

## **Joint meeting of the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, Geneva, Switzerland, 13-14 December 2012**

### **1. Opening of the meeting**

1. The bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) met jointly on Thursday, 13 December 2012 and Friday, 14 December 2012 at the International Environment House, Geneva. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present meeting report.

2. Ms. Magdalena Balicka (Poland), President of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, opened the meeting at 9:10 am and welcomed the participants. She recalled that at their first joint meeting in March 2011, the bureaux had decided to rotate the chairmanship of joint bureaux meetings among the Presidents in alphabetical order, starting with the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention. The present second joint bureaux meeting would thus be chaired by President of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention.

3. Mr. Jim Willis, Executive Secretary of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, welcomed the bureaux members to Geneva on behalf of the Secretariat and introduced the new Deputy Executive Secretary, Ms. Kerstin Stendahl, who had taken up office on 9 November 2012.

### **2. Adoption of the agenda**

4. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda made available before the meeting and is included in annex II to the present report.

### **3. Matters for consideration or action by the extraordinary meeting of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

5. The bureaux had before them a document on key substantive issues for discussion by the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

#### **(i) Review arrangements**

6. The Secretariat explained that as per the decisions on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions taken by the conferences of the parties in 2011<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter the “2011 synergies decisions”), two reports on the review of arrangements were currently under preparation: one by the evaluation offices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and one by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. These two reports were intended to support the evaluation by the extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties on how far the synergies arrangements, in particular on joint activities, joint managerial functions and joint services, have contributed to achieving the objectives of the synergies process. The response rate to a questionnaire, which constituted the basis of the Secretariat’s report, had been relatively low, with 23 parties submitting responses through the electronic system and two parties using different formats. All responses, as well as a graphic illustration of the responses to each question, were available on the synergies website<sup>2</sup>.

7. The bureaux took note of the information provided and expressed concern about the low response rate to the questionnaire. The bureaux also noted that the synergies arrangements had been in

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<sup>1</sup> Decision BC-10/29 taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, decision RC-5/12 taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and decision SC-5/27 taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

<sup>2</sup> <http://synergies.basel.int>, <http://synergies.pic.int>, <http://synergies.pops.int>

place for a relatively short period of time and felt that there might be value in evaluating the implementation of the synergies arrangements in subsequent years.

## **(ii) Proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

8. The Executive Secretary recalled that as requested by the 2011 synergies decisions, his proposal for the restructuring of the secretariats was sent to the bureaux in December 2011 and subsequently to all parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The restructuring implied a shift from a programmatic structure to a matrix structure with an immediate office and four branches serving all three conventions equally. It had been put into effect as of 18 February 2012. Acting branch chiefs were currently heading the four branches on administrative services, conventions operations, scientific support and technical assistance, awaiting recruitment of these management positions. Ms. Kerstin Stendahl had been appointed Deputy Executive Secretary. All management positions should be filled by the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties.

9. As per decisions BC.Ex-1/1, RC.Ex-1/1 and SC.Ex-1/1 (hereinafter the “omnibus decisions”) taken at the first simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties in 2010 and the 2011 synergies decisions, the UNEP Executive Director, in consultation with the FAO Director-General and the Executive Secretary and taking into account the reports on the review of the synergies arrangements referred to in section VI of the 2011 synergies decisions, was to present a full proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention and the UNEP part of the Rotterdam Convention, for consideration by the conferences of the parties in 2013. The Executive Secretary indicated that the current draft of the proposal would reaffirm the existing structure and propose it for adoption by the conferences of the parties. The proposal would be cost-neutral in respect of the adopted operating budgets of the three conventions, including the Executive Secretary and the Deputy positions, due to the savings the synergies process had generated in the Secretariat operations. The Executive Secretary also noted that for the current biennium, savings on the order of \$2 million US had accrued in the general trust funds and the parties would thus need to decide at the 2013 meetings how to reallocate those resources presumably towards supporting the implementation of the conventions by parties.

10. Additionally, the Executive Secretary was preparing a document on sustainability of the Secretariat for consideration by the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties. The document would include a proposal for the conferences of the parties to endorse a number of management controls that supported transparency and accountability in the administration of the Secretariat. Mr. Willis also noted that he would reach obligatory retirement age before the 2015 meetings of the conferences of the parties. He would therefore suggest to the 2013 meetings to start the recruitment of his successor right after those meetings, using a similar process as for his recruitment.

11. In the ensuing discussion, the bureaux members expressed support for a smooth transition process for the recruitment of the next Executive Secretary. They also reiterated a request from the Expanded Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention for the Secretariat staff to use harmonized email addresses, as well as to have clear convention focal points in the Secretariat. Upon a question from a bureau member, the Executive Secretary explained that cost savings had been realized through administrative measures, including the departure of the two former executive secretaries, the reduction of floor space and the decrease in other administrative costs, through the elimination of redundant administrative costs such as rental of photocopying machines and printers. The bureaux reaffirmed that savings should not be made for the sake of savings, but that the funds should be redirected towards supporting parties in their efforts to implement the conventions. In the ensuing discussion, some bureaux members noted that the African region was underrepresented in the Secretariat, and there were gender equity issues, particularly at the higher levels. The Executive Secretary indicated that he shared the bureaux’ concern and that he was committed to addressing the issue. The selection of the branch chiefs referred to above provided a good opportunity to do so.

