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BRS CONVENTIONS COPS HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2017

The BRS COPs continued Wednesday, first hearing reports from the contact groups. The SC COP convened throughout the day. The BC technical matters and synergies and joint issues contact groups met in the morning. The Budget Group met over lunch. The technical assistance and financial resources and SC listing contact groups met in the afternoon. In the evening, BC technical matters, SC listing, and technical assistance and financial resources groups continued.

STOCKHOLM COP8

EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION: Linroy Christian, Vice Chair of the Effectiveness Evaluation Committee, completed the review of the report.

Several supported the report's recommendations. The EU emphasized that all mechanisms for supporting parties in meeting obligations are in place except compliance.

BAHRAIN, BURKINA FASO, SOUTH AFRICA, and Georgia, for CEE, called for increased financial resources to enable parties to fulfill their obligations. IRAN called for study of parties' difficulties accessing financial and technical assistance. KENYA called for financial support for updating NIPs. CHINA called for future reports to focus on financial gaps. MAURITANIA called for South-South cooperation to facilitate POPs inventories.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO and SOUTH AFRICA noted concerns about pentachloro biphenyl (PCB) stockpiles, with TOGO calling for assistance for feasibility studies.

UN ENVIRONMENT reported its work supporting countries in the identification of POPs in various samples. IPEN noted poor progress in the elimination of DDT, and called for more information for POPs in products and reporting on the quantity of POPs used. IITC stressed the need to ensure public availability of research data.

Delegates agreed to adopt the draft decision on effectiveness evaluation of the SC pursuant to Article 16 (UNEP/POPS/COP.8/22), pending confirmation from the budget group.

GMP: Countries welcomed the report. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA called for an expanded monitoring programme. Kenya, for the AFRICAN GROUP, suggested that financing for the GMP should come from the General Trust Fund. PERU, EGYPT and URUGUAY noted that the GMP has strengthened national analytic capacity in the monitoring of POPs in breastmilk. KUWAIT highlighted the importance of strengthening the monitoring mechanisms for identifying POPs in products. IPEN called for POPs in Arctic food sources and newly-listed POPs to be included in the GMP.

Delegates adopted the decision in POPS/COP.8/21 pending confirmation from the budget group.

EXEMPTIONS: The Secretariat introduced the document (POPS/COP.8/4). The EU supported the draft decision. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA noted the need for more data on the lifecycle of certain POPs. EGYPT highlighted that parties conducting studies on certain POPs may later request exemptions. IPEN lamented the low number of parties registered for exemptions, noting that failure to claim an exemption could constitute a gap in the Convention's information database.

Delegates adopted the draft decision in the document, pending confirmation from the budget group.

BDEs: The Secretariat introduced the documents (POPS/COP.8/7 and INF/12). PAKISTAN, GABON, NORWAY, IPEN, BAN, and GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF INCINERATOR ALTERNATIVES called for an end to exemptions for recycling articles containing BDEs, with NORWAY saying it would propose textual amendments.

The EU and CANADA underscored the importance of preventing export of articles containing BDEs to countries that lack capacity for environmentally-sound management (ESM) of waste. CANADA said it would propose text on parties' obligations.

BELARUS supported the decision, noting the challenges of identifying POPs articles in the waste stream. ARGENTINA highlighted the importance of the GEF's support in addressing BDEs. EGYPT underlined need for projects on BDEs in developing countries.

The EU, Canada, Norway, Pakistan and other interested parties were invited to discuss CRP6 submitted by the EU.

Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctanesulfonyl fluoride (PFOSF): Several welcomed the consolidated guidance on alternatives (POPS/COP.8/8, INF/13). The EU requested that the regional centres assist parties in enhancing their legal and technical capacity.

NORWAY, CANADA, ICELAND and IPEN called for moving PFOS to Annex A to promote greater phase-out of exemptions. CHINA opposed. CANADA, IPEN, and PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK (PAN) supported the removal of specific exemptions and acceptable purposes, which INDIA opposed.

The US noted that the POPRC's guidance on alternatives does not mean that the POPRC assessed the alternatives.

GUINEA, INDIA and MALI expressed concern about the proposed text. The Secretariat clarified that the proposed text encourages regional centres to provide support to parties to improve their technical and legal capacity for sound management of PFOS. SC COP8 President Adu-Kumi proposed that these parties work with the EU on the proposed text and report back to plenary.

DDT: The Secretariat introduced the documents (POPS/COP.8/5, INF/6-9). SC COP8 President Adu-Kumi reported Morocco requested withdrawal from the DDT Register for its

use in malaria control. UN ENVIRONMENT and WHO reported on the road map for the development of alternatives and on the continued need for DDT for disease vector control, respectively.

THE PHILIPPINES, NIGER, LIBYA, MALDIVES and GABON highlighted the ban of DDT in their countries. VENEZUELA indicated that DDT is only used in public health emergencies. GHANA called for technical assistance.

IPEN urged acceleration of further research on and implementation of non-chemical methods and strategies for disease vector control. PAN AFRICA indicated that in the long-term DDT is not sufficient to deal with malaria due to resistance, highlighting ecological approaches already in use.

The EU suggested adding “as well as ensuring the long-term sustainability of vector control programs” at the end of the paragraph stating “ensuring adequate national capacity for research, resistance monitoring and implementation for pilot testing and scaling up of existing alternatives to DDT.” The decision was adopted as orally amended.

