

UN/ECE

Effects of Industrial Accidents

The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-1) to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, met in Brussels from 22–24 November 2000.

The Convention, which came into force on 19 April 2000, lays down a number of provisions aimed at protecting human beings and the environment against industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects and at promoting active international cooperation between the Contracting Parties before, during and after such accidents.

Delegates agreed on a system of mutual notification of accidents that could have a transboundary impact, the *Draft UN/ECE Industrial Accident Notification System*. This is for use between Parties or other UN/ECE member countries, at national level, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention for the transmission of early warnings, information and assistance requests. The notification system is based on three different report forms:

1. UN/ECE Early Warning Report – gives information

or warning in the event of an industrial accident or the imminent threat thereof;

2. UN/ECE Information Report – gives detailed supplementary information on an accident once the situation has been assessed;
3. UN/ECE Assistance Request Report – deals with matters related to the provision of assistance in order to mitigate consequences including transboundary effects.

Delegates agreed to work closely together to identify high-risk plants in a bid to prevent major industrial accidents or at least be better prepared to deal with them should they arise.

The Conference also discussed the prevention of accidental water pollution and the Convention's Internet home page. Delegates agreed that joint work should continue on the prevention of accidental water pollution; determining responsibilities and liabilities; the long-term work programme and the work plan for 2001–2002; and human and financial resources. (MJ)