12. The bureaux took note of the information provided.

### **(iii) Joint activities for the biennium 2014–2015**

13. The bureaux agreed to take this item up together with agenda item 3 (iv).

### **(iv) Budget for joint activities and possible necessary amendments to the budget of the three conventions for the biennium 2014–2015**

14. The Secretariat explained that it had developed proposed programmes of work and budgets for the three conventions for 2014-2015 for consideration by the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties. The budgets would be presented in a single document, containing convention specific and joint activities and showing the allocation of funds from each trust fund for each activity. As requested by the conferences of the parties in 2011, three scenarios had been developed: one to maintain the operational budget at the 2012-2013 level in nominal terms, one to increase the operational budget from the 2012-2013 level by 5 per cent in nominal terms and the Executive Secretary's assessment of the required growth of the operational budget to financial all proposals before the conferences of the parties that had budgetary implications.

15. Through consolidating similar activities in the programmes of work, the number of activities had been reduced from 120 included in the approved budgets of the three conventions for the 2012-2013 biennium to 36 in the proposed budget for the 2014-2015 biennium. In the proposal the activities were grouped under 7 headings: conferences and meetings; technical assistance and capacity building; scientific and technical activities; knowledge and information management and outreach; overall management; legal and policy activities; and office maintenance and services. Through this approach and by implementing other recommendations made by the 2011 meetings of the conferences of the parties, translation costs had been reduced considerably. The documents would be made available on or before 28 January 2013, at least 90 days before the meetings of the conferences of the parties. The Executive Secretary added that the Secretariat would also prepare separate documents showing the individual budget of each convention.

16. In the ensuing discussion, the bureaux members noted that despite having one document showing all budgets jointly, each meeting of the conference of the parties would adopt its budget separately. Upon a question from a bureau member, the Executive Secretary clarified that exchange rate fluctuations had a considerable influence on staff costs and thus the overall costs of the operations of the Secretariat. However, since predicting such fluctuations is not possible, the Executive Secretary's proposal for consideration by the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties would be to maintain a reasonably well-stocked carry-over to allow the Secretariat make ends meet in case of an unfavourable exchange rate fluctuation.

17. The bureaux took note of the information provided.

### **(v) Outcome of the United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director's consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes**

18. The bureaux agreed to take this item up together with agenda item 5.

## **4. Organization of work of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions**

### Schedule of work

19. The bureaux had before them a document prepared by the Secretariat on two options for the tentative schedule of work of the ordinary and simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties in 2013.

20. Under both options, preparatory meetings, including regional and bureaux meetings, would be held on Saturday, 27 April 2013. All meetings of the conferences of the parties would open on Sunday,

28 April 2013. The extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties would then convene to deliberate briefly on the substantive items on their agenda. One or more contact groups could afterwards be set up to deal with the various synergies issues, including the budgets of the three conventions, in detail.

21. The first option furthermore foresaw that in the afternoon of Sunday, 28 April 2013, sequential sessions of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties would start, beginning with the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, followed by the Basel and the Rotterdam conventions. Each ordinary meeting would have approximately 3.5 days of plenary in which to meet. The last day of the two-week period would be for taking decisions on the items on the agenda of the extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties and, if needed, for adopting any outstanding decisions of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties. All meetings would formally close in the afternoon of the last day of the two-week period.

22. The second option had been developed by the Secretariat upon request by the Expanded Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention<sup>3</sup>. It provided for parallel sessions of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties on certain cross-cutting topics, i.e. technical assistance, compliance, national report and technical guidelines on POPs wastes. These parallel sessions would take place in the afternoon of Sunday, 28 April and throughout Monday, 29 April. Afterwards, joint or separate contact groups could be set up for these issues, as required. Every morning the contact groups could provide progress reports on their work. The remaining sessions of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties would be held sequentially.

23. Mr. Franz Perrez (Switzerland), President of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, then introduced a third option for organization of work he had prepared, which he called a fully parallel option. The beginning of the meetings was the same as under the second option, with sessions of the extraordinary, followed by simultaneous sessions of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties. However, after the simultaneous ordinary sessions, his proposal foresaw that the remaining ordinary sessions of the conferences of the parties would not be held sequentially as under the second option, but rotate every half day among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions meetings. The conferences of the parties would be fully flexible on when to schedule each session, as all participants, including technical experts, would participate during the whole two-week duration of the meetings.

24. In the ensuing discussion, the bureaux considered the advantages and disadvantages of the three options<sup>4</sup>. Most bureaux members expressed support for the second option, as it provided opportunities for cross-fertilization and synergistic approaches to topics discussed under two or three conventions. While the third option would have the advantage of providing full flexibility, it would make it necessary for all members of delegations to be present for the full two-week period since they would not know in advance when particular technical issues would be addressed. This would imply considerable time away from other duties, which would not be the case for scenarios 1 or 2. It was also noted that this option could be somewhat complex to follow for some delegations.

