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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on
Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA COP 13)
(Geneva, Switzerland, 27-29 November 2024)
- Information from the Presidency and the Commission

Delegations will find in the [Annex](#), for information, a summary report from the Presidency and the Commission on the outcome of the abovementioned meeting.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
to the Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA COP 13)
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Key highlights

The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA) was held successfully from 27 November to 29 November 2024. Around 130 participants, covering 36 Parties attended the COP in Geneva UNECE headquarters.

Among the **highlights of this CoP** meeting were:

- the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Assistance and Cooperation programme,
- the publication of joint guidance of the OECD/UN/JRC on the management of Risks from Natural Hazards to Hazardous Installations (Natech),
- a TEIA Seminar on industrial safety of the energy transition (ISET), where the EU delivered a key note speech, and
- the adoption of a decision to continue the work in that regard, under a dedicated small group under the Bureau of the Convention. The EU volunteered to lead this work.
- the adoption of a decision to update existing TEIA guidelines to more comprehensively cover tailing management facilities (TMFs) which are better aligned with EU legislation on extractive waste.

At the opening of the CoP meeting, Ukraine made a statement condemning the **Russian war of aggression**, supported by UK, the US, the EU and Switzerland expressing their full solidarity with Ukraine and condemning in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustified act of aggression against Ukraine. Both the Russian Federation (RF) and Belarus reacted to this statement negating among others the RF aggression of Ukraine and the targeting of civilians, calling on contracting parties not to politicise the meeting.

A **new Bureau** was appointed for the period 2025–2026, with France as chair and the EU and Serbia as vice-chairs, as well as two EU Member States as Bureau Members (Germany and Finland). Members of the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) for 2025-2028 were also appointed via a vote, for the first time in the history of the TEIA Convention, as there was no consensus on the list of candidates, due to the presence of a candidate from Belarus. 9 candidates were re-elected, among which 5 EU Member States (AT, BE, RO, SK, SE).

The COP adopted a **decision on the work programme and resource requirements** for 2025-2026. The Chair and the Secretariat pointed to the current positive but fragile financial situation as only half of the Parties are voluntarily contributing to the budget. A roundtable on financing was organised to engage parties to contribute actively to financing of activities of the Convention. The EU confirmed its 35 000 € annual financial contribution for the biennium 2025-2026 and its financial support through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), in accordance with the TEIA and EU priorities. RF informed the COP that no Russian contribution can reach UN accounts so they are not in the position to contribute to the Convention.

The EU team (Presidency, DG ENV & EU Delegation Geneva) also participated in one informal meeting in the margins of the COP, on 29 November 2024, to discuss proposed wording to draft decision on financing under agenda item 5, with representatives from Switzerland, Norway, Russian Federation, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, as well as with the TEIA Secretariat. Objective of this meeting was to find a compromise on the text for this decision as Belarus had expressed its disagreement with the rewording of decision 2018/2, During the negotiation, the parties agreed to only refer to decision 2018/2 and to include the proposal for a minimum amount of \$1000 as a comment in the decision, as requested by Belarus. The EU remained within the mandate agreed during related EU coordination meeting as regards this decision.

The cooperation between the Presidency, the EU Delegation, as well as EU Member States in the context of preparations in the Council Working Party and at the CoP was excellent and went smoothly and constructively.

The **next CoP** is likely to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2026, unless a Party proposes to host it.

In details

Under agenda item 2, the COP took note of the ratification status of the Convention. The COP noted that the number of Parties with credentials and connected was sufficient to take decisions, and that the quorum was met.

Under agenda item 3, the COP took note of the conclusions of the UNECE Seminar on the global energy transition: Strengthening industrial safety to address emerging risks. The Bureau's small group presented the results of the survey conducted by the Bureau's small group on industrial safety of the energy transition. The CoP also adopted Decision 2024/1 on work on the industrial safety of the energy transition under the Convention.

Under agenda item 4, a new Bureau was elected for the period 2025–2026. The Bureau now includes:

Party	Name
Armenia	Ms. Armine Hayrapetyan
European Union	Ms. Maud Casier
Finland	Mr. Pasi Ryyananen
France	Ms. Marie-Claire Lhenry
Germany	Mr. Michael Matthes
Montenegro	Ms. Dragana Raonić Popović
Republic of Moldova	Ms. Aliona Rusnac
Serbia	Ms. Suzana Milutinovic
Switzerland	Mr. Martin Merkofer
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Gill Smart

The COP also took note of the regular report of the Bureau on its activities since the COP 12. It took note on the activities carried out by the Joint Expert Group and took note of the key findings and recommendations from the Workshop on increasing capacities to prevent, prepare for and respond to accidental water pollution from tailings facilities (TMFs).

Under agenda item 5, after welcoming the presentation made by the outgoing Chair regarding the financing of activities under the Convention, the new Chair invited all of the Parties for a Financing Tour-de-table where all member states could explain how they plan to contribute to the Convention.

Under agenda item 6, a new Working Group on Implementation was elected, with a vote on secret ballot called by the Chair, following the opposition by Ukraine to the candidature of Belarus. The WGI now includes among which 5 candidates from EU Member States (AT, BE, RO, SE, SK):

Party	Name
Austria	Mr. Rupert Bliem
Belgium	Ms. Inge Leenders
Kazakhstan	Mr. Serik Akhmetov
Republic of Moldova	Mr. Vitalii Mutaf
Romania	Mr. Francisc Senzaconi
Serbia	Ms. Sanja Stamenkovic
Slovakia	Ms. Mária Šebestová
Sweden	Ms. Helena Fridh
Switzerland	Mr. Raphaël Gonzalez

Under agenda item 7 about the Disaster risk reductions, natural hazard-triggered technological disaster risk management and climate change (Natech) OECD, JRC and UNECE presented their joint new guidance for managing risks from natural hazards to hazardous installations. The COP welcomed this Publication, also calling on Parties and other United Nations Member States to provide financial and in-kind support for the development of a Road map on Natech Risk Management.

Under agenda item 9, the Secretariat presented an overview of the evolution and achievements of the Assistance and Cooperation programme over the last 20 years. A roundtable then took place with presentations by panellists from beneficiaries and donor countries (from Moldova, Serbia, Switzerland) followed by a discussion. Ukraine, as the newest party, also presented an ongoing project financed by the EIB aimed at implementing the TEIA Convention. Switzerland invited parties for a celebration of the 20th anniversary of this programme, after the COP.

Under agenda item 9, the COP took note of the publication Risk Assessment for Industrial Accident Prevention: An Overview of Risk Assessment Methods, Selected Case Studies and Available Software, also encouraging countries to review and consider applying suitable risk assessment methodologies, as appropriate, for informed decision-making on siting and land-use planning, developing preventive measures, preparing contingency plans, including with regard to Natech risks and emerging risks associated with the energy transition.

Under agenda item 10, the CoP took note of the Convention's work to strengthen the safe and secure management of hazardous substances to prevent and mitigate industrial accidents on the Conference and thanked the EU and the European Investment Bank for their support for this work both financial and as in-kind support. The COP also requested the secretariat to prepare knowledge products and to share information on the risks of managing hazardous substances in relation to industrial accidents.

The COP also took note of the regular report of the Bureau on its activities since the COP 12. It took note on the activities carried out by the Joint Expert Group and took note of the key findings and recommendations from the Workshop on increasing capacities to prevent, prepare for and respond to accidental water pollution from tailings facilities (TMFs).

Under agenda item 11, the workplan and resource requirements for 2025-2026 were adopted by the COP, as well as a decision on guiding principles for financial assistance, whereby the EU expressed its refusal to finance activities for the Russian Federation and Belarus. Belarus expressed its disappointment with the EU's statement, especially on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Assistance and Cooperation Programme.

Under agenda item 12, the co-Chairs of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG) reported on the Group's activities carried out since the twelfth meeting of the COP. The COP endorsed the proposed activities of the JEG, as contained in the adopted workplan for the Convention for 2025–2026, notably the organization of Seminar on early warning and industrial accidents notification systems, financed by the EU funded- NDICI project, in close cooperation with the UNECE Water Convention. The EU expressed its appreciation of this project and highlighted its relevance in the light of the upcoming EU Water Resilience Strategy.

Under agenda item 13, the Secretariat presented an overview of data collected from the national reports of the tenth reporting period. The COP encouraged the cooperation with key partner organizations, and worldwide promotion of this work and members of the Bureau, Working Group on Implementation and Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents to actively contribute to the implementation of this decision. The COP also decided to update the existing TEIA guidelines on identification of hazardous activities to more comprehensively cover tailing management facilities and align with EU legislative on extractive waste.

Under agenda item 14, a special session on innovations and industrial safety took place, focusing on satellite monitoring technologies, with presentations from United Nations Satellite Center (UNOSAT) and from DG DEFIS on Copernicus, reflecting on opportunities for Contracting parties to use open data from these tools for reliable earth observation and environmental monitoring data in the context of industrial accidents prevention and response. The CoP welcomed the cooperation with Value Space and invited Parties to support this project with possible tailing management facilities that could become part of this trial.

Under agenda item 15, the COP agreed to upgrade the Industrial Accident Notification System (IAN), which is an emblematic tool of the TEIA Convention, and to organise a test and consult TEIA Contracting Parties during the biennium 2025-2026, for connectivity tests.

Under agenda item 16, the Secretariat presented the activities under the TEIA Convention to promote Convention linkages with Sendai Framework for disaster risks reduction 2015-2030.

Under agenda item 18, the Secretariat report on the use of financial and in-kind resources in 2023-2024.

Several activities included in the workplan could not be implemented because of insufficient funding, such as the roadmap on Natech activities, a seminar for capacity building in Ukraine and some activities under the Assistance and Cooperation Program. Overall, a gradual increase in contributions has been noted since the Convention entry into force, with a new high record in the biennium 2023-2024, with important earmarked contributions to the 2023-2024 work program activities via projects financed by Switzerland and the EU, and important in-kind contributions, including from the European investment Bank (EIB).

Under agenda item 19, the Secretariat informed that no proposal has been received yet to host the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) of the TEIA Convention. Should no Party make a proposal, COP14 will take place in Geneva in 2026.