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**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior
Informed Consent Procedure for Certain
Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in
International Trade**

Conference of the Parties

Third meeting

Geneva, 9–13 October 2006

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda

Organizational matters: organization of work

Scenario note for the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Conference of the Parties, in an annex to the present note, the scenario note for the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, prepared by the President of the Conference, Mr. Ruisheng Yue (China).

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Annex

Scenario note for the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties

1. In consultation with the secretariat, I have prepared the present scenario note for the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to assist delegates in preparing for the meeting and in particular to highlight the key issues for the meeting. Documents for the meeting were distributed in two mailings, in April and July 2006. All meeting documents have been or will be posted on the Rotterdam Convention website (www.pic.int).
2. The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be opened on Monday, 9 October 2006, at 10:00 am. It is proposed that the meeting be conducted in plenary and that contact and drafting groups be established on individual agenda items as needed.
3. A ministerial segment is planned for the afternoon of Thursday 12 and Friday 13 October. This high-level segment is particularly significant for the current meeting as there are a number of important policy and operational issues on which decisions will need to be taken, as well as because there was no high-level segment convened at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties and there will be a two year lapse between the third and fourth meetings of the Conference.
4. In view of the importance of political will as a key requisite for the successful implementation of the Convention, the high-level segment will provide an opportunity to help ensure that the activities of the Rotterdam Convention are brought to the attention of those at the highest levels in Governments. Consistent with this idea I have, in consultation with the Bureau, proposed that the theme for the high-level segment be "Towards full implementation of the Rotterdam Convention – challenges and opportunities". Those participating in the high-level segment are invited to consider this theme in preparing their addresses to the Conference.
5. Final adoption of decisions and the report of the meeting will take place on Friday afternoon, during plenary session.
6. The working languages of the meeting will be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

A. General objectives of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties

7. The main goal of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties is to provide a sound basis for full implementation of the Convention by all Parties. I foresee two sets of issues for the meeting, which might be broadly categorized as policy issues and operational or implementation issues. Within each of these two categories, I have set out what I consider to be the key items for which decisions will need to be taken by the Conference.
8. The key policy issues to be considered by the Conference include the following:
 - (a) Work on developing a non-compliance regime will be continued starting Monday afternoon (9 October). The Open-ended Working Group on Non-compliance will meet at the same time as the plenary sessions of the meeting and will operate in six languages. I would like to remind you that Parties have an opportunity to include at least one expert on their delegations to this meeting to participate in this work. I look forward to a constructive, productive discussion of the outstanding issues on non-compliance and invite Governments to consider the relevant issues prior to the meeting to allow substantive progress to be made;
 - (b) The Conference will need to decide on the inclusion of chrysotile asbestos in Annex III of the Convention and the adoption of the decision guidance document completed at the second session of the Chemical Review Committee. I invite Governments, in taking this decision, to recall the objectives of the Convention, which include protecting human health and the environment while allowing informed trade in chemicals. The inclusion of chrysotile asbestos in the prior informed consent procedure will allow Governments to take informed decisions about future imports of this chemical;

(c) A further study on possible options for lasting and sustainable financial mechanisms which would enable developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention has been prepared by the secretariat. I welcome the opportunity to consider this issue, recognizing that for many Parties this is an important element in the implementation of the Convention. I encourage Governments to come to the meeting with constructive suggestions that will lead to progress on the issue of sustainable financing;

(d) We will examine opportunities for increasing cooperative efforts among chemicals conventions. Relevant information available to the Conference will include the study on improving cooperation and synergies between the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions undertaken by the secretariat of the Stockholm Convention and referenced in decision RC.2/6 and the supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any of the changes proposed. It will be important to consider this information in the light of the report on the subject by the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, as well as the outcome of the discussions at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;

(e) The Conference will also consider the papers prepared by the secretariat and forwarded by the Chemical Review Committee at its second meeting on risk evaluations and trade restrictions under other multilateral environment agreements and the implications for chemicals that might be included in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention.

9. The key operational or implementation issues to be considered by the Conference include the following:

(a) The Conference will review the key technical assistance activities undertaken since 2003 as the basis for a decision on a programme of technical assistance for 2007–2008. Technical assistance to countries in the implementation of the Convention is key to its continued success. It is important that countries carefully consider their priorities for technical assistance under the Rotterdam Convention, to ensure that they contribute effectively to the implementation of the Convention as well as to their national development goals. For countries with the ability to make financial contributions to such work, this discussion will provide an opportunity to consider how they might do so;

(b) The Conference will need to decide on the countries that will be eligible to nominate new experts to the Chemical Review Committee to replace those that were appointed for a two-year term under decision RC-1/6 of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Also, the term of office for the present Bureau of the Conference of the Parties will end with the closure of the current meeting, and the Conference will need to elect a new Bureau in accordance with rule 22 of the rules of procedure to serve from the end of the current meeting until the end of the next meeting of the Conference. Regional groups are thus encouraged to review during the course of the meeting their representation on the Chemical Review Committee and the Bureau. I look forward to your nominations of new Bureau members and of the Parties that will be invited to nominate experts to serve on the Chemical Review Committee;

(c) The Conference will also need to approve a programme of work for 2007–2008, including adoption of a budget for this period, to consider issues referred to it by the Chemical Review Committee and to return to issues that at prior meetings it had scheduled for consideration at the current meeting. Details on these items may be found in the documents referred to in the annotated agenda.

B. Possible outcomes of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties

10. The following is a list of expectations for the possible outcomes of the meeting:

(a) An agreement on a programme of work for technical assistance for 2007–2008;

(b) Progress toward the development of lasting and sustainable financial mechanisms which will enable developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention;

(c) Progress toward agreement on the procedures and institutional mechanisms on non-compliance required under article 17 of the Convention;

(d) A decision on the inclusion of chrysotile asbestos in Annex III of the Convention and adoption of the decision guidance document;

(e) A clear understanding of the options and guidance to the secretariat for follow-up on the issue of synergies between the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;

(f) Confirmation of the membership of the Chemical Review Committee, agreement on a process for nominating new members and, as appropriate, to note the outcome of the second meeting of the Committee;

(g) Election of the Bureau for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in accordance with rule 22 of the rules of procedure;

(h) A commitment to continue to fund the operation of the Rotterdam Convention, a decision on the currency of the accounts and budget of the Convention, and adoption of the programme of work and the budget for 2007–2008.

11. I look forward to working with you in ensuring a successful outcome from this third meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
