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INFORMATION NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Fifteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-15) (Geneva, 23-26 June 2026) - Compilation of statements

Delegations will find in the Annex, for information purposes, a compilation of agreed statements as delivered, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, at the abovementioned meeting.

**Fifteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-15)
(Geneva, 23-26 June 2026)**

- Statements by the European Union and its Member States -

Opening Statement

Distinguished Co-chair, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues,

The European Union and its Member States wish to express their appreciation to the Bureau and the Secretariat for their efforts in preparing and organising this meeting. We are pleased to gather once again in Geneva and extend our gratitude to Switzerland for hosting this meeting.

We would like to thank the Secretariat, the lead countries, and the intersessional working groups for all their work and commitment in the period leading up to this meeting.

Last year, we met in Geneva and achieved a successful outcome at COP17 with the adoption of several important decisions. We welcome these outcomes as important foundations for our work moving forward. We look forward to the discussions over the coming days on the important issues that will be considered by COP18 next year in Panama.

We would like to briefly address a few key issues in that regard.

We believe that the issue of used textiles and textile waste deserves urgent attention, given the challenges associated with their transboundary movement and environmentally sound management. We look forward to constructive discussions on how to advance this work.

We attach great importance to the further consideration of plastic waste and look forward to discussions on the implementation, challenges and impacts of the 2019 plastic waste amendments, and how the Convention can continue to strengthen the environmentally sound management of plastic waste and support effective implementation of the plastic waste amendments.

We believe that further work on e-waste classification remains essential to improve legal clarity and facilitate effective implementation and enforcement of the Convention. A common understanding of the amendments and the implications in the framework of implementing the Basel Convention is crucial to address illegal traffic and support circularity.

We believe that the continuous improvement of the functioning of the prior informed consent procedure, including through implementing electronic approaches, plays a significant role in the effectiveness of the Basel Convention. We stand ready to engage actively in this discussion.

Lastly, we would also like to make substantial progress on the review of Annexes I and III with a view of concluding our discussions at COP18.

Ms. co-chair,

The EU and its Member States look forward to constructive discussions this week with all other delegations.

Thank you!

Agenda item 3: Matters related to the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for the biennium 2026–2027

Agenda item 3 (a): Strategic issues: work to improve the functioning of prior informed consent procedure

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat and the SIWG for the draft report with further options to improve the functioning of the PIC procedure. We continue to underline the importance of the PIC procedure as a cornerstone of the Convention.

It is now crucial to implement the recommendations decided by COP17 and any options withheld by future decisions in a clear and effective manner. The work should not stop at only collecting and sharing information. We would therefore like to stress the need to clarify how to ensure that the actions under Decision BC-17/2 lead to concrete improvements in the functioning of the PIC procedure and which intersessional working group or body under the Convention is entrusted with such work. We welcome options 2, 4, 9 and 11 in the draft report, as they provide such clarity.

Furthermore, we find it vital that the work of this SIWG remains consistent with the work in the SIWG on electronic approaches to the notification and movement documents, as well as with the work of the ICC on transit and on updating contact details of focal points and competent authorities, and would welcome a discussion on how this consistency will be guaranteed. In this respect, we look forward to participating in further discussions on these issues in a contact group.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b): Scientific and technical matters

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (a): Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants

The EU and its Member States wish to thank the Secretariat and the Small Intersessional Working Group for preparing the draft technical guidelines on POPs.

We consider that the changes to the draft updated technical guidelines on POPs-pesticides, the draft updated technical guidelines on ESM of wastes containing SCCP, and the draft updated technical guidelines on POPs-PFAS have improved the draft documents and can support these drafts.

Regarding the General Technical Guidelines, we welcome the review of destruction technologies but caution against removal of sections that have that have been included in previous iterations for a long time.

In order to advance the discussions and proceed toward a decision by COP18, we think the technical guidelines should be discussed in a contact group.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (b): Technical guidelines on transboundary movement of electrical and electronic waste and used electronic equipment, in particular regarding the distinction between waste and non-waste under the Basel Convention

The EU and its Member States thank the Secretariat and the EWG for its continued work on following up on the technical guidelines.

