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Background Paper
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MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS

I. ACHIEVEMENTS AND TRENDS

A. Harmonization of systems of classification and labelling of chemicals

1. After adoption of Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 by UNCED in 1992, ILO, OECD and the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods cooperated to elaborate the “Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)”, under the auspices of the Interorganization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems (CG/HCCS).

2. Once the work was next to completion, it was agreed that the maintenance and updating of the GHS, as well as the promotion of its implementation should be placed under the responsibility of a new United Nations body, the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. This body was established by resolution 1999/65 of 26 October 1999 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, as a subsidiary body of the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods which was renamed as the same occasion the “Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals”. The secretariat services for the Committee and its two sub-committees (GHS and transport of dangerous goods (TDG)) are provided by the Economic Commission for Europe. The GHS Subcommittee meets twice a year in order to revise and update regularly the GHS to reflect national, regional and international experiences in implementing requirements into national, regional and international law. It works on the basis of two-year cycles, at the end of which it reports to the Committee, which reports itself to the Economic and Social Council. Its sessions are held back-to-back with those of the TDG Subcommittee in order to ensure proper intersectoral cooperation.

3. The first task of the GHS Subcommittee was to make the GHS available for worldwide use and application. The first version of the document, which was intended to serve as the initial basis for the global implementation of the system, was published in 2003 under the symbol ST/SG/AC.10/30.

4. A first, second and third revised versions were published in 2005, 2007 and 2009 at the end of each working cycle.

5. The GHS contains all criteria necessary for classification of chemicals according to their intrinsic hazardous properties (physical hazards such as flammability, hazards to health and hazards to the environment), as well as all necessary provisions for hazard communication through labelling (identification of chemical, pictogrammes, symbols, hazard statements, precautionary statements, signal words, etc.) and through Safety Data Sheets (SDSs).

6. While governments, regional institutions and international organizations are the primary audiences for the GHS, it also contains sufficient context and guidance for those in industry who will ultimately be implementing the national requirement once adopted. Availability of information about chemicals, their hazards, and ways to protect people, will provide the foundation for national programmes for the safe management of chemicals. Widespread management of chemicals in countries around the world will lead to safer conditions for the global population and the environment, while allowing the benefits of chemical use to continue. Harmonization will also have benefits in terms of facilitating international trade, by promoting greater consistency in the national requirements for chemical hazard classification and communication that companies engaged in international trade must meet.

7. In paragraph 23 (c) of its Plan of Implementation adopted in Johannesburg on 4 September 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) encouraged countries to implement the GHS as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008. Subsequently, in its resolutions 2003/64 of 25 July 2003, 2005/53 of 27 July 2005, 2007/9 of 23 July 2007 and 2009/19 of 29 July 2009, the United Nations Economic and Social Council invited Governments who had not yet done so, to take the necessary steps, through appropriate national procedures and/or legislation, to implement the GHS as recommended in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. It also reiterated its invitation to the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned, to promote the implementation of the GHS and, where relevant, to amend their respective legal international instruments addressing transport safety, workplace safety, consumer protection or the protection of the environment so as to give effect to the GHS through such instruments.

8. More detailed additional information on the work of the Committee and its two sub-committees may be found in the report of the Secretary General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals during the biennium 2007-2008 (E/2009/55).

9. Since the GHS addresses several sectors (transport, consumers, occupational health and safety and the environment), its effective implementation requires significant efforts from Member States to amend many existing legal texts concerning chemical safety in each sector or to enact new legislation.

10. In the transport sector, the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations, have already been updated to reflect the relevant provisions of the second revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System*. All the major international legal instruments which are based on these Model Regulations have also been amended accordingly for effective application in 2009, as have all national regulations that are based on those instruments or that are regularly updated on the basis of the Model Regulations (see also section I.B below).

11. In the other sectors, the situation is more complex, because implementation requires the amendment or revision of a considerable number of different legal texts and guidelines for application.

12. Legal instruments implementing the GHS have already entered into force in the following countries: New Zealand (2001), Mauritius (2004), Republic of Korea (2006) and all countries members of the European Union and the European Economic Area (January 2009).

