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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**INFORMATION NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat

to: Delegations

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Subject: LRTAP Convention:  
51st Session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review  
(Geneva, 30 April -3 May 2013)  
- Final statements and positions

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Delegations will find attached, for information a compilation of statements and positions agreed and delivered at the 51st Session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (Geneva, 30 April - 3 May 2013) as transmitted by the Presidency.

**Agreed statements and positions  
51st session of the CLRTAP Working Group on Strategies and Review  
(Geneva, 30 April to 3 May 2013)**

**Item 3: Proposals by the ad hoc group of experts on the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention and the ad hoc group of experts to review the International Cooperative Programmes**

**Documentation:**

- ECE/EB.AIR/2012/15 (Report of the ad hoc group of experts on the action plan for the implementation of the long-term strategy of the Convention)
- ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2013/1 (Review of the Convention's organisation and operational structure – subsidiary bodies, task forces, and other groups)
- ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2013/2 (Communication strategy and Protocols on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Heavy Metals)

**Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia welcome the report from the Ad Hoc Group and would like to thank the Group for its good work. We see the report as a strong basis to progress implementation of the Long-term Strategy, and so strengthen the relevance of the Convention as a leading regional agreement addressing air pollution challenges into the twenty first century.

We value the recommendations in the report, and we will work constructively with other Parties during this session, to advance implementation of the Long-term Strategy of the Convention.

Regarding the Convention organisation and operational structure, the EU and its Member States and Croatia can agree with many of the recommendations. We believe that several of the Group's recommendations should command broad support among the Parties and could be actioned without difficulty.

**Specific Ad Hoc Group Recommendations**

**The Executive Body and its Bureau**

**Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia welcome the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the organisational and operational arrangements for the Executive Body. We believe that all the recommendations set out in the ad hoc report in paras 4 to 7 are important to improving the working of the Convention. We agree that the EB should develop a rolling plan for its meetings based on a well-defined policy cycle of 4 to 5 years where assessment and review, based on the latest scientific knowledge has a central role, with a view to delivery of the main objectives of the LTS, namely to improve the implementation of the Convention, and increase the number of ratifications of its instruments.

## **The Implementation Committee**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia recognise the important work of the Implementation Committee and that it has acted swiftly to address (i) the tasks assigned to it under the Action Plan and (ii) the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Group. The IC should continue to update its present method of working and evaluate the systemic barriers it has identified to achieving compliance with the Convention and its protocols.

## **The Working Group on Strategies and Review and subsidiary bodies**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the WGSR. Careful consideration of the workplan (2014/15) and oversight by the Executive Body will be an important means of improving effective implementation of the Long-term Strategy. Maintaining a strong focus on increasing ratifications and improving implementation and compliance with the current protocols is central to that aim.

## **The Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group to upgrade EGTEI to a Task Force, broadening its mandate to cover atmospheric emissions of pollutants covered by the protocols, including POPs and heavy metals, and with a focus on advice and guidance for EECCA and SEE countries. The work should also address BAT guidance for emissions abatement techniques for stationary and mobile sources and be strongly linked to the work of the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling. Careful consideration needs to be given to ensure that the work of the group is appropriately resourced in line with its elevated status and expanded mandate.

## **The Network of Experts on the Benefits of Economic Instruments**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the ad hoc group to discontinue the work of NEBEI. Nevertheless, we also believe that work in this area should continue, preferably under the auspices of the TFIAM.

## **The Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group that the TFRN continue its strategically important work. Reactive nitrogen is a global issue, impacting, *inter alia*, on biodiversity and linked to ozone production, as well as contributing to climate change, and so presents opportunities for outreach and communication consistent with the strategic priorities of the Convention as set out in the LTS.

To this end, we believe it is important to strengthen the links and cooperation between the TFRN and the work of the WGE and the TFIAM to ensure an effective coordination of the approaches to achieve an integrated N assessment.