As no additional results of the use and/or testing of the guidelines were put forward so far, the EU and its Member States do not see the preparation of draft updated guidelines as a priority for the Expert Working Group to work on. The EU and its Member States can agree to the draft decision with a minor change regarding the commenting deadline.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (c): Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of waste lead-acid batteries and on other batteries

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the BRS Secretariat and the SIWG for their work on the revised draft Technical Guidelines on other waste batteries and the revised draft updated technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of waste lead-acid batteries.

Regarding the TG on other waste batteries, we welcome the decision to limit the scope of the technical guidelines to four key categories of batteries: lithium, nickel, sodium, and alkaline/zinc-based batteries. We also welcome the SIWG's decision to prioritise well-established recycling operations.

The EU and its Member States are in favour of retaining and further developing the chapter on the "repair and repurpose of OWB for reuse". While we acknowledge that not all repair operations qualify as waste treatment operations, we emphasise that such activities can be applied to waste items, as reflected in the glossary of terms. Repair is a crucial element of the waste hierarchy, helping to keep resources in the economy longer.

Regarding the revised draft updated Technical Guidelines on waste lead-acid batteries, we welcome the changes made to the chapter on Health & Safety and the decision of the SIWG to focus on well-established recycling operations.

Given the importance of these guidelines, we believe that further discussion should take place in a contact group.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (d): Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of used and waste pneumatic tyres

Firstly, the EU and its Member States would like to thank the BRS Secretariat and the Strategic Implementation Working Group for their work on the revised draft updated Technical Guidelines on Tyres.

We consider it essential that the updated technical guidelines provide clear guidance on repair and retreading operations, as well as the management of used tyres. We also consider it important that the document highlights the issue of Tyre and Road Wear Particles (TRWP). We welcome the information provided in Section IV on the uses of materials arising from the recycling of waste pneumatic tyres. However, we believe this section needs further review to better present the environmental and health concerns linked to the different applications of these materials.

Finally, we propose that the technical guidelines be discussed in a contact group.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (e): Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for updating the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds, and can accept the draft changes proposed.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (f): Updates to technical guidelines to reflect adjustments consequential to the adoption of the e-waste amendments

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing updated technical guidelines to reflect adjustments consequential to the adoption of the e-waste amendments.

We do not have substantial remarks to make to this work, but want to flag that a subparagraph seems to be missing from the draft decision to refer to the mercury technical guidelines.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (i) (g): Updates to technical guidelines to reflect adjustments consequential to the adoption of the plastic waste amendments

The EU and its Member States appreciate the work carried out by the Secretariat in the updating of the technical guidelines to reflect adjustments consequential to the adoption of the plastic waste amendments can agree to the draft changes proposed.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (ii) (b): National reporting - Revision to table 9 of the reporting format and to the manual for completing the format for national reporting

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the revision of table 9 of the reporting format and to the manual for completing the format for national reporting.

We can accept the proposed changes to table 9, as we believe these will improve both the quality and quantity of the data reported, but welcome the opportunity to comment further in writing.

We can agree to the draft decision.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (iii): Electronic approaches to the notification and movement documents

The EU and its Member States continue to support the ongoing work of the SIWG. The close link with the work to improve the functioning of the notification procedure, whereby digitalisation is key, but only one part of the solution, is highlighted again. We think that the SIWG should continue its work according to the Decision made at COP17.

We would like to inform the meeting that a case study about the EU digitalization of waste shipment procedures was shared for publication on the Basel Convention website with the Secretariat.

We welcome document INF18 and the draft fact sheets. The EU and its Member States may come with specific comments on these fact sheets.

We can agree overall to the draft decision with a minor reservation on the comment deadline and would not insist in discussing this item in a contact group, unless other Parties see a need for doing so.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (iii): Electronic approaches to the notification and movement documents

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We can agree overall to the draft decision with a minor reservation on the comment deadline and would not insist in discussing this item in a contact group, unless other Parties see a need for doing so.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (iv): Further consideration of plastic waste

The EU and its Member States believe that the Basel Convention plays a crucial role in preventing environmental damage from the transboundary movement of plastic waste. The plastic waste amendments adopted at COP14 in 2019, were a breakthrough in regulating plastic waste trade and addressing plastic pollution.

We welcome efforts to evaluate how these amendments have contributed to reducing plastic pollution.

