



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/MP.WH/2
EUR/06/5069385/1
3 July 2007

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE
PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION
AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL
LAKES

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES
ON ITS FIRST MEETING
(Geneva, 17-19 January 2007)**

Summary

The Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (the Water Convention) held their first meeting in Geneva from 17 to 19 January 2007. At the meeting, Parties adopted their rules of procedure as well as a number of other decisions that had been prepared by the Working Group on Water and Health.

Most notably, they adopted a compliance procedure and elected the members of the Compliance Committee. Moreover, the Parties established a mechanism for international support for national action under article 14 of the Protocol which will promote the coordination of international aid for the implementation of the Protocol and enhance the capacity of recipient countries to access sources of finance by helping them to formulate projects.

Finally, the Parties adopted a programme of work for the period 2007-2009 which will support implementation and compliance with the Protocol as well as the sharing of experience in the UNECE region.

Part One: Proceedings

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
	Introduction.....	1-6 4
I.	Opening ceremony and constitution of the first Meeting of the Parties.....	7-14 4
	A. Opening ceremony.....	7-10 4
	B. Constitution of the first Meeting of the Parties.....	11-12 5
	C. Election of officers for the first Meeting of the Parties.....	13 5
	D. Report on the credentials submitted by Parties.....	14 5
II.	Adoption of the Agenda	15 6
III.	Adoption of the rules of procedure.....	16-18 6
IV.	Status of implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health.....	19-25 6
	A. Reports by Parties, Signatories and other observers.....	19-20 6
	B. Reports on activities of relevance under UNECE, including The Water Convention.....	21-22 6
	C. Report on activities of relevance under the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO-EURO) of Relevance to the Protocol and mainstreaming of activities under The Protocol into the policymaking of WHO-EURO.....	23-25 7
V.	Amendment to the Protocol.....	26-29 8
VI.	Target-setting, review and assessment of progress and guidelines for Reporting under the Protocol.....	30-40 8
	A. Obligations deriving from article 6 of the Protocol.....	30-31 8
	B. Obligations deriving from article 7 of the Protocol.....	32-40 9
VII.	Surveillance and early-warning systems, contingency plans and Response capacities.....	41-44 10
VIII.	Compliance procedure.....	45-53 11
IX.	Ad hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism.....	54-57 12
X.	Partners in cooperation: links with other organizations and programmes...	58-63 14
	A. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.....	58-60 14
	B. Other partners.....	61-63 14
XI.	Designation and responsibilities of focal points.....	64-65 15
XII.	Programme of work, terms of reference of bodies established to Implement it, and resources needed.....	66-67 15
XIII.	Financial arrangements.....	69-71 16
XIV.	Declaration of the first Meeting of the Parties.....	72-74 16
XV.	Date and venue of the second meeting of the Parties.....	75 17
XVI.	Adoption of the report and closing of the meeting.....	76-79 17

Part Two: Action and decisions taken by the Meeting of the Parties

*For practical reasons, Part Two of the present report is issued in five addenda
(ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.1- EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.1 to 5)*

Rules of procedure for the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol.....	ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.1/ EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.1
Declaration and decisions.....	ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2/ EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2
Declaration of the first Meeting of the Parties	
Decision I/1 Mainstreaming activities and priorities of work under the Protocol into the policymaking of the World Health Organization (WHO)	
Decision I/4 Designation and responsibilities of focal points	
Decision I/5 Financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol	
Terms of reference of the Working Group on Water and Health	
Decision on review of compliance.....	ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.3/ EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.3
Decision on the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism.....	ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.4/ EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.4
Programme of work for 2007–2009.....	ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.5/ EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.5

INTRODUCTION

1. The first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes took place in Geneva from 17 to 19 January 2007.
2. The meeting was attended by delegations of the following Parties to the Protocol: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Norway, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine.
3. Delegations from the following countries were also present: Algeria, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The European Community was also represented.
4. Representatives of the following international organizations also attended the meeting: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
5. Representatives of the following organizations also participated in the meeting: World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Water and Health, WHO Collaborating Centre Institute for Hygiene and Public Health, Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment, Earthjustice, European ECO-Forum, International Environmental Association of River Keepers – ECO/TIRAS, International Office for Water, Green Cross International, Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), AQUAFED and the European Federation of Water Suppliers.
6. Within the framework of the meeting, a “Roundtable on the Human Right to Water and the Protocol on Water and Health: making access to water a reality” was held on 18 January (see paras. 62-63).

