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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE TRANSBOUNDARY
EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS**

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES
Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management**

INFORMATION NOTICE

**WORKSHOP ON THE PREVENTION OF
WATER POLLUTION DUE TO PIPELINE ACCIDENTS**

(Berlin, 8-9 June 2005)

Prepared by the delegation of Germany in cooperation with the
Conventions' secretariats

Introduction

1. Accidents involving pipelines that carry hazardous substances may have far-reaching transboundary effects and lead to accidental water pollution. The Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) and the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) decided to share experience regarding pipeline safety as a step towards drawing up safety guidelines/good practices.
2. This document provides information on the planned workshop on the prevention of water pollution due to pipeline accidents. Another outlining the workshop's programme and other details will follow.

A. Background

3. Joint activities under both Conventions started with the “Workshop on the prevention of chemical accidents and limitation of their impact on waters”(Berlin, 7-9 May 1998). Following this, a joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents was established to prepare the “Seminar on the prevention of chemical accidents and limitation of their impact on waters” (Hamburg, Germany, 4-6 October 1999). The Seminar’s conclusions and recommendations were adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention and endorsed by the Conference of the Parties to Industrial Accidents Convention.

4. The Parties to both Conventions extended the mandate of the joint expert group to support and provide guidance in the implementation of these recommendations and agreed on its work plan (ECE/CP.TEIA/2, annex VI).

5. One of its tasks was to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines to assist UNECE member countries and/or joint bodies (e.g. international river commissions) to implement the provisions of both Conventions.

6. The joint expert group, at its fourth meeting in Kaliningrad (Russian Federation) on 30-31 October 2003, commenced work on the safety of pipelines by considering the experience of the Russian Federation. At its fifth meeting in Budapest on 26 October 2004, it recommended organizing two workshops, one on the prevention of water pollution and the other on the prevention of accidental releases into the air due to pipeline accidents. The joint expert group established an open-ended steering group to prepare the workshops and assist in drawing up the guidelines/good practices for pipelines.

7. The approach of the joint expert group was fully supported by the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention at its third meeting in Budapest on 27-30 October 2004 (ECE/CP.TEIA/12) as well as by the of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management at its first meeting in Geneva on 15 December 2004 (MP.WAT/WG.1/2004/2).

B. Dates and venue

8. The workshop will be held at the invitation of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety on 8 and 9 June 2005 at the Federal Press Agency of the German Federal Government (Bundespresseamt), Reichstagsufer 14, 10117 Berlin.

C. Objectives

9. The workshop will provide a platform for representatives of competent authorities and experts from the public and private sectors to share information and experience on national and international developments in pipeline safety, including the existing legal framework and best practices to prevent, control and reduce the impact of pipeline failures and accidents on the terrestrial and aquatic environment, including transboundary waters. It is expected to contribute to:

(a) Compiling information on existing practices in the safe operation of pipelines;

(b) Identifying gaps in the legal and regulatory frameworks concerning the operation of pipelines; and

- (c) Drawing up guidelines/good practices for pipelines.

D. Guidelines/good practices for pipelines

10. Participants will be able to consider and further elaborate the draft elements for the guidelines/good practices for pipelines prepared by the steering group for the workshop. The steering group will take these comments into account when finalizing its draft guidelines/good practice document after the workshop. Before submitting them to the joint expert group and afterwards to the governing bodies of the two Conventions for further consideration and endorsement.

E. Programme of the workshop

11. The workshop will be divided into six key topics for discussion (see annex I).

12. The steering group, in cooperation with the Conventions' secretariats, will prepare a detailed programme of the workshop following its first meeting on 18 March 2005 in Berlin. Experts from the Parties to either Convention are invited to participate in this meeting, which will be conducted in English only. Interested experts should contact the Conventions' secretariats (see para. 14).

F. Presentations and discussion papers

13. Invited speakers will introduce each topic with keynote presentations, possibly supported by other presentations and discussion papers submitted before the workshop.