## **The Task Force on Heavy Metals and the Task Force on POPs**

### **Statement**

#### **Task Force on POPs**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group that the Task Force on POPs be discontinued. The WGSR should continue to keep the POPs substances under review and, where needed, refer any future policy work on substances under the POPs Protocol to an ad hoc group under the WGSR.

#### **Task Force on Heavy Metals**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group that the Task Force on Heavy Metals is discontinued following completion of the tasks (i) to consider the implications of the Minamata Convention on Mercury with respect to mercury-containing products and heavy metal ELVs, and (ii) to conduct an assessment of any impact on future work under the Heavy Metals Protocol.

## **The Scientific Bodies (Potential Merger WGE/EMEP)**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia believe that the current scientific work of the Convention is important and should be continued to meet the requirement of the Long-term Strategy. In considering possibilities for future streamlining, we believe, on balance, that any decision on a potential merger of the Convention's scientific bodies, EMEP and WGE, should only be taken after the ICP Review is complete, so the decision can be better informed by the outcome of this review.

## **The Scientific Bodies (Effectiveness and Streamlining; Mandates)**

### **Statement**

**The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to (i) improving the effectiveness and streamlining of reporting, and to (ii) the development of a new mandate or mandates for the scientific body or bodies that better serve(s) the needs of the Long-term Strategy. We will work constructively with the other parties to devise new mandate(s) for the scientific bodies.**

### **Groups under the EMEP Steering Body**

#### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can broadly support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to groups under EMEP. However, in relation to the recommendation on the workload of the three EMEP centres (No. 21), the current work by MSC-East in particular in relation to monitoring and modelling of HMs and POPs is of value to many bodies both inside and outside the Convention, and is also of value for the assessment of the effectiveness of the HM and POPs Protocols. We believe that any decision to decrease this work area should only be taken after an analysis of the consequences for the Convention.

### **Groups under the Working Group on Effects**

#### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the Joint Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution.

We recognise the essential role the ICPs play in identifying air pollution threats and developing an effects-based approach to address those threats and welcome the fact that the ICP review is now in progress and will report to EB 32.

### **Timing (and status) of meetings**

#### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the timing and status of meetings.

### **Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)**

#### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia welcome the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group for a principled approach in relation to the future addition of substances to the Protocol on POPs, as a good basis to consider how best to advance implementation of the LTS in this area. We will work constructively with parties at this session to progress the relevant matters.

In relation to the question of whether there is a need to further develop and update two sets of BAT guidance documents under the POPs Protocol and the Stockholm Convention respectively, given their similar though not identical nature, we believe that an assessment of the differences in terms of coverage, ambition levels etc should be conducted, possibly by a new Task Force on Techno-Economic Issues, to inform a decision in relation to further development of BAT guidance under the POPs Protocol.

## **Protocol on Heavy Metals**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia welcome the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to potential future amendments to the Heavy Metals Protocol, as a good basis to consider how best to advance implementation of the LTS in this area. We will work constructively with parties at this session to progress the relevant matters.

## **Regional and global agreements and networks**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can in general agree with the numerous recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group on outreach. We believe, however, that some further prioritisation of the recommendations may be necessary and that some of the recommendations may also need to be further considered before they can be implemented.

## **Communication Strategy**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the revision of the Convention's Communication Strategy.

In relation to the need to provide for effective and efficient information sharing between Parties, we strongly support improved access to data and information through the Internet.

We also strongly support the aim of providing the public with relevant key information in order to promote the LTS aim of increasing ratification of the Convention's three most recent protocols, and improving the effectiveness of their implementation in the UNECE region.

## **Secretariat**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia can support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the Secretariat, in particular that the EB should clearly communicate, to the Secretariat, its priorities as set out in the LTS along with the expected outputs from the Secretariat. We also believe that an annual report from the Secretariat on its significant activities during the year would be very helpful, and that an increased focus on developing and maintaining the Convention's website is appropriate given its importance as a communication tool.

## **Review and Update of the 2004 needs assessment of UNECE member states that have not ratified the Convention**

### **Statement**

The EU and its Member States and Croatia support the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group in relation to the review and update of the 2004 needs assessment of UNECE member states that have not ratified the Convention.

