

Launch of the National Policy Dialogues (NPD) for Industrial Safety in Serbia, Belgrade, 26 October 2021

Conclusions

Main Meeting Objectives:

- Launch the NPDs on Industrial Safety in Serbia with engagement of all relevant authorities
- Raise awareness on the benefits of the NPD process
- Familiarize participants with the existing principles for the industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response as well as the tools and methodologies available for identifying country's needs in this regard
- Share information on existing institutional and legislative frameworks, on-going work and priorities as well as possible gaps with regard to industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response
- Set up a steering committee of the NPDs on Industrial Safety in Serbia
- Determine next steps in the NPD process in Serbia

Organizers:

The meeting was co-organized by the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Serbia and the secretariat of the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (hereinafter – Industrial Accidents Convention), in collaboration with the OECD Programme on Chemical Accidents, with financial contribution by the Ministry of Ecological Transition of France.

Attendees:

The meeting aimed to bring together all relevant authorities of Serbia responsible for industrial safety, chemicals classification, environment protection, civil protection, response to industrial accidents etc. The invitations were sent out by the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Serbia to all competent¹ and other relevant authorities. The representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection (including attendance by the Assistant Minister, Sector for Management of Environment), Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure (attended by the Assistant Minister, Sector for Spatial Planning and Urbanism), Ministry of Mining and Energy and the Republic Water Directorate of the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management attended the meeting.² The meeting was also attended in person by the Chair of the UNECE Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, its Secretary and Manager of its Assistance and Cooperation Programme. The Chair of the OECD Working Party on Chemical Accidents, representatives of its secretariat as well as representatives of the Ministry of the Ecological Transition of France connected to the meeting remotely.

¹ Serbia nominated the following competent authorities under the Industrial Accidents Convention: Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Interior and Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

² Representatives of the Ministry of Interior were also invited but cancelled their participation on short notice

Overview of the meeting:

The meeting, which was held on Tuesday, 26 October 2021, comprised three sessions of presentations and panel discussions. Representatives of the Serbian Ministry of Environmental Protection, the lead competent authority gave presentations on existing institutional and legislative frameworks for industrial accidents prevention, preparedness and response in Serbia, related activities and progress towards the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention. International experts shared experience of their respective countries, namely France and Norway, regarding the implementation of the Convention and cooperation between national competent authorities responsible for industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response. The Convention's secretariat presented the Assistance and Cooperation Programme and its Strategic Approach. The Chair of the OECD Working Party on Chemical Accidents presented the OECD programme on chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the terms of reference of the Steering Committee for NPD on Industrial Safety, agreement on its set-up & next steps, brainstorming on the plan of activities & next steps of the NPD process in Serbia.

Key outcomes of the meeting:

- Representatives from different Serbian authorities agreed to set up a Steering Committee (SC) of the NPD, with membership at this stage from the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - the Republic Water Directorate, the Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure, and the Ministry of Mining and Energy
- It was agreed that participation of the Ministry of Interior in the SC – as one of the competent authorities under Industrial Accidents Convention - is crucial and will be sought
- The Ministry of Environmental Protection agreed to lead the NPD process under the leadership of the current Assistant Minister Ms. Aleksandra Imširagić Đurić who proposed to make use of the NPD process, *inter alia*, to develop a National Programme on Industrial Safety, which was agreed at the meeting
- The Terms of Reference of the SC were agreed
- It was agreed to hold the first meeting of the SC on the NPDs in Serbia in March 2022, with engagement of all competent and relevant authorities, with the objective to further discuss and agree on the next steps towards the development of a National Programme on Industrial Safety
- The meeting attendees agreed to become members of the SC and the Ministry of Environmental Protection agreed to facilitate finalization of SC composition by sending out requests for membership to the remaining relevant authorities which were not present at the meeting
- It was suggested that, in addition to the representatives of the Serbian three competent authorities under the Industrial Accidents Convention, as well as representatives of other relevant state authorities, representatives of local authorities, NGOs, academia and civil society be invited to contribute to the future NPD meetings
- It was agreed to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNECE and the Ministry of Environmental Protection (possibly involving other competent authorities of Serbia & partner organizations, such as OECD) for the NPD implementation in Serbia

The meeting agenda, list of participants, and evaluation summary are available here:

<https://unece.org/info/events/event/353193>