14. Experts from competent authorities, international governmental and non-governmental organizations and from the public and the private sectors are invited to submit discussion papers related to any of the workshop's key topics (see annex I), in accordance with the guidelines in annex II. Texts should be in English and/or Russian and submitted as soon as possible but **not later than 6 May 2005** to the Conventions' secretariats at the following address:

Mr. Rainer ENDERLEIN and Mr. Sergiusz LUDWICZAK
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Environment and Human Settlements Division
Palais des Nations
8-14, Avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel.: (+41) 22 917 2373 and 3174
Fax: (+41) 22 917 0107
E-mail: rainer.enderlein@unece.org and sergiusz.ludwiczak@unece.org

15. Discussion papers will be reproduced in their original language(s) by the organizers and made available to participants.

G. Working languages

16. The workshop will be conducted in English, German and Russian.

H. Participation

17. Experts from the Parties to the Conventions, other UNECE member countries, United Nations Member States, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, the public or private sector, including experts from the pipeline industry, may participate in the workshop. Members of the joint expert group are strongly encouraged to participate.

18. Experts from countries in transition may apply to the host country for financial assistance to facilitate their participation in the workshop on condition that they actively participate in it, among other things, by submitting papers on the experiences of pipeline operations in their countries.

I. Registration, organizational details and visas

19. Detailed organizational and registration information, including hotel accommodation, will be in the provisional programme for the workshop to be issued in the beginning of April 2005.

20. Participants are responsible for obtaining their visas, if required. Further information can be obtained from the nearest diplomatic representative of the Government of Germany.

Annex I

KEY TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Advantages and disadvantages of pipelines

1. This will consider the advantages of pipelines as important means for transporting a variety of hazardous substances. It will also consider the disadvantages of pipelines, such as infrastructure costs, problems associated with water and soil protection and potential hazards. Accident statistics and examples of recent accidents and the lessons learned will be examined. Participants are particularly invited to provide an overview (e.g. maps, inventories) of pipelines that in the catchment areas of transboundary waters (rivers, lakes, groundwaters).

B. Technical and organisational measures for pipeline safety

2. The topic will consider experience and good practice related to the elements of a pipeline safety concept; surveillance by the operator (e.g. leak detection systems); surveillance by competent authority and third-party experts; safety management systems; risk assessments; life-cycle analysis; and other technical and organizational measures.

C. Emergency response and technical assistance and cooperation

3. This will examine specific experiences and good practice in responding to pipeline accidents. Examples of practical exercises dealing with accident response to pipeline failures will also be examined.

D. Legal requirements and regulatory approaches

4. The experiences and approaches to drawing up and implementing legal requirements, both in the planning and implementation of pipeline construction, operation and maintenance will be discussed. Particular attention will be given to the legal requirements for transboundary pipelines.

E. Projects

5. This topic will examine lessons learned from the preparation and implementation of pipeline projects, particularly transboundary ones including: the project of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society on "Environmental Security of the Transportation of the Hazardous Substances involved in Oil and Gas Transportation in Black Sea and Caspian Region", the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) -Pipeline and the "Rotterdam-Rijn-Pijpleiding" stretching from Rotterdam (Netherlands) to Cologne (Germany).

F. Recommendations for future action

6. UNECE-wide, subregional and national measures to further develop and strengthen safety measures for pipelines will be considered. The workshop participants will draw conclusions and provide guidance to the steering group for drawing up safety guidelines/good practice for pipelines. They should keep in mind, among other things, provisions on pipeline safety contained in chapter 17 (c) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Guiding principles for chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response¹ as well as other documents regarding pipeline safety. Particular attention should be given to the needs and problems of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe.

¹ http://www2.oecd.org/guidingprinciples/toc_index.asp

Annex II

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF DISCUSSION PAPERS

1. Discussion papers should be original contributions (not reprints) of a substantive nature. They should not exceed 10 pages including graphs and tables. The texts of discussion papers should be provided in Microsoft WORD and communicated to the Conventions' secretariats by e-mail and/or on diskette. Discussion papers will be issued in their original language(s).
2. **Page one** of the discussion paper should indicate the title of the contribution, the full names and professional postal addresses (including telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses) of all authors, and a reference to the workshop topic(s). The FAMILY NAMES of authors should be in capital letters.
3. **The main body of the text should start on page two.** The title and authorship of the discussion paper should not be repeated on this page. This part of the discussion paper will be directly reproduced from the author's file (see para. 1).
4. Graphs should be in black and white drawing, and any captions should be written in English or Russian. Photographs cannot be accepted for reproduction. Footnotes as well as source and reference notes should be kept to a minimum.