

ECOSOC Resolution 2007/6

Work of the 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 resolutions 1999/65 of 26 October 1999 and 2005/53 of 27 July 2005,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals ¹ during the biennium 2005-2006,

A. Work of the Committee regarding the transport of dangerous goods

Recognizing the importance of the work of the Committee for the harmonization of codes and regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods,

Bearing in mind the need to maintain safety standards at all times and to facilitate trade, as well as the importance of this to the various organizations responsible for modal regulations, while meeting the growing concern for the protection of life, property and the environment through the safe and secure transport of dangerous goods,

Noting the ever-increasing volume of dangerous goods being introduced into worldwide commerce, and the rapid expansion of technology and innovation,

Recalling that the major international instruments governing the transport of dangerous goods by the various modes of transport and many national regulations are now better harmonized with the Model Regulations annexed to the Committee's recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, but that the uneven progress in the updating of national inland transport legislation in some countries of the world remains, inter alia, a reason for regulatory disharmony at the worldwide level and represents a serious legislative obstacle to international multimodal transport,

Aware of activities initiated by the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to address the problems caused by the denial of shipments of radioactive material, including the creation of a senior-level steering committee including representatives of international organizations,²

Sharing the concern of the International Atomic Energy Agency at the negative consequences of these denials and related transport delays which render radioactive isotopes useless for their intended

¹ E/2007/53.

² International Atomic Energy General Conference resolution CG(50)RES/10, part B, para. 13.

application, such as medical diagnosis, therapy, industrial applications, production of nuclear power and research,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals with respect to matters relating to the transport of dangerous goods, including their security in transport;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the new and amended recommendations³ on the transport of dangerous goods to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned;

(b) To publish the fifteenth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations*⁴ and the amendments to the fourth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria*⁵ in all the official languages of the United Nations, in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2007;

(c) To make those publications available on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe,⁶ which provides secretariat services to the Committee, and to make them available also on CD-ROM;

3. *Invites* all Governments, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the other concerned international organizations to transmit to the secretariat of the Committee their views on the Committee's work, together with any comments that they may wish to make on the amended recommendations;

4. *Invites* all interested Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the international organizations concerned to take into account the recommendations of the Committee when developing or updating appropriate codes and regulations;

5. *Requests* the Committee to study, in consultation with the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental organizations concerned, the possibilities of improving the implementation of the Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in all countries for the purposes of ensuring a high level of safety and eliminating technical barriers to international trade, including through the further harmonization of international agreements or conventions governing the international transport of dangerous goods, or a possible joint approach to the development of an effective international instrument on multimodal international transport of dangerous goods, as appropriate;

³ ST/SG/AC.10/34/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, and Add.2.

⁴ ST/SG/AC.10/1/Rev.15.

⁵ ST/SG/AC.10/11/Rev.4/Amend.2.

⁶ www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm.

6. *Invites* United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations concerned with transport of dangerous goods safety or transport facilitation, or by the negative impact of denials of shipments of radioactive material, as well as non-governmental organizations representing transport associations, to take action, as deemed appropriate, to facilitate the transport and quick delivery of such material and to enhance their cooperation in this respect with the International Atomic Energy Agency;

B. Work of the Committee regarding the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Bearing in mind that in paragraph 23 (c) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)⁷ countries were encouraged to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008,

Bearing in mind also that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/253 of 20 December 2002, endorsed the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and requested the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Plan relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 by strengthening system-wide coordination,

Noting with satisfaction:

(a) That all United Nations programmes and specialized agencies concerned with chemical safety in the field of transport or of the environment, in particular the Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, have taken appropriate steps to amend or are considering amending their legal instruments in order to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals by the 2008 target date or as soon as possible;

(b) That the International Labour Office and the World Health Organization are also taking appropriate steps to adapt their existing chemical safety recommendations, codes and guidelines to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, in particular in the areas of occupational health and safety, pesticide management and the prevention and treatment of poisoning;

(c) That Member States participating in the activities of the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, as well as the European Commission, are actively preparing revisions of national or regional legislation applicable to chemicals for implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

⁷ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

(d) That several United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, Governments, the European Commission and non-governmental organizations representing the chemical industry, have organized or contributed to multiple workshops, seminars and other capacity-building activities at the international, regional, subregional and national levels in order to raise administration, health sector and industry awareness and to prepare for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

Aware that effective implementation by 2008 will require further cooperation between the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the international bodies concerned, continued efforts by the Governments of the Member States, cooperation with the industry and other stakeholders, and significant support for capacity-building activities in countries with economies in transition and developing countries,

Recalling the particular significance of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research/International Labour Organization/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Global Partnership for Capacity-Building to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals for building capacities at all levels,

1. *Commends* the Secretary-General for the publication of the first revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)* in the six official languages of the United Nations, in book form⁸ and on CD-ROM,⁹ and its availability together with related informational material on the website of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe;¹⁰

2. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to the Committee, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned for their fruitful cooperation and their commitment to the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the amendments¹¹ to the first revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned;

⁸ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.E.13 and corrigenda.

⁹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.05.VIII.3.

¹⁰ www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm.

¹¹ ST/SG/AC.10/34/Add.3 and Add.3/Corr.1.

(b) To publish the second revised edition¹² of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* in all the official languages of the United Nations in the most cost-effective manner no later than the end of 2007 and to make it available on CD-ROM and on the website of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe,¹³ which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

4. *Invites* Governments that have not yet done so to take the necessary steps, through appropriate national procedures and/or legislation, to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible, with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008;

5. *Reiterates its invitation* to the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, the specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to promote the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and, where relevant, to amend their respective legal international instruments addressing transport safety, workplace safety, consumer protection or the protection of the environment so as to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals through such instruments;

6. *Invites* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, the specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to provide feedback on implementation to the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;¹⁴

7. *Encourages* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in particular those representing industry, to strengthen their support of the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals by providing financial contributions and/or technical assistance for capacity-building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

C. Programme of work of the Committee

Taking note of the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 2007-2008 as contained in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁵

Noting the relatively poor level of participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the

¹² ST/SG/AC.10/30/Rev.2.

¹³ www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm.

¹⁴ Information on implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals by country and through international legal instruments, recommendations, codes and guidelines is available on the Economic Commission for Europe website at www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html.

¹⁵ E/2007/53.

work of the Committee and the need to promote their wider participation in its work,

1. *Decides* to approve the programme of work of the Committee;

2. *Stresses* the importance of the participation of experts from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee and, in that regard, calls for voluntary contributions to facilitate their participation, including through support for travel and daily subsistence, and invites Member States and international organizations in a position to do so to contribute;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council in 2009 on the implementation of the present resolution, the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

*40th plenary meeting
23 July 2007*