### **Preparations for the 2014–2015 workplan (INF. 1)**

#### **Position**

The EU welcomes the initiative of the Secretariat in preparing the draft work plan for 2014/15 (informal document no.1) for discussion in WGSR and decision by the EB. The creation of an accessible work plan format which clearly conveys the components and coherence of the work under the Convention for the next two years will be an important development in promoting further transparency and efficiency.

As a support to the development of such a work plan, the EU can offer some interim responses to the recently circulated informal document no.1 which are focused on structure and general content. The EU would also request that time is given for more considered responses on the detail of specific tasks such that we can offer an expanded response in relation to potential gaps in the work planned, the timing of deliverable releases, coherence with the LTS Action Plan, and the clarity of tasks in regards to their explicit deliverables. We would propose that Parties would provide final comments to the Secretariat and the WGSR Bureau at the latest by the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2013 to allow for possible inclusion into the final document to be discussed by the EB.

Related to the request for time to comment, we would also suggest a formal invitation to the EECCA Coordination group to request their input in regards to aspects of the work plan which they feel would support progress on non-party ratifications.

In regards to the initial responses on structure and general content, these are synthesised in the bullets below:

- The work plan is addressing the next two years of work, and whilst it is important that it does not contradict the long-term strategy, the general vision outlined in paragraph 2. (Policy) should be tailored to the 2 year timeframe with more explicit detail on short-term aims and how success will be measured and achieved. This may be expected to include more content relating to the approach to support and encourage increased numbers of non-party ratifications.
- The work plan has adopted a form associated with four pillars of the Convention. Specifically, Science, Policy, Compliance and Capacity Building. It is recommended that a 5th section be added to the work plan document explicitly addressing the work planned in regards to Communication and that the work planned for outreach would be placed in an additional, and separate, 6th section instead of the current placement under section 2 on policy.

- The third column in the tables drafted allows for reference to the LTS, LTS Action Plan, and EB Decision. At present this is generally populated with a reference to conclusion 17 a (increased ratification) of the LTS. We believe that whilst this relative indexing could be valuable, it should refer to more specific recommendations. The existing predominant reference to the high level LTS conclusion 17A alone does not offer particular value. An alternative approach may be to allow the EB to approve at a higher level that the work plan is aligned with the LTS, LTS Action Plan and related EB decisions, and therefore omit the third column from the work plan. There may have been another purpose for this column and so we would ask the Secretariat for information on any other motivations for including this column.
- The fourth, fifth and sixth columns in the drafted tables deal with funding and resources. Acknowledgement of the resource constraint aspects of the work plan are important, as it is perhaps necessary to convey that outcomes are contingent on the availability of resources be they either direct financial aid or in-kind contributions. However, whilst trust funding may be readily quantified, in-kind and other contributions will be challenging to value. As such we would recommend removing the fifth and sixth columns and editing the fourth to deal with funding sources, availability and adequacy more generally. This could acknowledge the source (or mix) of funding, and as necessary flag the requirement for additional resources. The relevant parties can discuss those additional requirements as necessary, but formal inclusion of these data within the work plan may create administrative challenges that outweigh the value of information provision in this case.

On a general level, the deliverables and actions should be carefully composed to ensure that the work plan incorporates an unambiguous pathway and set of tasks for the 2014-2015 period.

A final comment would be that whilst we are aware of the challenges in providing a more complete document at this stage, and that this is the task of the EB and not the WGSR, it is felt that the overall balance and coherence of the work plan can only be properly evaluated when the accompanying sections on Science, Compliance, Capacity Building (and then Communication and Outreach) are completed.

### **Item 9. Progress in the implementation of the 2012-2013 workplan**

#### **Documentation:**

- ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2013/3 Report of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen

#### **Statement**

The EU and its MSs and Croatia welcome the report from the TFRN. Under the proposed workplan a work item (para 31 (a)(iv)) to "[d]evelop multi-pollutant approaches" is included. It is not clear what the aim, scope and content of the proposal is, we would like to request clarification with a view to providing more precise language.