, including online meetings. In the next period, the Committee would consider proposing adjustments to its operating rules to foresee regular (e.g., monthly) online meetings in English, to allow the Committee to hold informal consultations in preparation of its sessions.

VI. Opening ceremony of the high-level segment

50. The Chair of the general segment informed the Meetings of the Parties that the Bureau had recommended that Ms. Iya Malkina, First Vice-Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus, and Mr. Neno Dimov, Minister of Environment and Water of Bulgaria, be elected as Co-Chairs of the joint high-level segment. The Meetings of the Parties elected Ms. Malkina and Mr. Dimov accordingly.

51. The Co-Chairs of the high-level segment made some opening remarks before giving the floor to the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECE, who also made an opening statement.

52. The Co-Chairs then invited the moderators of the panel discussion on the contribution of the Convention and the Protocol to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals to report back to the high-level segment on the outcomes of those discussions.

VII. Panel discussion on the role of the Protocol and the Convention in addressing climate change

53. The secretariat organized a high-level panel discussion in which the panellists provided insights into the application of the Convention and the Protocol for addressing climate change.

54. Ms. Malkina opened the panel by stressing the important environmental and economic impacts of climate change and, consequently, the importance of the early implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Such measures could provide an impetus to new industries, increase opportunities for attracting investments and bring about competitive advantages. The key to progress in combatting and adapting to climate change lay in the full integration of climate considerations into strategic plans, programmes and projects implemented by countries. In that respect, the Convention and its Protocol constituted effective tools for the systematic integration of climate change

issues into a wide range of public and private projects and programmes, through environmental impact assessment.

55. Mr. José Herrera, Minister of Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change of Malta, emphasized the high relevance of climate change issues for Malta as a Mediterranean island nation. Over the next decade, the rising of the sea level was expected to have an enormous impact on many of the country's economic sectors, for example on tourism. Consideration of climatic factors in environmental assessments was to be encouraged as it contributed to fostering a more adaptive approach to climate phenomena and to increasing overall resilience. Besides the necessity for countries to formulate and adopt relevant adaptation measures for addressing climate change, it was important for all countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The importance of more sustainable cities was also highlighted. In Malta, where the number of cars exceeded the number of inhabitants, a modal shift towards a more sustainable mobility, better environmental quality and healthier lifestyles was seen as essential, and environmental assessments were efficient tools to that end.

56. Mr. Konrad Pawlik, Ambassador of Poland in Belarus, noted that Poland would hold the presidency of the climate negotiations at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which would be held in Poland in 2018. The country's ambition was that at its twenty-fourth session the Conference achieve results that were not only limited to addressing climate change, but that also contributed to bringing the world back to a sustainable development pathway responding to environmental, economic and societal challenges. To that end, multiple strategies addressing a number of issues, including heating, mobility and waste management, were necessary. The Ambassador also presented the Polish experience with the development and the testing of a "Guide to investment preparation respecting climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as resilience to natural disasters", together with examples of synergies between the climate and environmental impact assessment processes. Education and training, and solidarity between countries were also key to ensuring sustainable development for future generations.

57. Mr. Ostap Semerak, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine, reported on the significant progress of Ukraine in developing its legislative framework for environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment, including the recent adoption of its new law on environmental impact assessment. Similarly, Ukraine had established its national strategic framework for climate change and had initiated its implementation. It had also been the third country to ratify the Paris Agreement adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC. As climate change clearly led to unpredictability and uncertainties affecting the environment and economic development of Ukraine and other countries, its proper consideration through the application of strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment was seen as important and as positively impacting them both.

58. Ms. Vesna Kolar-Planinšič of the Slovenian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning presented the main climate change adaptation issues in Slovenia, including high river flood peaks, low snow fall and warmer summers in the cities, and the general aim to make Slovenia climate resilient. Climate challenges had been addressed in the country, for example, through the strategic environmental assessment of the Ljubljana Municipal Spatial Plan. As a result of the application of strategic environmental assessment, a series of recommendations and measures had been integrated in the Spatial Plan, including, for instance, to reduce the scope of the planned activities in flood-prone areas, or measures to reduce the flood risks (e.g., through retention ponds). Strategic environmental assessment had also contributed to improving alternatives regarding waste disposal sites, the public transport scheme, including pedestrian and cycling networks, and the quality of life (mainly

related to noise reduction, air quality protection, and increasing green areas). Strategic environmental assessment had a high potential to “green” strategic documents and to address climate change. However, to achieve that, it was important to ensure that such assessments were carried out by interdisciplinary teams and that the discussion on the alternatives and the stakeholder consultations were undertaken at an early stage of the planning process.