However, we note that despite strengthened controls, global trade in plastic waste has not significantly decreased since 2021. We note that the classification of the different types of plastic waste listed under the Basel Convention poses important challenges in practice. Moreover, determining contamination levels on the ground is time-consuming and challenging. Furthermore, we note that there is an emerging practice of moving plastics under non-waste codes instead of waste codes. Lastly, we note that the management of plastic waste, particularly residual waste, remains challenging in many parts of the world.

Given these challenges, we believe it is essential to carefully assess whether new measures under the Basel Convention are needed to address the challenges identified in the implementation of the current rules.

The EU and its Member States consider that possible aspects to assess include the possibility to bring all plastic waste, including B3011, under the control mechanisms of the Convention, and to clarify better the classifications of other types of plastic waste, such as B3026 (waste from pretreatment of composite packaging).

We consider that the Basel Convention's work on plastic waste and the INC's negotiations on a global plastics treaty are two distinct and complementary approaches. Therefore, discussions during OEWG15 should focus on assessing and improving the effectiveness of existing plastic waste amendments. In this context we would like to thank Switzerland, Cook Islands, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Palau and Zimbabwe for their CRP and look forward to discussing this in a contact group.

We request that the proposal from Norway currently listed under agenda item 3 (b) (viii) amendments to the annexes to the Basel Convention, be discussed together with this.

Agenda item 3 (b) (vi): Follow up to the amendments to Annexes II, VIII and IX on e-waste

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the EWG and the Secretariat for the work done.

We welcome the first draft guidance document as revised by the EWG as a good starting point for the discussion on providing guidance regarding the identification of e-waste, as well as on the distinction between e-waste (Y49 or A1181) and waste that is related to such electrical and electronic waste but can be classified under another entry in Annex II, VIII or IX of the Convention.

We made detailed comments in February, in the context of the EWG discussions. We appreciate that some of those comments were taken on board. We see a need for further work and stand ready to provide more comments.

We remain of the view that the following three key issues constitute what needs to be clarified with this guidance:

- Guidance on what categories of electrical and electronic equipment, components and types of materials from the processing of electrical and electronic equipment or components, are covered by entries A1181 and Y49, as well as how to distinguish components and materials from processing waste that can be classified under another entry in Annex II, VIII or IX of the Convention.
- Clearly highlighting that for waste that is considered e-waste under the new entries A1181 and Y49, all the controls under the Convention apply without exemptions.
- Guidance in operational terms on how Basel procedures should be applied in the situation where e-waste is shipped between two Parties, whereby one Party has accepted the new entries and the other Party has not (yet). We would prefer that this issue is clarified in the guidance.

We are open to discussing this topic more in a contact group.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (b) (vii): Used textiles and textile waste

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Parties and Observers who responded to the call for comments, as well as the BRS Secretariat for their comprehensive report on possible options under the Basel Convention to address used textiles and textile waste.

We are convinced that there is a need to address this issue and take concrete actions to address the challenges faced by Parties. These challenges affect both Parties that export used textiles and textile waste and Parties that receive such shipments.

We are convinced that it is important that the Basel Convention is able to deal with emerging challenges like the management of textile waste, which is closely related to the transboundary movement of such waste, and where stronger controls on the transboundary movements could be relevant to address these challenges at a global level.

We welcome the Secretariat's report, which identifies relevant options, including guidance development, review of codes and annex classifications, and capacity building. These options are not mutually exclusive and could be pursued in parallel.

We look forward discussing these options and their possible prioritization or timing in a contact group, and call on the OEWG to recommend COP18 to decide on their implementation during the upcoming biennium.

We welcome the call for comments following OEWG15 and kindly request the Secretariat to compile these comments, make them available on the Convention website, and submit the compilation, along with the draft report, to COP18 for consideration.

Agenda item 3 (b) (viii): Amendments to the annexes to the Basel Convention

The EU and its Member States would like to thank Norway for its proposal regarding possible amendments to Annexes II, VIII, and IX of the Basel Convention.

We welcome the Norwegian proposal on the removal of waste from Annex IX, and possible amendments to the Annexes II, VIII and IX.

