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### ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

#### COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

#### AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

Meeting of Experts for the Pilot Project  
Demonstrating the Environmental Clean-up  
of Selected Sites Polluted by Chemicals

Eight session, 30 October 2000

### REPORT ON THE EIGHTH SESSION

#### Introduction

1. The eighth session of the Meeting of Experts was held on 30 October 2000 in Geneva preceding the first session of the *Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development*. The Meeting of Experts was by invitation only, and was a technical session of the Task Force on the Pilot Project, which included invited participants from other agencies.
2. Representatives of the following countries participated in the present meeting: Czech Republic, France, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey. A representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) also attended. The representative of Slovakia also spoke on behalf of the International Centre for Science and High Technology of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (ICS-UNIDO).

Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

3. The Meeting of Experts adopted its provisional agenda. Mr. Viktor Mejstřík (Czech Republic), present Chairman of the Task Force, requested that he be replaced, and nominated Mr. Martin Murín (Slovakia), who was duly elected. The meeting felt that a vice-chairman was not required.

Item 1 Inform participants of the present UN/ECE position with regard to the future activities in soil decontamination, and obtain their views and recommendations

4. The secretariat informed the Meeting of Experts that, based on decisions of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development, resources within the secretariat are to be re-oriented towards the Programme of Work of the new *Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development*. Upon retirement of the present Secretary of the UN/ECE Chemical Programme within the next several months, the post will be redefined to fulfill these activities.

5. Within the UN/ECE, the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities has shown considerable interest in this project, and a representative of the Coordinating Unit, formerly of the UN/ECE Environment Division, was present during the meeting to express that interest and provide background to the experts. Participants in the meeting felt that this possibility was very positive, and that the idea should be pursued. Contact between the Coordinating Unit and the Chairman will be maintained to follow up on this opportunity. The Chairman also later expressed his views to the Director of the UN/ECE Trade Division.

Item 2 Introduce new potential agencies which may be interested in assisting in the implementation of further UN/ECE work on soil decontamination, and have them meet the experts already engaged

6. Two other United Nations agencies have expressed some interest in the Pilot Project. Representatives of those agencies were invited to attend this meeting:

- the International Centre for Science and High Technology of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (ICS-UNIDO) in Trieste (Italy) was unable to attend due to last-minute scheduling difficulties, but asked that the Chairman of the Meeting of Experts (who had recently visited ICS-UNIDO) to speak on their behalf. ICS-UNIDO is well experienced in soil decontamination, and has a working group on the subject. They could provide some financial resources for assistance to delegates to attend meetings and seminars, or perhaps assist a limited number of experts in visiting sites. They could also provide intellectual input, but they do not have adequate infra-structural support (secretarial or conference facilities) to take complete responsibility for the project.

- the Representative of the United Nations Environment Programme/Chemicals Office (UNEP Chemicals), which is based in Geneva, stated that the resource limitations of that group would not permit expansion of the activities into covering Pilot Project work. The Chemicals Office is primarily concerned with servicing the various conventions presently under the responsibility of UNEP. The Chairman of the Meeting of Experts stated that he would like to pursue relations with UNEP further, and that he would do that himself.

Item 3 Provide up-dated information on pilot project sites

7. A draft of the *Progress Report on the Pilot Project Demonstrating the Environmental Cleanup of Selected Sites Polluted by Chemicals* prepared by the secretariat, was presented to the meeting. The report included details on the eight priority sites and listing of 40 current sites. It will be issued as a United Nations document (not as a sales publication) in final form after receipt of comments from participants and their colleagues. An executive summary will be prepared for inclusion at the beginning of the document. It was also suggested that the questionnaire for site evaluation be included as an appendix to the report, and that a short description of the goals of the project be included in the introduction.
8. Start of cleanup on the Synthesia site (Czech Republic) will begin in a few months. This site is one of the largest in the Czech Republic, and US\$ 25 million is now in hand to begin the first stage of the cleanup, which will require some three years. Total estimated cost is close to US\$ 50 million. This will mean relocation of 250,000 tons of waste; further extensive details are included in the draft *Progress Report* noted above. An international tender has been issued for the work to be carried out.
9. A site in Albania has been visited by two engineers from GEOTest Brno, one of whom is a member of the Task Force. The site is an old metal-plating facility and the ground is contaminated with heavy metals, principally chromium. It is not yet known in which form the Cr contamination exists. A proposal will be elaborated in the coming weeks for this site.
10. The Chemolak site in Slovakia has not made any progress since the last report; environmental questions have taken a lower priority as business itself has slowed. On the other hand, the Chemko Strazske site has made some significant progress: they have determined that a non-combustion process for PCB elimination will clear their site of the 1000 tons of PCBs stored there, and this will be purchased or licensed by the company.
11. An up-dating on the Bulgarian site Bulcolor was provided, and the representative of the Coordinating Unit suggested that he could be of help in providing access to funding through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Office in Bulgaria. This is to be followed up by the Swiss Task Force representative together with the Coordinating Unit.
12. It was reported by the secretariat that the Incukalns site in Latvia has received a grant of i 120,000 from the Walloon (Belgium) regional environmental office, in part thanks to a recommendation made by UN/ECE to that agency. This will allow commencement of the cleanup of the sulphuric acid tar waste at that site.
13. The D4D Wire Works site in Miskolc (Hungary) has been officially declared by the Hungarian government to be fully cleaned up; however UN/ECE has not received a report of that procedure. Such a report will be requested from the site owners or the Hungarian government, and the report circulated to members of the Task Force.