59. Mr. Jiri Dusik of UNDP Viet Nam provided an overview of the key methodological propositions in the European Commission’s guidance documents on integrating climate change and biodiversity into strategic environmental assessment and into environmental impact assessment.² Based on his experience from Viet Nam, he suggested that the approach promoted by those guidelines was applicable also beyond the European Union context. However, strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment had to provide information that could facilitate the dialogue during the planning process, as the assessment reports on their own could not usually accomplish much. He presented proposals for updating the European Union guidelines to address the climate change mitigation measures more efficiently. Particular challenges included the long-term and the cumulative effects of climate change and the complexity of various cause-effect relationships. There was a need for collaborative international action to address climate change, and therefore it was timely to provide guidance and/or to exchange information between Parties to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol and other potentially interested United Nations Member States. UNDP Viet Nam was ready to collaborate in that regard;

60. Ms. Mara Silina, speaking on behalf of the European ECO Forum, noted the benefits that strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment could bring, including identification of plans, programmes and projects that could be sensitive to climate change and by providing decision makers with information on the likely impacts of climate change on planned strategic actions and project development, together with alternatives as to how those impacts could be addressed. Strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment could provide frameworks for good decision-making. However, there were several challenges to efficient assessment in practice, including insufficient national legislative frameworks in a number of countries and a low level of effective subsequent implementation and enforcement of the results and recommendations from such assessments. She advocated for actions at various levels to overcome those problems: Parties to the Convention and the Protocol, with support from the secretariat, should elaborate recommendations on how to integrate climate change in strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment, and seek close cooperation with UNFCCC and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It would also be important to provide a platform for the countries in the ECE region to share experience and information within and beyond the region, and to support extensive and timely involvement of all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, in strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment procedures.

61. Ms. Marjan van Giezen of the Dutch Ministry of Environment moderated the discussion. When closing the panel, she briefly summarized the discussion, emphasizing the benefits that environmental assessments could provide through efficiently addressing climate change at the strategic and project levels. She referred to the examples presented by

² See *Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment* (2013), available from <http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/metadata/guidances/guidance-on-integrating-climate-change-and-biodiversity-into-strategic-environmental-assessment>; and *Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Environmental Impact Assessment* (2013), available from <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/3ed0e578-7f24-4073-81c9-f279c6d4b3cf/language-en>.

the panellists, which indicated that strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment could be used as tools to formulate options for integrating relevant climate change considerations into plans, programmes and projects; to evaluate possible alternatives and scenarios; and to coordinate among various sectoral planning processes. Further actions should be undertaken by interdisciplinary teams and implemented both at the regional and national levels, considering the Convention and the Protocol as a platform to enable information exchange among countries and stakeholders. Some panellist had also pointed out that economic benefits were often of a higher priority for Governments than sustainable development and climate change. Consequently, green economy and climate change mitigation and adaptation, to which the assessments contributed, should be considered as opportunities to develop new business models, e.g., the generation of new jobs through the development of renewable energy resources.

62. The Meetings of the Parties expressed their gratitude to the panellists and asked that the presentations be made available on the website of the Convention.

VIII. Statements by ministers and high-level representatives

63. At the high-level segment the following country delegations made statements: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Lithuania, Norway and Ukraine. Statements were also made by representatives of the European Union and WHO. In addition, the Central and Eastern European Bankwatch Network spoke on behalf of the NGO community. The Meetings of the Parties asked that the statements be made available on the website of the Convention.

IX. Adoption of decisions and the Minsk Declaration

64. Having reviewed the changes agreed earlier in the sessions, the Meetings of the Parties proceeded with the adoption of decisions and a declaration.

65. The Meetings of the Parties jointly adopted the Minsk Declaration and the following decisions:

- (a) Decision VII/3–III/3 on adoption of the workplan;
- (b) Decision VII/4–III/4 on the budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance;
- (c) Decision VII/5–III/5 on the guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects;
- (d) Decision VII/7–III/6 on the development of a strategy and an action plan for the future application of the Convention and the Protocol.