We note that under agenda item 3(b)(iv), the OEWG is tasked with assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the plastic waste amendments in halting unsustainable international trade in plastic waste. In this context, we note that one of the options to be considered should be the possibility of bringing all plastic waste under the controls of the Convention—including B3011—as part of these discussions and should be presented as one of the options for consideration by COP18.

We recall that, in our views regarding document BC-17/11, we reiterated that possible aspects to assess include bringing all plastic waste under the Convention's controls and clarifying the classification of different types of plastic waste, including B3026.

We would like to reiterate that since 21 May, the export of all plastic waste from the EU, including green-listed plastic waste classified under entry B3011, is subject to the PIC procedure under EU law. From 21 November even stricter rules will start to apply, and all plastic waste exports to countries that do not adhere to the OECD Decision on the transboundary movement of waste, will be prohibited. This reflects our commitment to stronger controls on plastic waste trade.

We look forward to discussing this further in a contact group under agenda item 3(b)(iv) further consideration of plastic waste.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (c) (i): Review of Annexes I and III

The EU and its Member States welcome the work carried out by the EWG and recognize the progress made in the discussions on the review of Annexes I & III.

We are aware of the work needed to clarify many aspects on these issues, which are both important and technical.

Although many aspects still need thorough discussions, probably even after this meeting, we see that there are elements on which we could advance our work, even during this week.

We support deferring further discussion to a contact group to allow for a more in-depth exchange of views.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (c) (ii): Consequential implications of the amendments to Annex IV

The EU and its Member States would like to thank to Secretariat for preparing the changes reflected in document INF25.

We can agree to these proposed changes as well as to the draft decision contained in UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/10.

Agenda item 3 (c) (iii): Explanations, technical guidelines or guidance in relation to the disposal operations specified in Annex IV

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the draft revisions to the notification and movement documents and the instructions for completing them, as set out in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/24.

We can agree with the draft decision in UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/10.

Agenda item 3 (d) (i) (a): Partnership for Action on Challenges relating to E-waste (PACE II)

The EU and its Member States welcome the ongoing work of the Partnership to develop the two draft guidance documents on television screens, including cathode ray tube (CRT), liquid crystal display (LCD) and light-emitting diode (LED) screens, video and audio equipment on the one hand, and on refrigerators, cooling and heating equipment on the other hand.

EU and Member State members to the Partnership have provided detailed comments on the two draft documents during the intersessional period. The EU and its Member States remain ready to further share such comments during the meeting or in writing after the meeting.

We encourage PACEII to develop these two drafts in view of maturing them enough to be adopted at COP18.

We further welcome the report on the implementation of the programme of work of the working group of the Partnership for Action on Challenges relating to E-waste for the biennium 2026–2027 and we take note of the options put forward in the draft programme of work for the biennium 2028–2029 as presented in INF/28. We are of the view that before developing guidelines for other types of e-waste or adding new e-waste types in the TOR of the Partnership, it is important to finalise the current work and then evaluate the uptake of the guidelines developed and consider whether and how PACE II should continue its work after COP18.

We can support the draft decision.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (d) (i) (b): Household Waste Partnership

The EU and its Member States would like to acknowledge the work done by this group.

We welcome that progress is made in the implementation of the workplan of the Household Waste Partnership Working Group for the biennium 2026–2027, as presented in INF/29 and can agree to the draft decision.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (d) (i) (c): Partnership on Plastic Waste

The EU and its Member States continue to support the work of the Partnership on Plastic Waste, and welcomes the overview of activities of the working group as presented in INF/30.

We can agree to the draft decision to take note of the progress made so far on the implementation of the workplan of the working group for the biennium 2026-2027.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (d) (ii): Cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System

The EU and its Member States would like to express their appreciation for the work carried out by the Secretariat and welcome the report on the status of the work of the WCO on the Harmonized System related to the Basel Convention.

We support the Secretariats continued work and cooperation with the Harmonized System Committee.

We find it important that customs codes relating to waste are clear and understandable while correctly reflecting the scope of the relevant Basel entries. This is important in order for inspectors to be able to intervene and ensure that the legal requirements in the national legislation related to the Basel Convention are complied with.

The EU and its Member States support the request to prepare an indicative table of existing Harmonized System codes for wastes and their correlation with the types of wastes listed in Annex VIII and IX to the Convention, for the consideration by the Conference of Parties at its eighteenth meeting.