13. Other countries, in particular all those which participate (either as full members or as observers) in the meetings of the GHS Subcommittee as well as Chile, Malaysia and Singapore, continue to revise and amend their legal texts, standards and guidelines to achieve implementation of the GHS as soon as possible.

14. In order to monitor the status of implementation of the GHS, the UNECE secretariat has placed on its website¹ all the information it has collected from countries. The website provides the possibility for Government administrations to update this information or to submit new information for the various sectors concerned. All countries are therefore invited to provide such information, as indicated in paragraph 6 of part B of ECOSOC resolution 2009/19.

¹ www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html

15. In 2007 and 2008, quite a number of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities have been initiated by several organizations, as described below.

16. A workshop on the GHS aimed at different sectors (transport, industry, customs and administration) was organized by the Ministry of Health of Chile (Santiago, April 2007).

17. With the financial support of several Member States, the European Commission and the private sector, several additional capacity-building and training activities were carried out, with the participation of experts from the GHS Subcommittee, by various organizations and programmes, in particular:

(a) United Nations Institute for Training and Research/International Labour Organization (UNITAR/ILO) Global Capacity-building Programme on the Globally Harmonized System and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System for Chemical Classification and Labelling:

(i) National GHS workshops and planning meetings in Cambodia, China the Gambia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Thailand and Viet Nam;

(ii) Regional workshops on chemical hazard communication and GHS implementation for ASEAN countries (Indonesia, May 2007), for public interest and labour organizations (Indonesia, May 2007) and for countries of the Economic Community of West African States (Nigeria, May 2008);

(iii) Second meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System (Geneva, July 2007);

(iv) GHS presentations at the third Arab Conference on Occupational Safety and Health (Bahrain, November 2008); the third Latin American Conference on Chemical Accidents and the second Meeting of Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Centres (Argentina, November 2008); the sixth United Nations University/Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology Joint Programme Workshop on Sound Management of Hazardous Chemicals and Sustainable Energy (Republic of Korea, October 2008); Regional Workshop for the preparation of the second meeting of the ad hoc open-ended working group to review and assess measures to address the global issue of mercury (Qatar, June 2008);

(v) Development of resource materials: revised guidance document on preparing a national implementation strategy; training courses on the GHS; revised guidance on comprehensibility testing; country case studies on the legal implementation of the GHS; international GHS handbook; industry awareness-raising brochure; World Summit on Sustainable Development Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System annual reports;

(vi) Twelfth and thirteenth meetings of the Capacity-building Programme advisory group, which were held back-to-back with those of the Subcommittee;

(b) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation: sixth meeting of the Chemical Dialogue (Australia, June 2007) and follow-up meetings of various working groups where GHS implementation issues are under consideration;

(c) World Health Organization/ILO/United Nations Environment Programme (WHO/ILO/UNEP) International Programme on Chemical Safety:

(i) Review and update of the International Chemical Safety Cards to include GHS classification and labelling. To date, GHS classification has been included in 178 new or revised Cards;

(ii) Workshop on the GHS for the health sector in Nigeria (May 2008);

(d) UNEP Regional Office for West Asia:

(i) Regional training workshop on the GHS (Saudi Arabia, April 2008);

(ii) GHS promotion at the following meetings:

- a. Second joint meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council groups on ozone, chemicals and customs (Saudi Arabia, May 2008);
- b. Meeting of the Arab technical group on hazardous waste and chemical multilateral environmental agreements (Egypt, November 2008);
- c. Arab symposium for sound management of chemicals (Syrian Arab Republic, November 2008);

(e) Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals: preparation of a guidance document to assist countries with the transition phase for GHS implementation.

18. The GHS Subcommittee has also continued its cooperation with treaty bodies that administer certain international conventions dealing with specific aspects of chemical safety in order to facilitate the implementation of the GHS through such conventions (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal; Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; and Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

B. Transport of hazardous chemicals: risk reduction programmes

19. Transport of dangerous goods, including hazardous chemicals and hazardous wastes, should be regulated in order to prevent, as far as possible, accidents to persons or property and damage to the environment, the means of transport employed or to other goods. For this purpose, the United Nations Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (TDG Sub-Committee, see also paragraph 2 above) has elaborated and kept up-to-date, since 1953, recommendations which are called the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations and the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Manual of Tests and Criteria.

20. The 16th revised edition of the Model Regulations has just been published in 2009, and the fifth revised edition of the Manual of Tests and Criteria is under preparation. Apart from the provisions concerning classification criteria and labelling, which are harmonized with the GHS, the recommendations address all safety and security aspects of the transport of dangerous goods, such as the use of packagings, tanks and vehicles, their construction, testing and approval, training of transport workers, emergency response, etc.

21. The requirements contained therein are now fully integrated in all major legal instruments regulating international transport of dangerous goods by all modes of transport, and in national regulations of most countries which have economic interests in production, use or trade of hazardous chemicals

22. In its resolution 2007/6, the Economic and Social Council invited all interested Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the international organizations concerned, when developing or updating appropriate codes and regulations, to take into account the recommendations of the Committee (15th revised edition of the Model Regulations).

23. The provisions of the fifteenth revised edition of the Model Regulations² have been incorporated into the following international instruments:

- (a) International Maritime Organization (IMO): International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, amendment 34-08 (mandatory application for the 159 contracting parties to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea from 1 January 2010, with the possibility of application on a voluntary basis from 1 January 2009);
- (b) International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): 2009-2010 edition of the Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (mandatory application for the 190 contracting parties to the Convention on International Civil Aviation from 1 January 2009);
- (c) International Air Transport Association: Dangerous Goods Regulations 2009 (fiftieth) edition (applicable from 1 January 2009);
- (d) Economic Commission for Europe: European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (applicable from 1 January 2009, 45 contracting parties);
- (e) Economic Commission for Europe: European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (applicable from 28 February 2009, 11 contracting parties);
- (f) Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail: Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (appendix C to the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail) (applicable from 1 January 2009, 43 contracting parties).

24. In the member States of the European Union, the provisions of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, the Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail and the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways also apply to domestic traffic³.

25. The Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay) are applying an agreement on the inland transportation of dangerous goods (Acuerdo sobre Transporte de Mercancías Peligrosas en el MERCOSUR) based on the seventh revised edition⁴ of the Model Regulations, the Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods

² United Nations publications, Sales No. E.07.VIII.I and corrigendum.

³ Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on the inland transport of dangerous goods (Official Journal of the European Union, L260 of 30 September 2008).

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.91.VIII.2.

by Rail and the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, which is being updated on the basis of the twelfth revised editions.

26. The Andean Community (Bolivia Plurinational State of, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) has developed draft regulations based on the thirteenth revised edition of the Model Regulations⁶ the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (2005) and the Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (2005), which are still under consideration.

27. In 1997, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific published the Guidelines for the Establishment of National and Regional Systems for Inland Transportation of Dangerous Goods, recommending the implementation of the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods. The transport ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed, on 20 September 2002, Protocol No. 9 to the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit. The Protocol provides for the simplification of procedures and requirements for the transit transport of dangerous goods in ASEAN countries, using the Model Regulations and the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road.

28. In 1999, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) adopted regulations concerning the transport of dangerous goods by road that are partly based on old provisions of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road but that are not fully in line with the Model Regulations.

29. With respect to domestic inland transport of dangerous goods in individual countries, except as described above implementation of the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods may vary considerably depending on the national procedures for enacting law or updating regulations. For example, the regulations applicable in the United States of America (Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations) are normally updated on a yearly basis and they have been updated to reflect the fifteenth revised edition of the *Model Regulations*², with very few exceptions. The Canadian regulations are based on the fourteenth revised edition⁷ but consignees are authorized to use the classification and shipping names of the latest edition. The *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* (seventh edition) is also based on the fourteenth revised edition of the Model Regulations. The twelfth revised edition of the Model Regulations has been adopted as a national standard in Malaysia and has been implemented through national legislation in Brazil and Thailand.

II. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

A. Harmonization of systems of classification and labelling of chemicals

30. The objective of having the GHS fully operational by 2008, recommended by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, was ambitious and has not been completely met.

31. The GHS is already operational in the transport sector, mainly because:

⁵ Ibid. Sales No. E.01.VIII.4.

⁶ Ibid., Sales No. E.03.II.E.25 and corrigendum.

² United Nations publications, Sales No. E.07.VIII.I and corrigendum.

⁷ Ibid., Sales No. E.98II.F.49.

(a) international transport regulations for different modes of transport and many national transport regulations were already harmonized between themselves on the basis of the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations; (b) some classification criteria for certain hazards and some hazard communication tools contained in the GHS are not relevant for the transport sector; (c) the classification criteria and labelling requirements contained previously in the transport regulations were already largely in line with those of the GHS. The rapidity with which the transport sector could adapt to the GHS shows nevertheless the usefulness of having national and international chemical safety regulations closely harmonized with United Nations recommendations such as those on the transport of dangerous goods and the GHS.

32. In other sectors, chemical safety regulations, such as those addressing workplace safety, consumer protection, environment protection, supply, storage and use of chemicals, are decided nationally and are not based on international detailed recommendations, except perhaps in the case of pesticides where FAO and WHO play an active role. Therefore action to develop or amend the various national regulations concerned had to follow usual legal procedures in each country, and this was done at different paces. Some countries, such as Mauritius and New Zealand were particularly quick to take action, while quite a number of other countries preferred to wait and observe the reactions of important economic players such as the European Union, United States of America, Japan, etc. before starting embarking in difficult legislative processes. The recent adoption of the GHS in the European Union, and the progress made by countries such as Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea is likely to encourage many other countries to take action, although other important countries such as Canada and the United States of America, which were amongst the leader countries in developing the GHS, are still at the national consultation stage as far as effective implementation is concerned.

33. The various activities described in paragraphs 16-17 have proven to be very useful in terms of GHS awareness-raising, but much more technical assistance resources would be needed not only to cover a wider range of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, but also to improve or develop suitable chemical safety legislation based on the GHS.

34. Support from international organizations responsible for international instruments dealing with chemical safety is also of utmost importance, e.g. FAO and WHO for pesticides. Although cooperation has been established between the GHS Sub-Committee and treaty bodies that administer environmental conventions, the GHS classification criteria are not yet used on a systematic basis by some of these treaty bodies.

2. Transport of hazardous chemicals

35. Due to excellent cooperation between the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the United Nations Subcommittee of experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, the regulations applicable to air or maritime transport of hazardous chemicals are fully in line with the United Nations recommendations and meet a high safety level. Due to the activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in the area of transport of dangerous goods, and its commitment to apply the United Nations recommendations, the same can be said of the legal instruments regulating international transport of hazardous chemicals by road, rail and inland waterways between most of the 56 UNECE countries, or legislation applicable to domestic traffic in most of these countries.

36. However, similar mechanisms do not exist for inland transport in other regions of the world, and despite progress made in the past few years in particular in South America (MERCOSUR, Andean countries), North Africa, South Africa and South East Asia, national regulations for transport of hazardous chemicals are still often obsolete or even non-existing in many developing countries or countries in transition, in particular in Africa and Asia.

37. In addition, when applying the United Nations Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods through their national legislation applicable to domestic traffic, several countries tend to introduce some deviations from the Model Regulations, which at the end results in considerable difficulties for consignors, carriers and other transport entities to determine which regulations are applicable in international transport involving inland transport, and even for enforcement authorities to check compliance. The fact that certain national regulations applicable to inland transport are not brought into line simultaneously, or completely, is therefore causing problems in international trade, in particular in the case of multimodal transport. For this reason, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2009/*... of 29 July 2009, requested all governments and organizations concerned to provide feedback to the TDG Subcommittee regarding such differences.