I. OPENING CEREMONY AND CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

A. Opening ceremony

7. Mr. Mihály Kádár (Hungary), Chairperson of the Working Group on Water and Health, opened the meeting and presided over it until the election of the chairperson.
8. Mr. Marek Belka, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and Mr. Roberto Bertolini, Director of the Special Programme on Health and

Environment of the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO-EURO), addressed the Meeting. Their statements were circulated.¹

9. Mr. Kádár also addressed the participants and recalled the work at the basis of the adoption of the Protocol and the activities developed by the Working Group on Water and Health during the interim period. He acknowledged the important role played by late Dr. Alan Pinter, former Director of the Hungarian National Institute for Environmental Health.

10. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to apply ad interim the draft rules of procedure (ECE/MP.WH/2007/1 - EUR/06/5069385/7), until it had formally adopted them under item 3 of the agenda.

B. Constitution of the first Meeting of the Parties

11. Ms. Francesca Bernardini, co-secretary of the Protocol on Water and Health of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), informed the Meeting of the Parties on the status of ratification of the Protocol on Water and Health. As of 17 January 2007, 19 UNECE member States had become Parties to the Protocol. These were: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine.² The Meeting of the Parties was declared to be duly constituted.

12. The Meeting of the Parties established two ad hoc groups: one on the draft programme of work, chaired by Ms. Sybille Vermont (Switzerland), and one on the draft declaration, chaired by Ms. Heide Jekel (Germany).

C. Election of officers for the first Meeting of the Parties

13. The Meeting elected unanimously the following persons to serve on its Bureau: Ms. Lucia Ana Varga (Romania) as Chairperson, Ms. Kateryna Kiryanova (Ukraine) and Mr. Kjetil Tveitan (Norway) as Vice-Chairpersons, and Ms. Sirkka Haunia (Finland), Mr. Kádár and Mr. Pierre Studer (Switzerland) as members of the Bureau.

D. Report on the credentials submitted by Parties

14. The Meeting of the Parties took note of the report by the chairperson that the credentials submitted by the Parties to the Protocol were in good order.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

15. The Meeting adopted its agenda as set out in document ECE/MP.WH/1 - EUR/06/5069385/6.

¹ Statements, presentations, information documents and other material distributed at the meeting are available at: <http://www.unece.org/env/water/whmop1/highlights.htm>

² In addition, Switzerland and Germany ratified the Protocol on 27 October 2006 and 15 January 2007, respectively.

III. ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

16. Mr. Attila Tanzi, Chairperson of the Legal Board, presented the draft rules of procedures in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/1 - EUR/06/5069385/7.

17. The Meeting adopted the rules of procedure with the deletion of paragraph 3 of rule 20 (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.1 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.1).

18. The Meeting also agreed that the agenda and the report of the Bureau meetings would be placed in due time on the Protocol's website to encourage wider awareness, information flow and interaction between the Bureau, the Parties, and those States and organizations referred to in rule 5, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure. Any issues of concern or emerging issues could be then addressed to the Chairperson of the Bureau for their possible discussion during the Bureau meetings.

IV. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH

A. Reports by Parties, Signatories and other observers

19. The representatives of the following delegations delivered general statements on the implementation of the Protocol, including main challenges and priorities of work until 2009 and beyond: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine.

20. The European Community, UNDP, European ECO-Forum, ECO-TIRAS and WECF also informed the Meeting of the Parties about their activities of relevance to the Protocol and about their intentions to cooperate under the future programme of work.³

B. Reports on activities of relevance under UNECE, including the Water Convention

21. Mr. Kaj Barlund, Director of the UNECE Division of Environment, Housing and Land Management, presented the progress made under the "Environment for Europe" process and the preparations for the sixth Ministerial Conference, which would be held in Belgrade from 10 to 12 October 2007. The preliminary agenda for the Conference included several items of relevance for the Meeting of the Parties, such as: the state of the environment in the pan-European region; the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements; education for sustainable development; challenges in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and in

³ Statements and written inputs are available at: www.unece.org/env/water/whmop1/highlights.htm.

