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**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed
Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous
Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
Chemical Review Committee
First meeting
Geneva, 11–18 February 2005**

Scenario note for the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee

Note by the secretariat

1. The Secretariat has prepared the present scenario note for the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee to assist participants in their preparations. The first set of documents for this meeting was sent to all Committee members in December 2004 and, on request, to interested observers. They are also available on the Rotterdam Convention web site (www.pic.int).
2. In view of the lengthy agenda, the meeting will be opened on Friday, 11 February 2005. The current proposal is for the first two days (Friday and Saturday) to focus on establishing the procedural and operational framework for the Committee, where possible building on the accomplishments of the interim Chemical Review Committee that operated under the interim prior informed consent (PIC) procedure. No formal meetings are anticipated for Sunday, which will provide participants with an opportunity further to review supporting documentation for the candidate chemicals submitted under article 5 of the Convention. The meeting will reconvene on Monday, 14 February, and run through to Friday, 18 February. The focus of the work of the Committee during this full week will be to review the notifications for candidate chemicals against the criteria in Annex II to the Convention.
3. Given that there are 14 chemicals to be considered, including a large volume of supporting documentation, the Committee may wish to develop criteria for setting priorities for their review at the present meeting.

A. General objectives of the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee

4. The overall goals of this first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee include: ensuring a common baseline of understanding among Committee members of the operation of the PIC procedure and the role and responsibilities of the Committee under the Convention; a

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consideration of the working procedures and guidance developed during the interim PIC procedure; and a review of the notifications of final regulatory actions submitted under article 5 and the supporting documentation for 14 candidate chemicals submitted in line with the requirements of the Convention. The Committee will need to elect a bureau with a representative from each of the five United Nations regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Europe and other States, and Central and Eastern Europe), and from that bureau a chair of the committee and a rapporteur.

5. As part of the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee, it is proposed that the technical work will begin with a presentation by the secretariat on the key operational elements of the Rotterdam Convention, in particular the PIC procedure, the role and purpose of decision guidance documents and the role and mandate of the Chemical Review Committee. This will include an open discussion by members of the Committee and an opportunity for questions and answers. The goal of this introductory presentation is to help ensure a common baseline of understanding among Committee members prior to embarking on a detailed consideration of operational procedures of the Committee and reviewing candidate chemicals.

6. In order to build on the substantial experience gained by the interim Chemical Review Committee, the Conference of the Parties has forwarded the working procedures and guidance developed during the implementation of the interim PIC procedure to the Chemical Review Committee for consideration and possible adoption at its first meeting. The documentation represents the results of the practical experience gained by the interim Chemical Review Committee in reviewing candidate chemicals. For example, the working papers on the development of decision guidance documents were seen as one means of promoting consistency and transparency in the work of the Committee. It is proposed that the Committee will spend time during the first two days reviewing the working papers. This will both help members familiarize themselves with the processes established during the interim PIC procedure, and allow the Committee to determine whether or not it wishes to adopt these policies and procedures for its future work. It may also serve as useful preparation for the review of the 14 candidate chemicals.

7. The following are some of the principal issues to consider:

(a) In reviewing the working procedures and guidance, the Committee may wish initially to focus on the process for considering the inclusion of chemicals in Annex III and developing draft decision guidance documents, as this is common to both banned and severely restricted chemicals (article 5 of the Convention) and severely hazardous pesticide formulations (article 6 of the Convention);

(b) The documents relevant to severely hazardous pesticide formulations and common and recognized patterns of use of severely hazardous pesticide formulations and the working paper on the preparation of internal proposals and decision guidance documents for severely hazardous pesticide formulations might be considered together;

(c) Similarly, the documents concerned with banned and severely restricted chemicals might be considered together. This could begin with the more detailed technical issues, including determination of ongoing trade in chemicals, use of bridging information and the preparation and use of focused summaries. The last item considered could be the working paper for the preparation of internal proposals and decision guidance documents for banned and severely restricted chemicals as preparation for the evaluation of the candidate chemicals;

(d) In the case of policy guidance, for topics such as contaminants the Committee may wish to note the existence of the information but postpone more detailed consideration until such time as a candidate chemical with such issues is identified.

8. In view of the large number of chemicals scheduled for review by the Committee, it will be important for Committee members to familiarize themselves with the notifications and supporting documentation prior to the meeting. In undertaking its review of the 14 candidate compounds, the Committee may wish to undertake a preliminary assessment of the notifications and supporting documentation in smaller working groups. It may be appropriate for experts from regions where Parties which have submitted the notifications are located to take a lead role in these working groups. A preliminary assessment could be presented to the Committee as the basis for further review and comparison with the relevant criteria in the Convention (Annex II). The Committee would then decide whether or not to recommend to the Conference of the Parties

the inclusion of any or all of these chemicals in Annex III to the Convention and prepare rationales in support of such recommendations.

9. It is anticipated, based on the practices established by the interim Chemical Review Committee, that the Committee will need to establish drafting groups to prepare decision guidance documents intersessionally. Accordingly, Committee members should come to the meeting prepared to indicate their availability to take an active role in these groups.

B. Possible outcomes of the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee

10. The following is a list of possible outcomes of the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee:

- (a) Election of the Bureau for the Chemical Review Committee, including the Rapporteur and the Chair;
 - (b) Review and adoption of operational procedures and working papers as a basis for the operation of the Committee;
 - (c) Recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on whether or not to include any or all of the 14 candidate chemicals in Annex III to the Convention. For chemicals that are recommended for inclusion in Annex III, adoption of a rationale based on the relevant criteria in the Convention (Annex II);
 - (d) If agreed, establishment of drafting groups and a work plan for the development of draft internal proposals for decision guidance documents for chemicals recommended for inclusion in Annex III.
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