III. THE WAY FORWARD

38. With respect to classification and labelling of chemicals, and transport of hazardous chemicals, all governments and organizations concerned should take note of the report of the Secretary General in document E/2009/55 and respond, as appropriate, to ECOSOC resolution 2009/*... of 29 July 2009 (reproduced in the annex hereto).

QUESTIONS FOR INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

What action has been taken to implement the GHS in countries which are not mentioned in www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html?

Could they provide the relevant information to the secretariat by e-mail? (ghs_implementation@unece.org)

Can countries, outside the UNECE region and not participating in the work of the United Nations Subcommittee of experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, provide the secretariat (same address as above) with information about their national regulations on the transport of dangerous goods by road, rail and inland waterways, and the status of implementation of the United Nations Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods through these national regulations?

- The GHS Subcommittee was established to maintain and update the GHS, but also to facilitate communication between various ministries involved in chemical safety, notably labour, health, environment and transport. Have mechanisms been put in place at national level to facilitate communication between various ministries and ensure proper implementation of the GHS and the United Nations Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods?

* Serial number not yet assigned. To be completed by DESA. Refer to the draft resolution contained in Part 1 of document E/2009/55, adopted by ECOSOC on 29 July 2009 (see annex hereto).

AnnexECOSOC Resolution 2009/19 of 29 July 2009

Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1999/65 of 26 October 1999 and 2007/6 of 23 July 2007,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals during the biennium 2007-2008⁸,

A. Work of the Committee regarding the transport of dangerous goods

Recognizing the importance of the work of the Committee for the harmonization of codes and regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods,

Bearing in mind the need to maintain safety standards at all times and to facilitate trade, as well as the importance of this to the various organizations responsible for modal regulations, while meeting the growing concern for the protection of life, property and the environment through the safe and secure transport of dangerous goods,

Noting the ever-increasing volume of dangerous goods being introduced into worldwide commerce, and the rapid expansion of technology and innovation,

Recalling that, while the major international instruments governing the transport of dangerous goods by the various modes of transport and many national regulations are now better harmonized with the Model Regulations annexed to the Committee's recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, further work on harmonizing these instruments is necessary to enhance safety and to facilitate trade, and recalling also that uneven progress in the updating of national inland transport legislation in some countries of the world continues to present serious challenges to international multimodal transport,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals with respect to matters relating to the transport of dangerous goods, including their security in transport;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the new and amended recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods⁹ to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned;

⁸ E/2009/55.

⁹ ST/SG/AC.10/36/Add.1 and Add.2.

(b) To publish the sixteenth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations*¹⁰ and the fifth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria*¹¹ in all the official languages of the United Nations, in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2009;

(c) To make those publications available on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe,¹² which provide secretariat services to the Committee, and to make them available also on CD-ROM;

3. *Invites* all Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the other international organizations concerned to transmit to the secretariat of the Committee their views on the Committee's work, together with any comments that they may wish to make on the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods;

4. *Invites* all interested Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the international organizations concerned to take into account the recommendations of the Committee when developing or updating appropriate codes and regulations;

5. *Requests* the Committee to study, in consultation with the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental organizations concerned, the possibilities of improving the implementation of the Model Regulations on the transport of dangerous goods in all countries for the purposes of ensuring a high level of safety and eliminating technical barriers to international trade, including through the further harmonization of international agreements or conventions governing the international transport of dangerous goods;

6. *Invites* all Governments, as well as the regional commissions and organizations concerned, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization to provide feedback to the Committee regarding differences between the provisions of national, regional or international legal instruments and those of the Model Regulations, in order to enable the Committee to develop cooperative guidelines for enhancing consistency between these requirements and reducing unnecessary impediments; to identify existing substantive and modal international, regional and national differences, with the aim of reducing those differences to the greatest extent practical and ensuring that where differences are necessary they do not pose impediments to the safe and efficient transport of dangerous goods; and to undertake an editorial review of the Model Regulations and various modal instruments with the aim of improving clarity, user friendliness and ease of translation;

B. Work of the Committee regarding the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

3 ST/SG/AC.10/1/Rev.16.

4 ST/SG/AC.10/11/Rev.5.

5 www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm.