Southeastern-Eastern Europe (SEE); and partnerships to support the implementation of environmental policy.

22. Ms. Bernardini presented the outcome of the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention (Bonn, Germany, 20-22 November 2006) and the decisions of relevance for the Protocol. In particular, the following activities in the workplan 2007-2009 of the Convention would entail cooperation with the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol:

(a) Availability of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment to assist the Parties to the Protocol in the development of targets and indicators of progress in the field of water management, as requested by article 6 of the Protocol;

(b) Development of a guidance document on Water and Climate Adaptation by the Water and Climate Task Force, which would address possible impacts of climate change on flood and drought occurrences, including health related aspects, as well as practical ways to cope with the transboundary impacts through adaptation;

(c) Activities on groundwaters, in particular those related to the use of groundwater as a source of drinking water;

(d) Activities under the UNECE project "Capacity for Water Cooperation" (CWC), aiming to strengthen the capacity of transboundary water management in EECCA, and in particular the plan to organize a workshop on the Protocol on Water and Health, most likely in 2008.

C. Report on activities of relevance under the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO-EURO) of relevance to the Protocol and mainstreaming of activities under the Protocol into the policymaking of WHO-EURO

23. Mr. R. Bertollini reviewed the current medium-term strategic planning exercise (MTSP) at the WHO-EURO, and urged representatives of countries that have bilateral collaborative agreements (BCAs) with WHO-EURO to actively communicate with their respective health ministries to ensure inclusion of water and health elements in the strategic plan and in its translation into concrete actions. He touched upon the meeting of the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) held in Szentendre, Hungary, and elaborated on the forthcoming inter-governmental mid-term review meeting (Vienna, Austria, June 2007) called to review progress made since the fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Budapest, Hungary, 23-25 June 2004).

24. Mr. Roger Aertgeerts, co-secretary of the Protocol on Water and Health (WHO-EURO), made a presentation on WHO operational planning, governing bodies and policies, and introduced the draft decision on mainstreaming activities and priorities of work into the policymaking of WHO-EURO set out in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.1 – EUR/06/5069385/8.

25. The Meeting of the Parties adopted the decision amending paragraphs 1 and 2 as follows:

“1. *Requests* the Regional Director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to inform the policymaking bodies of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, particularly its Regional Committee, of the decisions taken by the Meeting of the Parties and to ensure adequate resources for the support of the joint secretariat and for the implementation of the Protocol; and

2. *Invites* the Regional Committee of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to take cognizance of the programme of work adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, and to provide appropriate support for the implementation of the Protocol’s programme of work during the definition of the programme of work and budget of the WHO Regional Office for Europe.”

V. AMENDMENT TO THE PROTOCOL

26. Ms. Bernardini introduced document ECE/MP.WAT/WG.4/2006/5 - EUR/06/5059736/5, on opening the Protocol for ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to countries outside the UNECE region, and summarized previous discussion within the Working Group on Water and Health on this issue.

27. The Meeting took note of the readiness of Hungary and Switzerland to prepare a proposal to amend the Protocol to open it to countries outside the UNECE region for consideration by the Parties at their second meeting. Norway, Belgium and Finland expressed support for this proposal. Algeria expressed its interest in joining the Protocol.

28. Germany, Turkey and the United Kingdom expressed doubts about the real interest of countries outside the UNECE region in ratifying the Protocol, and indicated that proposing the amendment at could be premature.

29. Taking into account these concerns, the Meeting of the Parties requested the joint secretariat to prepare documentation to support the proposal for amendment.

VI. TARGET SETTING, REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AND GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING UNDER THE PROTOCOL

A. Obligations deriving from article 6 of the Protocol

30. Ms. Bernardini introduced the obligations deriving from article 6 of the Protocol, whereby, among others, Parties should establish and publish national and/or local targets for a high level of protection against water-related diseases as well as target dates for achieving them, within two years of becoming Parties. In addition, she presented the relevant programme element, foreseen in the programme of work for 2007-2009 under the Task Force on Indicators

and Reporting, aimed at developing guidelines for target-setting and at sharing experience within the region.