SC COMPLIANCE: Noting the progress made in the time-limited contact group, President Adu-Kumi established a Friends of the President group composed of 18 members.

MEASURES TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE RELEASES FROM UNINTENTIONAL PRODUCTION: The Secretariat introduced the documents (POPS/COP.8/9, INF/14-16). Parties adopted the draft decision pending confirmation from the budget group.

REPORTING: The Secretariat introduced the documents (POPS/COP.8/20, INF/37). Upon request of the EU, the Secretariat explained the work of the intersessional working group to be established. INDIA recommended several modifications to make the electronic reporting system more user-friendly. IRAN called for further assistance from the Secretariat on information collection and submission through electronic tools. Parties agreed to adopt the draft decision after the COP decides on new chemicals to be listed.

MEASURES TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE RELEASES FROM WASTES: The Secretariat introduced the document (POPS/COP.8/10). CANADA and the EU suggested changes to the data collection mechanism. GUINEA suggested adding reference to African countries, where data collection is difficult.

INDIA expressed concern that the SC should adopt the BC technical guidelines (TGs), noting that the SC has waste-related provisions. The Secretariat characterized the link between the BC and SC as “light,” in that the SC invites the BC to develop TGS for POPs waste.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THAILAND, IPEN and the US expressed views on the low-POPs content TGS, and the Secretariat suggested these views be expressed in the BC technical matters contact group.

SC COP8 President Adu-Kumi asked Canada, the EU and Guinea to prepare a CRP with their textual changes.

OTHER MATTERS: On certifications to be submitted in connection with exports to a non-party, COP8 adopted the revised template for the certification (POPS/COP.8/31 and Add.1) and encouraged its use.

CONTACT GROUPS

SYNERGIES AND JOINT ISSUES: The contact group met in the morning. On cooperation and coordination with SAICM, the group considered a paragraph proposed in a CRP by the EU (CHW.13/CRP.9, SC and RC/COP.8/CRP.2). Views diverged on the importance of mentioning the SAICM intersessional process. Participants agreed to request the Secretariat to enhance cooperation and coordination with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention. Bilateral consultations will occur on the few remaining issues in this draft decision.

On illegal traffic and trade, participants discussed, *inter alia*, ensuring complementarity and consistency with the actions by UNEP and other organizations, strengthening parties’ action and cooperation and providing relevant information to the Secretariat and making such information publicly available.

BC TECHNICAL MATTERS: Jacinthe Séguin, Canada, and Magda Gosk, Poland, co-chaired. In the morning, the group discussed the technical guidelines (TGS) for wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with pentachlorophenol (PCP) and its salts and esters, with some parties offering additional information on historical import and production, use and trade names of commercial formulations. Participants agreed to remove reference to the structural formulation of the metabolite pentachloroanisole, noting that it was important for the SC listing, but it is not intentionally produced so is less relevant for waste management.

BUDGET: Oswaldo Álvarez, Chile, chaired, with participants making general comments on the documents. Many highlighted the need to address the issue of arrears. Delegations also stated their initial preference for either the zero growth budget scenario or the Executive Secretary’s scenario which represents 3% growth. The Secretariat explained, *inter alia*, the new budgeting system as prescribed by the UN’s central administrative system, Umoja.

SC LISTING: Björn Hansen, the EU, and David Kapindula, Zambia, co-chaired. On decaBDE, several parties called for exemptions for use in: textiles, noting widespread use in their countries; the automotive and aerospace industries; and polystyrene and polyurethane foam for housing insulation. Participants also considered exemptions for recycling, with some emphasizing that technology exists for separation of plastics and one noting that the recycling industry does not want decaBDE in the waste stream.

On SCCPs, participants noted a list of exemptions that had not been considered by the POPRC, began considering chemical identity, and briefly discussed the use of science in the SC, noting that the POPRC, not the COP, is responsible for scientific discussions.

On HCBD, participants considered key issues, including cost-effectiveness of listing in Annex C.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Delegates considered the SC financial mechanism decision. Many cautioned against any reference to the GEF being involved in the “development of diversified forms of financing,” which one developing country defined as green bonds. Others called for clarity on the GEF’s work on integrated programming, with one developing country party wondering whether this could end up being counted as climate finance. Some developed countries called for time to consult with capitals on a proposal requesting the GEF to consider improving its access modalities including enabling the participation of a number of additional agencies from developing countries. The developing country proponent noted that this is agreed language from Convention on Biological Diversity COP13. Co-Chair Urho requested delegates to consult informally to reach compromise on outstanding issues.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On Day Three, work progressed apace and able Presidents and Chairs kept delegates moving ahead on a range of issues. One first-time delegate to the BRS COPs noted a “lack of a spirit of consensus” within the group, leaving her discouraged about the possibility of decisions being adopted during the meeting. Another participant expressed frustration with references to “common but differentiated responsibilities,” declaring, “We are engaging in a cherry-picking exercise, and it is taking us nowhere. If a permanent financial mechanism is to be agreed, parties will need to move past these ancient arguments.”

Another “ancient” issue with potential to affect SC COP8 is the shift from dead to “live” substances, and from pesticides to technically-complex industrial chemicals. One veteran participant commented that the “slew of information” about current uses – which was not presented to the POPRC – may be indicative of the challenges delegates will face in reaching consensus to list these socioeconomically important chemicals.