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WORLD PLUMBING COUNCIL

SUBMISSION TO THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WATER AND HEALTH- GENEVA 26-27 MAY 2008

AGENDA ITEM 15-Partners in Cooperation

The World Plumbing Council, having been invited to participate in the above meeting by Roger Aertgeerts of the World Health Organisation, regrets that it has been unable to identify a representative who could attend. It would like, however, to submit this written submission outlining its work and suggesting ways in which it might support the aims of the Protocol.

Background

The World Plumbing Council (WPC) was established in 1990 and its mission is to “unite the world plumbing industry to safeguard and protect the environment and the health of nations, for the benefit of all”.

WPC currently has over 100 members in 22 countries.

WPC, which is registered in Geneva, Switzerland, was recognised as an NGO in relations with WHO in 2007. This followed collaborative working between the two organisations over a period of years and included the joint publication by WHO and WPC of “Health Aspects of Plumbing” on World Water Day, 22 March 2006. This publication, which was aimed particularly at developing countries, contains advice on the importance of plumbing as a contributor to health.

Since September 2007, a representative of WPC, John McBride, based in Melbourne, Australia, has been working with WHO on a range of projects including the development of a paper on plumbing regulation and the development of training packages to be used as a means of increasing capacity in developing countries where there is little current plumbing infrastructure.

Plumbing and Health

One of WPC’s principal aims is to create awareness of the important role which plumbing plays in improving and maintaining health. Dramatic health improvements were experienced in the now developed countries in the late 19th century although it is accepted that many people in such countries are not fully aware of the health benefits which well installed and maintained water supply and sanitation systems provides. WPC

is well aware of the MDG goals on water supply and sanitation and takes every opportunity to remind those responsible that the goals will only be met if the contribution which plumbing can play is recognised.

WPC's contribution to the Working Group

Having considered the papers for the first meeting of the Working Group, and in particular the work of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, WPC suggests that it could make the following contributions:

- Preparation of guidelines on the role of plumbing at community level, stressing the need for capacity building and methods of achieving such capacity, including training.
- A formal presentation at a future meeting of the Working Group on the role of the WPC and of the plumbing industry.
- Creating links between the work of the Working Group and WPC's other collaborative initiatives with WHO.
- Identification of plumbing-related measures which might be included in survey work undertaken on behalf of the Working Group.

Summary

The World Plumbing Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Protocol and looks forward to receiving the response from the Working Group to the suggestions contained in this paper.

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