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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
WATER COURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES

Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

Workshop on the Prevention of Accidents of Gas
Transmission Pipelines

The Hague, 8 to 9 March 2006

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

1. The Workshop on the Prevention of Accidents of Gas Transmission Pipelines was held in The Hague on 8–9 March 2006. The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Netherlands was the organizer.
2. The workshop was held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), within the framework of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

I. OBJECTIVES

3. In 2004 the Parties to both Conventions launched a process, within the UNECE framework, to draw up safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines. The Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, established to consider issues of common concern to both Conventions, was given responsibility for the process. An open-ended steering group comprising experts on pipeline safety was established in order to draft the document, which will be further considered by the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group and later adopted by the Conventions' governing bodies. Two expert workshops have now been held in order to enable stakeholders to provide as much input as possible. The Workshop on the Prevention of Water Pollution Due to Pipeline Accidents was held in Berlin on 8–9 June 2005; see CP.TEIA/2005/3 – MP.WAT/WG.1/2005/3.

4. The workshop on preventing gas transmission pipeline accidents enabled representatives of competent authorities and experts from the public and private sectors, in particular pipeline operators, to share information and experience on gas pipeline safety, including the existing legal framework and good practices to prevent gas pipeline failures and accidents and control and reduce their impact. The discussions focused on risk assessment, land-use planning and information policy. Participants had the opportunity to comment on a draft of the document containing safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines, prepared by the above-mentioned steering group.

II. PARTICIPATION

5. The workshop was attended by experts from the following 26 UNECE member countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Israel, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and Uzbekistan. Experts from the European Commission also attended, as did experts from the oil companies' European Association for Environment, Health and Safety (CONCAWE) and from the Technical Association of the European Natural Gas Industry (MARCOGAZ).

6. The participation of experts from countries in transition was sponsored by the Netherlands.

III. OPENING

7. Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Secretary to the Conference of the Parties, opened the workshop and welcomed the participants on behalf of the UNECE. He introduced Mr. Cees Moons, Director of External Safety at the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment.

8. Mr. Moons welcomed the participants to the Netherlands and expressed his Government's satisfaction that this workshop was taking place in The Hague. He expressed hope that its deliberations and especially the safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines would contribute to enhancing the safety of pipeline operation in the UNECE context. He then

suggested electing Mr. Kees Van Kuijen (Netherlands) as Chairman of the workshop. Mr. Van Kuijen had for many years been involved in issues relating to the safety of installations, including in the activities under the Industrial Accidents Convention.

IV. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

9. Mr. Van Kuijen was elected Chairman of the Workshop.

V. PROGRAMME

10. The workshop was divided into the following sections:

- (a) Setting the scene
- (b) Risk assessment on pipelines – methods and criteria
- (c) Land-use planning
- (d) Information policy
- (e) Lessons learned

11. The programme, including a list of presentations, appears in the annex. The presentations are available on the website of the Industrial Accidents Convention at <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/water/pipeline/hague-document.htm>.

VI. CONCLUDING SESSION

12. The concluding session consisted of a discussion on the draft safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines and in particular on newly proposed text reflecting the key issues presented at this workshop. Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany) chaired this session.

13. Valuable comments were made on most of the document's new paragraphs and will be reflected in its next version. Numerous comments were also made to other sections of the document and will be considered by the steering group, which will finalize its draft and submit it to the Joint Ad Hoc Expert group.¹ Successive versions of the guidelines are available at <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/water/pipeline/haguetworkshop.htm>.

¹ The Joint Expert Group, at its seventh meeting (in Geneva on 10–11 April 2006), considered and agreed on the text of the draft guidelines and good practices for pipelines. This draft will remain open for comments from authorities and pipeline operators until 31 May 2006 within a final consultation round. The Joint Expert Group will then endeavor to incorporate possible comments and finalize the document in order to submit it to the governing bodies for adoption at their meetings in November 2006.

VII. CLOSING

14. The participants agreed that the secretariat should prepare the report on the workshop and finalize it in agreement with the Chairman.

15. Mr. Van Kuijen thanked the speakers for their interesting presentations and the participants for their valuable input into the workshop's discussions. He said the workshop had contributed to sharing experience between experts from different parts of the UNECE region on increasing the safety of pipeline operation, and that the workshop's experts had been able to play an important role in shaping the draft guidelines.

Annex

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Opening statement by Mr. Cees Moons on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Netherlands	
Election of the Chairman: Mr. Kees Van Kuijen – Netherlands	
Section I: Setting the scene	
1.	A UNECE process to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines <i>Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Secretary of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents</i>
2.	European gas industry – a proactive attitude concerning pipeline safety <i>Mr. Daniel Hec, MARCOGAZ</i>
3.	Comparison of safety aspects: oil versus gas pipelines <i>Mr. Jorg Ludwig, Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing, Germany</i>
Section II: Risk assessment on pipelines – methods and criteria	
1.	The German approach to safety of natural gas distribution pipelines <i>Mr. Klaus Söntgerath, State Authority for Mining, Energy and Geology, Germany</i>
2.	Risk assessment on pipelines – the Dutch approach <i>Mr. Eduard Geus on behalf of Mr. Gerald Laheij, RIVM, Netherlands</i>
3.	Risk assessment on pipelines – the Swiss approach <i>Mr. Bernard Gay, Risk Prevention Division, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland</i>
Section III: Land-use planning	
1.	Example for land-use planning policies, good practices <i>Mr. Michael Struckl, European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Ispra</i>
2.	Land-use planning and policy in the Netherlands <i>Ms. Carla Speel-Zuiderwijk, External Safety Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, Netherlands</i>
Section IV: Information policy	
1.	Risk communication on pipeline safety in Georgia <i>Mr. Revaz Enukidze, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Georgia</i>
2.	Prevention of third-party interference <i>Ms. A. van Rijn, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Netherlands</i>
3.	Principles of a safety management system in gas transmission: the Snam Rete Gas experience <i>Mr. Pierluigi Caribotti, Health Safety and Innovation Manager, Snam Rete Gas, Italy</i>
4.	Guideline for the definition of performance indicators for safety management systems <i>Mr. Jeroen Zanting, Gasunie (member of the Marcogaz Working Group), Netherlands</i>

Section V: Lessons learned	
1.	Gas pipeline explosion at Ghislenghien, Belgium <i>Ms. Berenice Crabs, Fluxys, Belgium</i>
2.	Pipeline accident in Nordrhein Westfalen, Germany <i>Mr. Norbert Wiese, Landesumweltamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany</i>
3.	EGIG database – lessons learned from accidents <i>Mr. Dick van den Brand, Gasunie, Netherlands</i>
Concluding session	
Discussion on the draft safety guidelines/good practices <i>Discussion leader: Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei, Federal Environment Agency, Germany</i>	
Chairman's closing remarks – Mr. Kees Van Kuijen	