Thank you.

Agenda item 3 (d) (iii): Cooperation with the International Maritime Organization

The EU and its Member States welcome the entry into force of the Hong Kong Convention as an important step towards safe and environmentally sound ship recycling at global level.

We also welcome the opportunity to comment on the provisional guidance adopted by IMO MEPC 82, and we stress the importance of close cooperation, as this issue requires interpretation of both the Basel Convention and the Hong Kong Convention.

We thank the Secretariat for document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/21, which provides a useful basis for our discussion.

The EU and its Member States support the basic premise of the provisional guidance: Parties only to the Hong Kong Convention should apply that Convention, while Parties only to the Basel Convention should apply Basel, including the Ban Amendment where relevant.

At the same time, we have concerns with the suggestion that, for Parties to both Conventions, the Basel Convention should not apply where ships are recycled under the Hong Kong Convention procedures. We would recall that practical experience with the Hong Kong Convention remains limited, and that IMO has launched an experience-building phase, including possible amendments and clarifications. In that context, we consider it premature to draw conclusions on whether the Hong Kong Convention should be treated as an Article 11 agreement under the Basel Convention.

Against this background, we see merit in the way forward suggested by the Secretariat in document INF/21. The EU and its Member States therefore support the replacement of paragraph 3 of the provisional guidance with alternatives 1 and 2.

The EU and its Member States underline that the two Conventions are complementary and can be implemented in a coherent manner by Parties to both, as is already the case in the EU. This should be properly reflected in the guidance, and in this respect we support using the proposed text of alternative 1, but deleting the part referring to the “clarification of the role of the International Ready for Recycling Certificate in relation to Basel Convention procedures” since this should be better addressed under the further work foreseen under alternative 2.

We also consider that more time is needed to further explore the interplay between the two Conventions, and to allow the ongoing IMO work on experience-building and possible strengthening of the Convention to progress. In this respect, we also support the inclusion of alternative 2. However since it may prove difficult to build an agreement focussing on legal consideration and for this reasons the work on “the application of article 11 of the Basel decision” should not be prioritized.

CLOSING STATEMENT OF THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Dear Madam Chair, Executive Secretary, colleagues from the Secretariat, delegates, observers, colleagues.

The EU and its Member States would like to start by expressing our condolences to the family and colleagues of Ms Tessa Goverse. We hope they can find strength in these difficult times.

The EU and its Member States also want to congratulate the chair for a successful OEWG and thank her for so elegantly guiding us through this week. We would also like to thank the chairs of the contact groups and the Secretariat for their outstanding work over these past few days.

We would also like to thank all participants for their energy and hard work.

Some of the discussions we had this week were challenging, but still this Open-Ended Working Group certainly succeeded in advancing some important issues towards the upcoming COP18.

We welcome the progress made in the work to improve the functioning of the PIC procedure and on a number of important technical guidelines and other guidance documents, such as for POP containing wastes and e-waste.

We hope that the work on waste batteries and waste tyres will mature in the intersessional period and we can go to COP with documents that are ready for adoption.

The discussions on the review of Annexes I and III have again proven to be rather complex and more work will be needed to effectively conclude on these important topics. We hope that with the guidance from Parties and observers this work can happen in a constructive manner intersessionally, with a view to come to a conclusion at COP18.

Also the interplay between this Convention and the Hong Kong Convention was constructively discussed and we are happy to see that work will continue to carefully consider this matter.

We are thankful for the good exchanges we had on the possible role of the Convention in addressing the challenges linked to the trade in used textiles and textile waste. We welcome the support from others to continue discussions at COP18 to see where the Convention can help to address the challenges related to this waste stream.

Finally, we would like to express a feeling of disappointment about the lack of substantive exchange on the effectiveness of the plastic waste amendments. COP17 agreed that it is important that the Convention looks at how these amendments have been contributing to addressing plastic pollution; and this assessment process is in our view an essential step in that regard. We hope that at COP18 Parties will show more openness to discuss the further action needed on plastic waste.

In April next year we meet each other in Panama, the Crossroads of the World, let's take that opportunity to all together pave the way forward for this Convention, and improve the worldwide protection of the environment!

Thank you.