Bearing in mind that in paragraph 23 (c) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),¹³ countries were encouraged to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008,

Bearing in mind also that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/253 of 20 December 2002, endorsed the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and requested the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Plan relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 by strengthening system-wide coordination,

Noting with satisfaction:

(a) That the Economic Commission for Europe and all United Nations programmes and specialized agencies concerned with chemical safety in the field of transport or of the environment, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, have already taken appropriate steps to amend their legal instruments in order to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals before the target date of the end of 2008 or are considering amending them as soon as possible;

(b) That the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization are also taking appropriate steps to adapt their existing chemical safety recommendations, codes and guidelines to the Globally Harmonized System, in particular in the areas of occupational health and safety, pesticide management and the prevention and treatment of poisoning;

(c) That the Globally Harmonized System has already been in force in New Zealand since 2001 and in Mauritius since 2004;¹⁴

(d) That a new regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council implementing the Globally Harmonized System in the member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area entered into force on 20 January 2009;¹⁵

(e) That other Member States participating in the activities of the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

¹³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

¹⁴ Information on implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals by country and through international legal instruments, recommendations, codes and guidelines is available on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe at www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html.

¹⁵ Regulation (EC) No. 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, amending and repealing directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC, and amending regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006 (Official Journal of the European Union, L 353 of 31 December 2008).

are actively preparing revisions of national legislation applicable to chemicals for implementation of the Globally Harmonized System;

(f) That a number of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Governments, the European Commission and non-governmental organizations representing the chemical industry, have organized or contributed to multiple workshops, seminars and other capacity-building activities at the international, regional, subregional and national levels in order to raise administration, health sector and industry awareness and to prepare for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System;

Aware that effective implementation will require further cooperation between the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the international bodies concerned, continued efforts by the Governments of Member States, cooperation with the industry and other stakeholders, and significant support for capacity-building activities in countries with economies in transition and developing countries,

Recalling the particular significance of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals for building capacities at all levels,

1. *Commends* the Secretary-General for the publication of the second revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* in the six official languages of the United Nations, in book form¹⁶ and on CD-ROM,¹⁷ and its availability together with related information material on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;⁵

2. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to the Committee, the Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned for their fruitful cooperation and their commitment to the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the amendments¹⁸ to the second revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned;

(b) To publish the third revised edition¹⁹ of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* in all the official languages of the United Nations in

¹⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.II.E.5 and corrigendum.

¹⁷ Ibid., Sales No. E/F/S.07.VIII.4.

¹⁸ ST/SG/AC.10/36/Add.3.

the most cost-effective manner no later than the end of 2009 and to make it available on CD-ROM and on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe;

(c) To continue to make information on the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System available on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe;

4. *Invites* Governments that have not yet done so to take the necessary steps, through appropriate national procedures and/or legislation, to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible;

5. *Reiterates its invitation* to the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, the specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to promote the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and, where relevant, to amend their respective legal international instruments addressing transport safety, workplace safety, consumer protection or the protection of the environment so as to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System through such instruments;

6. *Invites* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, the specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to provide feedback to the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals on the steps taken for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System in all relevant sectors, through international, regional or national legal instruments, recommendations, codes and guidelines, including, when applicable, information about the transitional periods for its implementation;

7. *Encourages* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, the specialized agencies and other relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in particular those representing industry, to strengthen their support for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals by providing financial contributions and/or technical assistance for capacity-building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

C. Programme of work of the Committee

Taking note of the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 2009-2010 as contained in paragraphs 46 and 47 of the report of the Secretary-General,¹ *Noting* the relatively poor level of participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee and the need to promote their wider participation in its work,

1. *Decides* to approve the programme of work of the Committee;

2. *Stresses* the importance of the participation of experts from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee, calls, in that regard, for voluntary contributions to facilitate their participation, including through support for travel and daily subsistence, and invites Member States and international organizations in a position to do so to contribute;

¹⁹ ST/SG/AC.10/30/Rev.3.

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council in 2011 on the implementation of the present resolution, the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.
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