31. The Meeting invited Parties that had not yet done so to send to the joint secretariat information on established targets and target dates, by 15 February 2007.

B. Obligations deriving from article 7 of the Protocol

32. Ms. Bernardini reminded the Parties of the obligations deriving from article 7 of the Protocol on review and assessment of progress.

33. Mr. Thomas Kistemann, WHO Collaborating Centre for Water and Health, presented an overview of existing database and reporting mechanisms of relevance for the Protocol (see document ECE/MP.WH/2007/3 - EUR/06/5069385/10).

34. Mr. Rainer Enderlein, UNECE consultant, introduced the preliminary guidelines for review and assessment of progress under the Protocol based on previous work under the Working Group on Water and Health (see document ECE/MP.WH/2007/4 - EUR/06/5069385/11).

35. In the ensuing discussion, the following issues were highlighted:

(a) The need to address not only drinking water, but also water used for aquaculture and shellfish production;

(b) The need to make use, as much as possible, of data and information produced for other reporting mechanisms, in particular those of the European Union (EU);

(c) The need for methodologies for outbreak definition which would allow harmonization of reporting.

36. It was also recalled that the Protocol did not aim to compare the performance of Parties, and therefore assessment methodologies did not need to be harmonized between countries.

37. The Meeting of the Parties adopted the preliminary elements of the summary report on the review and assessment of progress under the Protocol, in the annex to document ECE/MP.WH/2007/4 - EUR/06/5069385/11, as a starting point.

38. Moreover, the Meeting of the Parties:

(a) Requested the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, with the assistance of the Compliance Committee, to further develop these preliminary elements, including a set of tables, and to prepare a first draft version of guidelines for the summary report by mid-2008;

(b) Agreed to test this draft version of the guidelines through a reporting exercise, requesting the Parties to prepare national summary reports and submit these summary reports to the secretariat by the end of 2008, for circulation to the other Parties;

(c) Based on these national summary reports, requested the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, with the assistance of the Compliance Committee and the joint secretariat, to prepare by early 2009 a report on drinking water and health in the European region for submission to the second meeting of the Parties and the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health;

(d) Requested the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, with the assistance of the Compliance Committee, to complete work on guidelines for the summary report, in accordance with article 7, paragraph 5, and taking into account the experience gained under the above-mentioned activities, for adoption by the Parties at their second meeting (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.5 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.5).

39. The Meeting decided that Parties should publish at least every three years the results of data collection and evaluation in accordance with the requirements of article 7 paragraph 2 of the Protocol. It also agreed that, in accordance with 7 paragraph 4 of the Protocol, Parties should review progress made in achieving the targets at least every three years, starting from 2009.

40. The Meeting emphasized that the review of progress should be based both on the published data on target and target dates and on the reports of Parties submitted to the joint secretariat in accordance with article 7.

VII. SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY-WARNING SYSTEMS, CONTINGENCY PLANS AND RESPONSE CAPACITIES

41. Mr. Aertgeerts reminded the Parties of the obligations on surveillance under the Protocol, the progress achieved under the Working Group on Water and Health, the activities of the WHO Regional Office, and other activities in this area. He reviewed the WHO International Health Regulations as they pertain to water-related diseases, summarized the legal obligation pertaining to waterborne disease surveillance in EU Member States, acknowledging the possibilities for synergy with the work of the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC), and recalled recent assessment of the current state of waterborne disease surveillance in Europe.

42. Mr. Aertgeerts explored information available through the WHO Health-for-All (HfA) database and the Centralized Information System on Infectious Diseases (CISID) for priority and secondary water-related diseases as defined by earlier sessions of the Working Group. Recognized as priority disease were: cholera, enterohaemorrhagic E. coli, shigellosis/bacillary dysentery, typhoid and viral hepatitis A. Recognized as secondary diseases were emerging diseases such as campylobacteriosis, cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis. Germany requested that legionellosis be included amongst the emerging diseases, a request acceptable to WHO. Infant mortality from diarrhoeal disease in the below-five population had likewise been recognized as an important indicator.

