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**Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context**

**Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment
(Fourth meeting, Orvieto, Italy, 19 November 2001)**

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING
to be held at Centro Congressi "Palazzo del Popolo" in Orvieto, Italy
starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 19 November 2001

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. Activities undertaken pursuant to the work-plan adopted at the second meeting of the Parties which require a decision by the Working Group:
 - (a) Strategic environmental assessment;
 - (b) Reviews of the implementation of the Convention;
 - (c) Reporting system; and
 - (d) Review of the Convention.
4. Financial aspects:
 - (a) Assistance to countries in transition; and
 - (b) Budget and extrabudgetary resources.

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5. Other activities:
 - (a) Strengthening cooperation with other ECE Conventions;
 - (b) Guidelines on good practice and on bilateral or multilateral agreements;
 - (c) Subregional cooperation;
 - (d) Database on environmental impact assessment; and
 - (e) Public participation in EIA in a transboundary context.
6. Cooperation with the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy.
7. Activities for promoting the implementation and ratification of the Convention:
 - (a) Status of ratification; and
 - (b) Amendment of the Convention.
8. Other business.
9. Closing of the meeting.

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The fourth meeting of the Working Group is convened in accordance with a decision taken at the second meeting of the Parties. The agenda and its explanatory notes have been prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau of the Meeting, in accordance with rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure.

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure adopted at the first meeting of the Parties, the Chairperson, Mr. Stefan Ruchti, will open the meeting.

The Working Group is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 2. Election of officers

The Meeting of the Parties elected Mr. Stefan Ruchti (Switzerland) as Chairperson of the Working Group (ECE/MP.EIA/4, para. 42). In accordance with the rules of procedure, the Working Group is expected to elect its own vice-chairperson.

Item 3. Activities undertaken pursuant to the work-plan adopted at the second meeting of the Parties which require a decision by the Working Group

(a) Strategic environmental assessment

Mr. Terje Lind, Chairperson of the ad hoc Working Group on the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, will inform the Working Group of the outcome of its first two meetings (MP.EIA/AC.1/2001/2 and 6)

(b) Reviews of the implementation of the Convention

The secretariat will inform the Working Group of the preparation of the draft review of the implementation of the Convention pursuant to item 1 of the work-plan adopted at the second meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex XI).

(c) Reporting system

The delegation of the United Kingdom, lead country for this activity, will present the report of the first meeting of the Implementation Committee, including a draft reporting system (MP.EIA/WG.1/2001/3). The Working Group is expected to discuss the proposal and adopt it. The new reporting system shall guide Parties in their reporting on the implementation of the Convention.

(d) Review of the Convention

The delegation of Italy, lead country for this activity, will report on the implementation of decision II/10 on the review of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex X), including the steps already taken by the task force to: (i) undertake a comprehensive review of the Convention; (ii) identify the areas that need amending; and (iii) develop proposals for possible amendments, and their rationale. The Working Group is expected to discuss this activity and to provide guiding principles for the continued work of the task force.

Item 4. Financial aspects

(a) Assistance to countries in transition

Pursuant to decision II/12 (ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex XII, para. 5), the Chairperson will present a proposal to revise the system of financial assistance to the countries with economies in transition so as to bring the granting of financial assistance in line with the policy of the Committee on Environmental Policy in this regard.

(b) Budget and extrabudgetary resources

The Working Group will review decision II/13 on the budget (ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex XIII) and, in particular, identify possibilities for complete funding of the activities set out in its table. Parties will report on how they will provide extrabudgetary resources pursuant to paragraph 4.

Item 5. Other activities

(a) Strengthening cooperation with other ECE Conventions

The delegation of Romania, lead country for this activity, will inform the Working Group on how this activity will be implemented. This activity will support the cooperation between the EIA Convention and the other ECE Conventions with the aim of further strengthening their implementation and application and in particular to further improve the application of environmental impact assessment (EIA) in a transboundary context.

(b) Guidelines on good practice and on bilateral or multilateral agreements

This activity aims at reviewing and updating the guidelines on the practical application of the Convention and on the preparation of bilateral and multilateral agreements. The delegations of Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden, lead countries for this activity, will prepare written information on its future implementation.

(c) Subregional cooperation

Subregional cooperation aims at strengthening the application of environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context through the provisions of the Convention, in particular in the countries in transition. The delegations of Croatia and Poland, lead countries for this activity, will provide information on how this activity will be implemented. The delegation of Poland will prepare written information on the establishment of a facility enabling countries in transition to

address their needs regarding transboundary EIA.

(d) Database on environmental impact assessment

The delegation of Poland, lead country for this activity, will provide information on the implementation of the database.

(e) Public participation in EIA in a transboundary context

The delegation of the Russian Federation, lead country for this activity, will present written information on the future implementation of this activity, which will lead to the preparation of the final version of the draft guidance on public participation in a transboundary context.

Item 6. Cooperation with the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy

Mr. Nenad Mikulic, Chairperson of the Bureau, will report on the outcome of an informal meeting on the relevance of the themes of the Aarhus Convention in the context of the other Conventions with representatives of the Bureaux of the Committee and the governing bodies of the ECE environmental Conventions which was held in Geneva on 25 June 2001 (CEP/2001/6 and /7).

Item 7. Activities for promoting the implementation and ratification of the Convention

(a) Status of ratification

The secretariat will inform the Working Group on the status of ratification of the Convention. Representatives of non-Parties will report on the steps that they are taking to become a Party to the Convention.

(b) Amendment of the Convention

At their second meeting, the Parties decided to amend the Convention, in particular to allow States outside the UNECE region to become Parties to the Convention (decision II/14, ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex XIV). Delegations are expected to report on the steps taken to promote its ratification, approval or acceptance. Mr. N. Mikulic will inform the Working Group on preliminary discussions within the Bureau on how to contact States outside the UNECE region.

Item 8. Other business

Delegations wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 9. Closing of the meeting

The Chairperson will close the meeting by presenting the main decisions taken by the Working Group.