Item 4 Plan for the future, including relationships with the Team of Specialists on CHEMISEED, up-date on the Paris seminar and potential for similar future conferences

14. There were numerous proposals for continuation of this project in some framework, preferably within UN/ECE. A Team of Specialists on CHEMISEED has been created by the *Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development* to be the responsible agency within UN/ECE to maintain this project and possibly some of those items formerly under the aegis of the *ad hoc Group of Experts on the Chemical Industry* related to ecological aspects of the chemical industry (i.e. the *Compendium* and seminars on soil decontamination). The final session of the ad hoc Group of Experts had been scheduled for 25-27 April 2001, but it was requested that the meeting be re-scheduled as a one-day session on 23 March 2001, and be associated with the second session of the *Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development* (WP.8) on 21-22 March 2001.

15. Participants in the meeting recommended that the Pilot Project be included in the Programme of Work of the Working Party, as a part of the Team of Specialists on CHEMISEED, which would retain responsibility for programme guidance; the secretariat would be located in the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities. Future work would be maintained and developed as a joint activity between UN/ECE and ICS-UNIDO.

16. In the implementation of projects, cooperation would be sought with other international institutions (e.g. UNEP, WHO, ISPRA, EU, USAID NATO/CCMS and others) as appropriate for programme delivery. Particularly close cooperation would be sought with the UNDP Regional Offices.

Seminar on Analysis, Methodology of Treatment and Remediation of Polluted Soils and Groundwaters (Paris), 13-15 March 2001

17. An oral report on the preparations for the Seminar was provided by the French delegation. Ninety summaries have already been received from speakers and poster presenters, and are being processed by UN/ECE in the three languages. The brochure for the seminar has been distributed to the press and all summary submitters. The secretariat will supply interpreters for the seminar; and the costs will be covered by the French Organizing Committee. All other preparations of the Seminar are underway.

18. In principle, the next seminar in this series should take place in spring 2003. Another series of seminars organized by the TNO in the Netherlands and FZK in Germany covering very much the same subject matter, CONSOIL, should also take place at that time. The secretariat had arranged a meeting between the French organizing committee and that of CONSOIL to discuss a joint seminar<sup>1</sup>. The French Ministries of Environment and of Industry are both tentatively supporting this cooperation, and would like to host a joint seminar, perhaps in Lille in 2003. They would be very pleased to have continued United Nations cooperation in this venture.

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<sup>1</sup> CONSOIL is a moving seminar on contaminated soils held every 2 ½ years; the seventh CONSOIL was held in Leipzig in September 2000 with some 800 delegates. Following this cycle would imply that the next CONSOIL would take place in spring 2003. Previous CONSOIL seminars were held in Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Frankfurt but never in France.

Other business

19. The secretariat was requested, if resources can be made available, to produce one or more of the following studies:

- *Legal and Administrative Procedures for Remediation of Polluted Sites* - a review of procedures in the various member States.
  - *Summary reviews:* 1) on setting remediation priorities; 2) transboundary pollution, including POPs (persistent organic pollutants); 3) all United Nations and other conventions relating to soil remediation.
  - *Guideline on funding approaches* - what the site owner must provide and how to approach funding agencies. The document should include a model 1-2 page questionnaire to be completed by site owners.
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