43. Current information sources indicate an important disease burden. From 1990, the baseline year for the monitoring of progress towards reaching the Millenium Development Goals, 3,596 cases of cholera, 116,939 cases of enterohaemorrhagic E. coli, 257,263 cases of typhoid, 1,992,781 cases of shigellosis, and 5,144,727 cases of viral hepatitis A were reported in the WHO European region through the WHO monitoring system. Similarly, 1,082,749 cases of campylobacteriosis were reported.

44. Serious gaps, however, were observed in the reporting, notably with information on secondary diseases being erratic in certain sub-regions. Mr. Aertgeerts recommended that the future programme of work include the following elements:

(a) Preparation of guidelines on surveillance, outbreak detection and early warning systems, contingency plans and response capacity, by an open-ended Task Force on Surveillance taking into account existing WHO guidelines on the subject. The finalized and tested guidelines will then be submitted for adoption at the second meeting of the Parties;

(b) Assistance to Parties and non-Parties through in-country activities to implement the guidelines.

45. The Meeting agreed to entrust the Task Force on Surveillance with activities in this area under the programme of work 2007-2009 (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.5 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.5).

46. The Meeting took note of document ECE/MP.WH/2007/5 - EUR/06/5069385/12 and commended the Working Group on Water and Health for the work carried out in the field of surveillance of water related diseases.

47. After the meeting, the delegation of Germany called to the attention of the joint secretariat the fact that the definition of water-borne diseases agreed by Signatories (see para. 7 of ECE/MP.WH/2007/5 - EUR/06/5069385/12) also included diseases resulting from inhalation of pathogenic micro-organisms from water.

VIII. COMPLIANCE PROCEDURE

48. Mr. Attila Tanzi introduced a draft decision on review of compliance under the Protocol (ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.2 - EUR/06/5069385/13) developed by the Legal Board in accordance with article 15 of the Protocol. He presented the guiding principles of the compliance procedure, the composition and the functions of the Compliance Committee, its trigger mechanisms, and the possible measures which might result from the compliance procedure.

49. The Meeting of the Parties welcomed the eloquent presentation of the compliance procedure and thanked the Legal Board for the excellent work done.

50. The Meeting discussed the opportunity of reviewing the proposed procedure at the second meeting of the Parties and decided to postpone such revision until the third meeting to allow enough experience in its implementation.
51. The Meeting also agreed that proposals made by Signatories for candidates to the Compliance Committee should also be taken into account by Parties when nominating their candidates.
52. The Meeting thus adopted the decision on the review of compliance and its annex as set out in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.2 - EUR/06/5069385/13, with the following amendments:
- (a) In paragraph 4 of the decision, replace “second meeting” with “third meeting”;
 - (b) The second sentence of paragraph 5 of the annex should read as follows: “They shall be elected by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol from among candidates nominated by the Parties, taking into consideration any proposal for candidates made by Signatories or by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) qualified or having an interest in the fields to which the Protocol relates.”
53. The meeting entrusted the chairman of the Legal Board with the assistance of the joint secretariat with the final editing of the text of the decision on review of compliance (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.3 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.3).
54. The Meeting then turned to the question of the election of the Compliance Committee referred to in the decision and elected the following members of the Compliance Committee: Mr. Mátyás Borsányi (Hungary), Mr. Pierre Chantrel (France), Ms. Ilona Drulite (Lithuania), Mr. Zarko Dadic (Croatia), Mrs. Phani Daskalopoulou-Livada (Greece), Ms. Diana Iskрева-Idigo (Bulgaria), Mr. Truls Krogh (Norway), Mr. Tanzi (Italy) and Mr. Serhiy Vykhryst (Ukraine).
55. Ms. Varga expressed her compliments to the newly elected members of the Compliance Committee on behalf of the Meeting.
56. According to the compliance procedure, five Compliance Committee members should serve for a full term of office and four should serve for a half term. The Meeting decided that the Bureau, in consultation with the elected members, should decide on the length of service of each Committee member.

IX. AD HOC PROJECT FACILITATION MECHANISM

57. The head of the delegation of Norway presented the outcome of the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health held in 2004, and the deliberations of the Working Group on Water and Health at its fifth and sixth meetings. She introduced a draft decision, as contained in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.3 - EUR/06/5069385/14, for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism, which would help mainstreaming international support for national action in accordance with article 14 of the Protocol. She also informed the Meeting on the

support provided by Norway to cover 18-month costs of the Facilitator position, which was under recruitment by WHO-EURO.

58. The Meeting welcomed the initiative of Norway and discussed specific aspects of the proposal linked to the Facilitator's tasks, the cooperation with the National Policy Dialogues under the EU Water Initiative's component for EECCA countries, and the scope of the Mechanism.

59. The Meeting adopted the decision on the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism, as set out in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.3 - EUR/06/5069385/14, with the following amendments:

(a) Insert in the decision a paragraph 2 bis to read as follows:

“2bis. Decides further to contribute to activities under the Water Convention designed to achieve the overall objectives of the National Policy Dialogues under the EU Water Initiative's component for EECCA countries, following the decisions of the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Convention, and develop synergies among the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism and the National Policy Dialogues.”

(b) In the terms of reference of the Facilitator, in the annex to the decision, amend the first bullet point to read as follows: “Identifying strategic areas of international assistance related to water and health and making this information available to the Ad Hoc Project Clearing House”;

(c) In the terms of reference of the Facilitator, delete from the second bullet point “Compiling,”;

(d) In the terms of reference of the Facilitator add one last bullet to read: “Conduct yearly financial reviews of the Mechanism for consideration by the Working Group on Water and Health.”;

(e) In the annex to the decision, in the area of work of the Ad Hoc Project Clearing House, replace the first bullet with “Health-related aspects of integrated water resources management” (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.4 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.4).

60. A representative of Finland presented a project aimed at sharing water- and health-related experience between countries that had successfully transferred from a centralized economy to a free-market economy to countries in the EECCA region. The project would be further developed for review by the donor community in the intercessional period.

X. PARTNERS IN COOPERATION: LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMES

A. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

61. Mr. Ulrik Halsteen, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, informed the Meeting of the Parties of recent developments within the United Nations Human Rights System relevant to the Protocol, in particular related to the right to health, the human right to water as a component of this right, and the right to an adequate standard of living. Following the general comment No. 15 (2002) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to water, the Human Rights Council had requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to conduct a detailed study on the scope and content of the relevant human rights obligations related to equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation under international human rights instruments (Human Right Council decision 2/104) to be submitted prior to the sixth session of the Council, to be held at the end of 2007.

62. Mr. François Muenger, Switzerland, presented the outcome of the “Roundtable on the Human Right to Water and the Protocol on Water and Health: making access to water a reality”, held on 18 January. The Roundtable brought together the human rights and the health and environment communities to reach a common understanding of this issue. The Roundtable presented specific experience in UNECE countries, explored the links between the human right to water and the Protocol, and how the Protocol could help countries put this right into practice. The following panellists convened during the Roundtable: Ms. Maria Francisca Ize-Charrin, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Mr. Joaquín de Arístegui, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Mr. Bart Ouvry, Deputy Permanent Representative of Belgium at the United Nations, Geneva; Ms. Elodie Carmona, Ministry of Health, France; Ms. Hannele Nyroos, Counsellor, Ministry of the Environment, Finland; and Ms. Anna Tsvetkova, European Eco-Forum. Panellists’ contributions and Mr. Muenger’s report are available at: www.unece.org/env/water/whmop1/roundtable.htm.

63. Parties took note of the debate and acknowledged the common goals of, and the synergies between, the Protocol and human rights instruments. Parties reaffirmed the importance of cooperating with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human right to water.

B. Other partners

64. The representative of UNDP underlined the high relevance of the Protocol for UNDP work and expressed willingness to cooperate on the programme of work 2007-2009, in particular within the framework of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism and on activities related to climate change and adaptation, and to sharing of experience.

65. European ECO-Forum and EEA also expressed their willingness for continued cooperation on activities under the Protocol.

66. The Meeting of the Parties:

(a) Greatly appreciated cooperation with established partners and committed itself to future joint work;

(b) Decided to seek new partners relevant to the activities under the programme of work, including NGOs and the private sector.

