

RESUMED SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF 1999

1999/65. Reconfiguration of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods into a 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 resolution 1995/6 of 19 July 1995 on the role of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in the development of a harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals for implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development contained in chapter 19 of Agenda 21,¹²⁵

Recalling also section B of its resolution 1997/3 of 18 July 1997 whereby global harmonization of systems of classification and labelling of chemicals, *inter alia*, was given priority in the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 1997–1998,

Noting with satisfaction that the Committee, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, has completed the elaboration of proposals for classification criteria for physical hazards,¹⁷⁹ except for the flammability of aerosols, on which work will continue into the next biennium,

Aware that the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, as focal point for health hazards and hazards to the environment, has also completed most of its tasks with respect to the classification criteria and has established a working group for criteria on mixtures, and that the International Labour Organization has established a working group for harmonization of chemical hazard communication systems,

Aware also that the Committee, the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, as focal points designated by the Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, are expected to make available, through their cooperative efforts, by the year 2000, a globally harmonized hazard classification and compatible labelling system, including material safety data sheets and easily understandable symbols, in accordance with the objectives of paragraph 19.27 of chapter 19 of Agenda 21,

Noting that the Coordinating Group has prepared proposals for the implementation of the globally harmonized system,¹⁸⁸ consisting in reconfiguring the present Committee and extending its mandate to cover not only transport of dangerous goods but also implementation and updating of the globally harmonized system,

Noting also that those proposals were endorsed by the Inter-sessional Group of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety at its third meeting, held at Yokohama, Japan,

from 1 to 4 December 1998, at which it requested that the Coordinating Group develop draft terms of reference, in cooperation with the Committee,

Noting further that the Committee agreed to the proposals of the Coordinating Group, subject to certain conditions,¹⁸⁹ and that draft terms of reference have been developed, accordingly, by the Group,

Recognizing that reconfiguring the Committee in accordance with those proposals would be the most cost-effective and efficient option¹⁹⁰ for the implementation of the globally harmonized system, ensuring at the same time cooperation between various authorities and organizations concerned with the sound management of chemicals, harmonization between various regulatory systems and facilitation of trade,

1. *Decides* to reconfigure, as from 2001, the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and its Subcommittee into a Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, with one Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and a second Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, with terms of reference and arrangements as described in the annex to the present resolution, and provided that the total meeting time does not exceed that currently allocated to the work of the Committee in a biennium;

2. *Invites* the reconfigured Committee and the Subcommittee on the Globally Harmonized System to endeavour, whenever possible, to work on a consensus basis;

3. *Invites* Member States interested in participating in the Subcommittee on the Globally Harmonized System to apply for membership at the latest by the end of 2000 so that the composition of the Subcommittee and of the reconfigured Committee may be decided at the organizational session for 2001 of the Council;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide, no later than 1 January 2001, adequate resources to the Transport Division of the Economic Commission for Europe and plan sessions of the Subcommittees and the reconfigured Committee for 2001 and 2002, as appropriate, in accordance with the arrangements outlined in the annex to the present resolution.

*48th plenary meeting
26 October 1999*

¹⁸⁸ See ST/SG/AC.10/1998/51.

¹⁸⁹ See E/1999/43, para. 21.

¹⁹⁰ See ST/SG/AC.10/1998/51, annex, for the various institutional options envisaged.

ANNEX

Draft terms of reference and working arrangements for the biennium 2001–2002 of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

1. DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

The Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals shall deal with strategic issues rather than technical issues. It is not envisaged that it will review, change or revisit technical recommendations of the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. Accordingly, its main functions shall be:

(a) To approve the programmes of work for the Subcommittees in the light of available resources;

(b) To coordinate strategic and policy directions in areas of shared interest and overlap;

(c) To give formal endorsement to the recommendations of the Subcommittees and provide the mechanism for channelling them to the Economic and Social Council;

(d) To facilitate and coordinate the smooth running of the Subcommittees.

1.2 *Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*

The functions of the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals shall be:

(a) To act as custodian of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, managing and giving direction to the harmonization process;

(b) To keep the system up to date, as necessary, considering the need to introduce changes to ensure its continued relevance and practical utility, and determining the need for and timing of the updating of technical criteria, while working with existing bodies, as appropriate;

(c) To promote understanding and use of the system and encourage feedback;

(d) To make the system available for worldwide use and application;

(e) To make guidance available on the application of the system and on the interpretation and use of technical criteria to support consistency of application;

(f) To prepare programmes of work and submit recommendations to the Committee.

1.3 *Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods*

The Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods replaces the existing Committee and its Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods with the same terms of reference.¹⁹¹

2. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BIENNIUM 2001–2002

The total number of meeting days shall not exceed that currently allocated to the Committee and its Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, namely, thirty-eight, with a maximum of three days for the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and ten days for the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (to be arranged by the secretariat after consultation with the Committee and the Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals).