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INFORMATION NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA COP 11) (Virtual, 7-9 December 2020) - Information from the Presidency and the Commission

Delegations will find in the Annex, for information, a summary report from the German Presidency and the Commission on the outcome of the abovementioned meeting.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
to the Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA COP 11)
(Virtual, 7-9 December 2020)

- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -

1. INTRODUCTION

The Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11) to the UNECE Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (TEIA) was held virtually and successfully from 7 to 9 December 2020.

TEIA COP 11 was chaired by Ms Torill Tandberg (Norway).

2. MAIN OUTCOMES

2.1 Adopted Decisions

- The Conference of the Parties adopted operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making in the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties due to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/L.5).
- The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2020/1 on strengthening mine tailings safety in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region and beyond (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/L.1)
- The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2020/2 on strengthening the implementation of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/L.2)

- The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2020/3 on guiding principles for financial assistance (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/L.4) for the participation of, in particular, representatives from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and, as resources allow, other developing and least developed countries

2.2 Development of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties took note of the information provided by the Chair that the informal consultations on the draft amendments to the Convention held during the biennium with the Parties concerned (the European Union, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Switzerland) revealed that there was no change in the positions communicated at the ninth and tenth meetings of the Conference. It invited the Parties to communicate any future change in positions to each other and the Chair and the secretariat. The Conference requested the Chair and secretariat to provide it with any updates communicated on the matter and agreed to consider resuming its considerations on draft amendments to the Convention, as contained in the draft decision amending the Convention (see ECE/CP.TEIA/2016/7) in case of a change in position communicated by the concerned Parties.

2.3 Other outcomes

All other outcomes of TEIA COP 11 were as anticipated and in line with agreed positions of the EU and its Member States. Amongst others, the Conference of the Parties:

- Adopted the priorities, workplan and resources for the Convention for 2021–2022 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/L.3) and its corresponding budget, on the basis of the Bureau's proposal made in cooperation with the secretariat, and updates made thereafter.
- Took note of the information provided in and adopted the Ninth report on the implementation of the Convention (2016–2018) (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/5). It requested the Working Group on Implementation to prepare a similar report for its thirteenth meeting.

- Took note of the proposed activities of the Joint Expert Group, as contained in the draft workplan for the Convention for 2021–2022 (ECE/CP.TEIA/2020/9).
- Took note of the outcomes of both the test and the consultation and the results of the seventh online consultation of the points of contact (CP.TEIA/2020/INF.4).
- Took note of the outcome of a European Union/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/ECE survey on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for industrial safety.
- The Conference of the Parties took note of the secretariat’s report on targeted communication, working visits and high-level missions to Parties and other stakeholders.

3. **ELECTIONS**

TEIA COP 11 elected its chair (Norway). Switzerland and Austria were elected as new vice chairs.

TEIA COP 11 also elected the members of the Bureau: AT, BY, EU, FI, FR, NO, RU, RS, SI and CH. Whilst gender balance is not satisfactory (3 male Bureau members out of 10 members), regional balance improved (5 members represent non-EU/non-EEA parties out of 10).

TEAI COP 11 also elected the members of the Working Group on Implementation (WGI): BY, EE, LV, NL, MD, RU, RS, SK, SE and CH. Whilst gender balance is not satisfactory (3 male WGI members out of 10 members), regional balance improved (4 members represent non-EU/non-EEA parties out of 10).

4. **NEXT STEPS**

TEIA COP 12 is scheduled for the end of 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland, unless a Party proposes to host it.

5. BACKGROUND

The 1992 Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents entered into force in 2000 and aims at protecting people and the environment against adverse effects of major industrial accidents involving hazardous chemicals. The principle is to prevent accidents from occurring, or to reduce their frequency and severity and to mitigate their effects if required. To sum up: Prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects. The Industrial Accidents Convention promotes active international cooperation between countries, before, during and after an industrial accident.

All EU Member States except for Ireland and Malta are Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention. The European Union signed the Industrial Accidents Convention on 19 March 1992 and approved it on 24 April 1998.

In the EU legal order, the corresponding measures are included in Directive 2012/18/EU (Seveso III), which is more stringent than the Industrial Accidents Convention.