66. The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention adopted the following decisions:

- (a) Decision VII/1 on reporting and review of implementation of the Convention;
- (b) Decision VII/6 on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities.

67. Regarding draft decision VII/2 on the review of compliance with the Convention, the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention agreed that further efforts were needed to reach consensus, and decided to finalize its deliberations at an intermediary session to be convened at a date to be determined (see para. 27 above).

68. The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol adopted the following decisions:

- (a) Decision III/1 on reporting and review of implementation of the Protocol;
- (b) Decision III/2 on the review of compliance with the Protocol.

X. Election of officers for the next intersessional period

69. The Meetings of the Parties elected officers for the next intersessional period.

70. The Meetings of the Parties elected Ms. Vesna Kolar-Planinšič (Slovenia) as Chair of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment and Ms. Sviatlana Kazakevich (Belarus) and Ms. Maryna Shymkus (Ukraine) as Vice-Chairs.

71. The Meetings of the Parties extended the mandate of Mr. Kremlis (European Commission) as the Chair of the Bureau, until the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties. The Meetings of the Parties elected Mr. Vegard Engh (Norway), Ms. Elyanora Grigoryan (Armenia), Ms. Lourdes Aurora Hernando (Spain), Ms. Seija Rantakallio (Finland) and a representative from Azerbaijan (to be named later), as Vice-Chairs of the Bureau, together with the Chair and the Vice-Chairs of the Working Group and the Chair and first Vice-Chair of the Implementation Committee.

72. The Meetings of the Parties to the Convention elected four new members of the Implementation Committee for Convention matters and their alternates, as follows: Ms. Aysel Babayeva and her alternate (to be named later) (Azerbaijan); Mr. Kaupo Heinma and his alternate M. Rainer Persidski (Estonia); Ms. Maria do Carmo Figueira and her alternate Ms. Águeda Silva (Portugal); and Mr. Anders Bengtsson and his alternate Ms. Christina Olsen Lundh (Sweden). On an exceptional basis, Mr. Heinma (and his alternate) were elected only for one term, as Estonia had already served in the Committee one term as a member for Protocol matters. The four new members were to join the four continuing members of the Committee for Convention matters: and Mr. Vladimir Buchko (Ukraine); Ms. Zsuzsanna Pocsai (Hungary); Mr. Romas Švedas (Lithuania); and Ms. Nadezhda Zdanevich (Belarus).

73. The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol elected five new members of the Implementation Committee for Protocol matters, and their alternates, as follows: Mr. Bengtsson, and his alternate Ms. Olsen Lundh (Sweden); Mr. Libor Dvorak and his alternate Ms. Eliska Dvorska (Czechia) (as alternate to Belarus); Ms. do Carmo Figueira and her alternate Ms. Silva (Portugal); Mr. Heinma and his alternate Mr. Persidski (Estonia); and Mr. Lasse Tallskog and his alternate Ms. Charlotta von Troil (Finland) (as alternate to Azerbaijan). They were to join the three continuing members of the Committee for Protocol matters: Mr. Buchko (Ukraine); Ms. Pocsai (Hungary); and Mr. Švedas (Lithuania). The Committee was to elect its own chair from among its members.

XI. Date and venue of the next meetings

74. The Meetings of the Parties decided that the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention would be held in conjunction with the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol preliminarily scheduled for late May or September 2020. The sessions would be held in Geneva in the absence of a volunteering host country. Parties to the Convention and the Protocol were invited to come forward with offers to host the sessions.

75. In addition, as the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention had agreed earlier (see para. 27 above), an intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention would be convened in late 2018 or early 2019 to finalize discussions on draft decision VII/2 and to address other issues that might arise.

XII. Conclusion of the sessions

76. The Meetings of the Parties agreed on the main decisions taken in the sessional period, as presented by the secretariat. The Meetings of the Parties authorized the secretariat to complete the report after the sessions under the guidance of the outgoing Bureau.

77. In closing the joint session, the Co-Chairs thanked delegations for their work and endurance in finding solutions to several outstanding issues. The Meetings of the Parties expressed their thanks to Belarus for its generous hosting of the sessions.