XI. DESIGNATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOCAL POINTS

67. Ms. Bernardini introduced the draft decision on designation and responsibilities of focal points as set out in document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.4 - EUR/06/5069385/15. All countries were invited to communicate to the joint secretariat any changes with respect to their focal point or to contact points for specific issues.

68. The Meeting adopted the decision on designation and responsibilities of focal points (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2).

XII. PROGRAMME OF WORK, TERMS OF REFERENCE OF BODIES ESTABLISHED TO IMPLEMENT IT AND RESOURCES NEEDED

69. Ms. Vermont, chairperson of the ad hoc group on the programme of work, presented the draft programme of work and the terms of reference of the Working Group on Water and Health, as agreed upon by the ad hoc group on the basis of document ECE/MP.WH/2007/2 - EUR/06/5069385/9.

70. The Meeting of the Parties:

(a) Welcomed the activities undertaken in the framework of the Water Convention by the Working Group on Water and Health that had provided the basis for the programme of work;

(b) Expressed its appreciation to the Parties and non-Parties that had taken the lead in the implementation of the programme of work;

(c) Adopted the programme of work with the relevant budget finalized by its ad hoc group on the basis of the relevant meeting documents discussed under the various items of the agenda and requested the secretariat with the assistance of the Bureau to finalize it, including the costs estimate (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.5 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.5).

(d) With this aim, requested Parties to inform the joint secretariat by 15 February 2007 as to their availability to provide funds for the implementation of the programme of work or to lead activities for which a lead Party had not been identified, on the understanding that the Bureau would review the programme of work and eliminate activities without adequate funding or without a lead country;

(e) Requested Parties and invited other States and relevant organizations to contribute actively to the activities contained in the programme of work, including through financial and in-kind contributions.

(f) Adopted the terms of reference of the Working Group on Water and Health (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2).

71. Mr. Tveitan was entrusted with the preparations for the first meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health.

XIII. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

72. Ms. Bernardini introduced the draft decision on financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol (ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.5 - EUR/06/5069385/16) aiming to establish a trust fund within UNECE and a voluntary fund within WHO-EURO to support the promotion and effective implementation of the Protocol.

73. The meeting reworded the paragraph into brackets as follows:

“Recognizing that, in the longer term consideration should be given to establishing stable and predictable financial arrangements for the core elements of the programme of work, for example using the United Nations scale of assessment or other appropriate scales;

and adopted the decision on financial arrangements as amended (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2).

74. The Meeting noted with appreciation that during an informal meeting with potential donors, held on 19 January 2007, some Governments had already pledged voluntary contributions to the Protocol’s trust and voluntary funds.

XIV. DECLARATION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

75. Ms. Jekel, chairperson of the ad hoc group on the declaration, presented the draft declaration agreed upon by the ad hoc group on the basis of document ECE/MP.WH/2007/L.6 - EUR/06/5069385/18.

76. A representative of Moldova stressed that special attention should be given to improving children’s access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.

77. The Meeting of the Parties adopted its declaration (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2).

XV. DATE AND VENUE OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE PARTIES

78. Parties welcomed with appreciation the offer of the Government of Romania to host the second Meeting of the Parties in late 2009 - early 2010.

XVI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSING OF THE MEETING

79. The Meeting adopted its report based on a draft, and entrusted its Bureau and the joint secretariat with finalizing the text.

80. Mr. Kádár thanked the participants and commended them for the fruitful deliberations and the commitments expressed during the meeting.

81. Ms. Varga reminded the Meeting of the commitments ahead for successfully implementing the Protocol and the activities in the adopted programme of work. In particular, she encouraged countries and other partners to allocate funds and other resources for such activities. She called on Parties to be involved in all activities proposed under the scope of the Protocol and to support other Signatories and non-Parties to ratify the Protocol as soon as possible. She also expressed her appreciation to the Working Group on Water and Health for its work done in preparation for the meeting. She finally thanked the joint secretariat for the preparations, arrangements and support.

82. Delegations thanked the Chairperson and the secretariat for a successful meeting. The contribution made through the preparatory process by Mr. Rainer Enderlein, former secretary of the UNECE Water Convention, and by Ms. Hiroko Takasawa, who would shortly be leaving the WHO-EURO secretariat, were acknowledged.
