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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Eighty-fourth session

Geneva, 22–25 February 2022

Item 9 (l) of the provisional agenda

Strategic questions of a horizontal and cross-sectoral policy or regulatory nature:

Transport of dangerous goods

ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2021/13 on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Note by the secretariat

1. The Committee deals with worldwide harmonisation of codes and regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods by all modes as well as of regulations for classification and labelling of chemicals. The Sustainable Transport Division provides the secretariat services to the Committee and its two sub-committees.
2. The recommendations developed by the Committee are applied worldwide and address potential exposures to all potential hazardous chemicals in all types of use situations, including production, storage, transport, workplace use, consumer use and presence in the environment.
3. The Economic and Social Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of its resolutions on the work of the Committee every two years. The report covering the biennium 2019-2020 was considered by the Council at its 2021 session. It was circulated with the symbol E/2021/10 and is available in the six UN official languages.¹
4. The secretariat reproduces hereafter resolution 2021/13, as adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 8 June 2021. As per the usual practice, a report on its implementation will be submitted for consideration by ECOSOC at its 2023 session.

¹ <https://undocs.org/E/RES/2021/13>

**2021 session**

Agenda item 18 (I)

Economic and environmental questions:**Transport of dangerous goods****Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council
on 8 June 2021**

[on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (E/2021/10)]

2021/13. Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1999/65 of 26 October 1999 and [2019/7](#) of 6 June 2019,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals during the biennium 2019–2020,¹

A**Work of the Committee regarding the transport of dangerous goods**

Recognizing the importance of the work of the Committee for the harmonization of codes and regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods,

Bearing in mind the need to maintain safety standards at all times and to facilitate trade, as well as the importance of these issues to the various organizations responsible for modal regulations, while meeting the growing concern for the protection of life, property and the environment through the safe and secure transport of dangerous goods,

Noting the ever-increasing volume of dangerous goods being introduced into worldwide commerce and the rapid expansion of technology and innovation,

¹ [E/2021/10](#).



Recalling that, while the major international instruments governing the transport of dangerous goods by the various modes of transport and many national regulations are now better harmonized with the Model Regulations annexed to the recommendations of the Committee on the transport of dangerous goods, further work on harmonizing these instruments is necessary to enhance safety and to facilitate trade, and recalling also that uneven progress in the updating of national inland transport legislation in some countries of the world continues to present serious challenges to international multimodal transport,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals with respect to matters relating to the transport of dangerous goods, including their security in transport;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the new and amended recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods² to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned;

(b) To publish the twenty-second revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations* and amendment 1 to the seventh revised edition of the *Manual of Tests and Criteria* in all the official languages of the United Nations, in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2021;

(c) To make those publications available in book and electronic format and on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

3. *Invites* all Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the other international organizations concerned to transmit to the secretariat of the Committee their views on the work of the Committee, together with any comments that they may wish to make on the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods;

4. *Invites* all interested Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the international organizations concerned to take into account the recommendations of the Committee when developing or updating appropriate codes and regulations;

5. *Requests* the Committee to study, in consultation with the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental organizations concerned, the possibilities of improving the implementation of the Model Regulations on the transport of dangerous goods in all countries for the purposes of ensuring a high level of safety and eliminating technical barriers to international trade, including through the further harmonization of international agreements or conventions governing the international transport of dangerous goods;

6. *Invites* all Governments, as well as the regional commissions and organizations concerned, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization to provide feedback to the Committee regarding differences between the provisions of national, regional or international legal instruments and those of the Model Regulations, in order to enable the Committee to develop cooperative guidelines for enhancing consistency between these requirements and reducing unnecessary impediments; to identify existing

² See [ST/SG/AC.10/48/Add.1](#) and [ST/SG/AC.10/48/Add.2](#).

substantive and international, regional and national differences, with the aim of reducing those differences in modal treatment to the greatest extent practical and ensuring that, where differences are necessary, they do not pose impediments to the safe and efficient transport of dangerous goods; and to undertake an editorial review of the Model Regulations and various modal instruments with the aim of improving clarity, user friendliness and ease of translation;