78. The Chair closed the joint session on Friday, 16 June 2017.

Annex

Pledges to the budget for the intersessional period 2017–2020

<i>State (Parties and signatories)</i>	<i>Party to Convention^a</i>	<i>Party to Protocol^a</i>	<i>Pledged total amount (in original currency)</i>	<i>Pledge and/or comments</i>
Albania	Yes	Yes	\$2 000	\$2,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020 to be paid by July 2017.
Armenia	Yes	Yes	— ^b	—
Austria	Yes	Yes	\$18,000	\$18,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$6,000 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
Azerbaijan	Yes	No	—	—
Belarus	Yes	No	—	—
Belgium	Yes	No	—	—
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes	No	—	—
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	\$8,000	\$5,000 to the Convention and \$3,000 to the Protocol for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in 2017.
Canada	Yes	No	—	—
Croatia	Yes	Yes	\$9,000	\$9,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$3,000 each in 2017 (already received), 2018 and 2019.
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	—	—
Czechia	Yes	Yes	\$15,000	\$15,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$5,000 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
Denmark	Yes	Yes	\$20,000	\$20,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid by the end of 2017.
Estonia	Yes	Yes	€3,000	€3,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of €1,000 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
European Union	Yes	Yes	€150,000	Subject to the adoption of the budget, €150,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of €50,000 each in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
Finland	Yes	Yes	\$20,000	\$20,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments: \$5,000 in 2018; \$5,000 in 2019; and \$10,000 in 2020, of which \$5,000 for the organization of the 2020 sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.

<i>State (Parties and signatories)</i>	<i>Party to Convention^a</i>	<i>Party to Protocol^a</i>	<i>Pledged total amount (in original currency)</i>	<i>Pledge and/or comments</i>
France	Yes	No	€60,000	€60,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of €20,000 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
Germany	Yes	Yes	\$45,000	\$45,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$15,000 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019, subject to adoption of the budget, and possible additional earmarked funding.
Georgia	No	No	—	—
Greece	Yes	No	—	—
Hungary	Yes	Yes	—	—
Iceland	No	No	—	—
Ireland	Yes	No	—	—
Italy	Yes	Yes	€30,000	€30,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in four instalments: €5,000 for June–December 2017 (already paid); €10,000 in 2018 and in 2019; and €5,000 in January–June 2020.
Kazakhstan	Yes	No	—	—
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	No	—	—
Latvia	Yes	Yes	—	—
Liechtenstein	Yes	No	—	—
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	\$6,000	\$6,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid by the end of 2017.
Luxembourg	Yes	Yes	—	—
Malta	Yes	Yes	—	—
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	—	—
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	€60,000	€60,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020 (already paid).
Norway	Yes	Yes	NKr 360,000	NKr 360,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of NKr 120,000 each in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
Poland	Yes	Yes	\$15,000	\$15,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$5,000 each in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
Portugal	Yes	Yes	—	—
Republic of Moldova	Yes	No	—	—

<i>State (Parties and signatories)</i>	<i>Party to Convention^a</i>	<i>Party to Protocol^a</i>	<i>Pledged total amount (in original currency)</i>	<i>Pledge and/or comments</i>
Romania	Yes	Yes	\$15,000	\$15,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$5,000 each in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
Russian Federation	No	No	—	—
Serbia	Yes	Yes	\$4,800	\$4,800 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in three instalments of \$1,600 each in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
Slovakia	Yes	Yes	\$2,000	\$2,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in 2017.
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	\$9,000	\$9,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020 to be paid in three instalments of \$3,000 each in May 2018, 2019 and 2020.
Spain	Yes	Yes	—	—
Sweden	Yes	Yes	—	—
Switzerland	Yes	No	SwF 126,000	Subject to the annual budgetary approval by the parliament, SwF 42,000 per year for the intersessional period 2017–2020, to be paid in 2017, 2018 and 2019, including an annual contribution of SwF 20,000 and an additional contribution of SwF 22,000 earmarked for capacity-building activities in Central Asia that are to be specified subsequently.
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Yes	Yes	—	—
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	\$6,000	\$6,000 for the intersessional period 2017–2020.
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Yes	No	—	—

^a These two columns reflect the status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol as at mid-June 2017.

^b An em-dash (—) indicates that no financial resources were pledged.