B
Work of the Committee regarding the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Bearing in mind that in paragraph 23 (c) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),³ countries were encouraged to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008,

Bearing in mind also that the General Assembly, in its resolution [57/253](#) of 20 December 2002, endorsed the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and requested the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Plan relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21⁴ by strengthening system-wide coordination,

Bearing in mind further the commitment by Member States to work for the full implementation by 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals and related targets as agreed by the General Assembly in its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in particular target 12.4 related to the achievement of the environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes through their life cycle in accordance with agreed international frameworks,

Noting with satisfaction:

(a) That the Economic Commission for Europe and all United Nations programmes and specialized agencies concerned with chemical safety in the field of transport or of the environment, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, have already taken appropriate steps to amend or update their legal instruments in order to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System or are considering amending them as soon as possible,

(b) That the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization are also taking appropriate steps to adapt their existing chemical safety recommendations, codes and guidelines to the Globally Harmonized System, in particular in the areas of occupational health and safety, pesticide management and the prevention and treatment of poisoning,

(c) That many Member States have already issued national legislation or standards implementing the Globally Harmonized System, or allowing its application, in one or several sectors other than transport,

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

⁴ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

(d) That work on the development or revision of national legislation, standards or guidelines to implement the Globally Harmonized System continues in other countries, while in some others activities related to the development of sectoral implementation plans or national implementation strategies are being conducted or are expected to be initiated soon,

(e) That a number of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the European Union, Governments and non-governmental organizations representing the chemical industry, have organized or contributed to multiple workshops, seminars and other capacity-building activities at the international, regional, subregional and national levels to raise awareness in the administration, health and industrial sectors and to prepare for or support the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System,

Aware that effective implementation will require further cooperation between the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the international bodies concerned, continued efforts by the Governments of Member States, cooperation with the industry and other stakeholders and significant support for capacity-building activities in countries with economies in transition and developing countries,

Recalling the particular significance of the Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development for building capacities at all levels,

1. *Commends* the Secretary-General on the publication of the eighth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*⁵ in the six official languages of the United Nations, electronically and in book form, and its availability, together with related informational material, on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

2. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to the Committee, the Commission and the United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned for their fruitful cooperation and their commitment to the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the amendments⁶ to the eighth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System* to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned;

(b) To publish the ninth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System* in all the official languages of the United Nations in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2021, and to make it available in book and electronic format and on the website of the Commission;

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.II.E.21.

⁶ [ST/SG/AC.10/48/Add.3](#).

(c) To continue to make information on the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System available on the website of the Commission;⁷

4. *Invites* Governments that have not yet done so to take the steps necessary to implement the Globally Harmonized System as soon as possible through appropriate national procedures and/or legislation and to keep them updated to take account of the recommendations made by the Committee every two years;

5. *Reiterates its invitation* to the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to promote the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System and, where relevant, to amend their respective international legal instruments addressing transport safety, workplace safety, consumer protection or the protection of the environment so as to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System through such instruments;

6. *Invites* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to provide feedback to the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals on the steps taken for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System in all relevant sectors, through international, regional or national legal instruments, recommendations, codes and guidelines, including, when applicable, information about the transitional periods for its implementation;

7. *Encourages* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in particular those representing industry, to strengthen their support for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System by providing financial contributions and/or technical assistance for capacity-building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

C

Programme of work of the Committee

Taking note of the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 2021–2022 as contained in paragraphs 46 and 47 of the report of the Secretary-General,⁸

Noting the relatively poor level of participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee and the need to promote their wider participation in its work,

1. *Decides* to approve the programme of work of the Committee;

2. *Stresses* the importance of the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee, calls in that regard for voluntary contributions to facilitate their participation, including through support for travel and daily subsistence, and invites Member States and international organizations in a position to do so to contribute;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council, in 2023, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

*8th plenary meeting
8 June 2021*

⁷ Available at <https://unece.org/ghs-implementation-0>.

⁸ E/2021/10.