25. Some bureaux members were cautious about certain aspects of the second option, expressing in particular concern about discussing compliance matters during the simultaneous ordinary sessions. They noted that the individual decisions would need to be taken by the ordinary sessions of the conferences of the parties, as the starting points on this topic were very distinct among the three conventions, with the Basel Convention being the only convention among the three to already have such a mechanism. If there was a simultaneous discussion of the three ordinary conferences of the parties on the topic, some bureaux members stated that the Secretariat should prepare background documents to facilitate deliberations, outlining lessons learned and best practices that could be applied across the conventions.

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<sup>3</sup> The Expanded Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention considered different options for the organization of work at its meeting on 12-13 November 2012. Following discussions, the Expanded Bureau requested the Secretariat to elaborate sequential and parallel options for a schedule of the two weeks for discussion at the joint meeting of the bureaux.

<sup>4</sup> The three options discussed by the joint bureaux are available at <http://synergies.basel.int/Implementation/JointBureaux/JointmeetingofthebureauxDecember2012/MeetingDocuments/tabid/2979/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

26. Most bureaux members felt that it would be useful to take up compliance during the simultaneous ordinary sessions, as the parties to the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions could profit from the experience gained under the Basel Convention. The simultaneous ordinary sessions would only provide for a general discussion and sharing of best practices and lessons learned. It was understood that decisions were not anticipated during the simultaneous ordinary sessions except for the possible establishment of a contact group for some of the issues. The mandate for any such contact group would be limited to preparing draft decisions for consideration by the respective ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties. The Secretariat ensured the bureaux members that the legal autonomy of the conventions would be fully respected by this approach to organizing the work of the simultaneous ordinary sessions.

27. The bureaux agreed to proceed with the second option and to entrust the finalization of the organization of work to the Presidents who would work with the Secretariat. The Presidents would take the concerns expressed by bureaux members into account when determining the details of the second option<sup>5</sup>. The Presidents reminded the bureaux members that the document on organization of work would be a living document and changes could be made during the meetings by the bureaux of the conferences of the parties on a daily basis. The Presidents and the Secretariat would also look into developing background material to guide discussions during the simultaneous ordinary sessions.

28. Although having the sessions of the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions close to each other would also have certain merits, the bureaux agreed to maintain the proposed order of Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam, as proposed by the Expanded Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention<sup>6</sup>.

29. The bureaux noted that, when arranging their travel, delegates would need to take into account that decisions under the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties could still be taken until the last day of the meetings, as the meetings would only close formally on the last day<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, delegates should be aware that the order and timing of sessions might change, depending on decisions made by the bureaux of the conferences of the parties and on the time required for discussion. The bureaux agreed that the scheduling of meeting sessions should be flexible, e.g., if less time was required for one ordinary meeting than expected then the following ordinary meeting could start earlier than originally planned. It was noted that the absence of some experts would not necessarily preclude beginning one of the meetings of the conferences of the parties slightly outside the indicative schedule agreed to by the joint bureaux and that travel plans should be made accordingly. ..

#### Funding of participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition

30. The Secretariat informed the bureaux members that depending on the availability of funds, one representative per country per convention to which the country is a party, to a maximum of three representatives per country, for up to the full two-week duration of the meetings would be financed for parties eligible to receive assistance. The bureaux agreed that, for eligible Parties, funding for a minister to participate in the potential high-level segment should be in addition to these participants and that the high-level segment should not compromise parties' abilities to send experts to the meetings. The Executive Secretary ensured the bureaux that the Secretariat would make every effort to raise sufficient funds for the meetings, and that indications received by donors to date had been very positive.

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<sup>5</sup> This revised version of the second option is available at <http://synergies.pops.int/?tabid=2914> and will be made available as document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/2.

<sup>6</sup> The Expanded Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention agreed at its meeting on 12-13 November 2012 that they would prefer this order under the sequential option. Their rationale was that the Basel and Stockholm conventions had several technical issues in common and would benefit from holding their ordinary meetings back to back. In addition, having the sessions of one of the ordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions at the beginning of the two weeks and the other toward the end of the two weeks would allow delegations more time to try to reach agreement on the establishment of compliance mechanisms for both conventions. For more information, see document UNEP/SBC/BUREAU/11/1/5.

<sup>7</sup> As indicated later in the present report, the last day of the meetings would be Friday, 10 May 2012.

31. Several bureaux members requested that for those countries that provided a bureau member, funding for up to four participants in addition to the ministerial participant should be envisaged to ensure that there was funding for the bureaux members to attend the meetings. The Executive Secretary replied that nominating participants, including for financial support, was each country's prerogative and that countries needed to make sure that they nominated bureaux members for financial support.

#### Potential contact groups

32. The bureaux identified a number of potential contact groups for the meetings, based on the second option for the organization of work. The potential contact groups are listed in the revised version of the second option for the organization of work.

33. The Presidents invited the bureaux members to support the identification of potential co-chairs for those groups and to send any suggestions to them by email, with a copy to the Secretariat.

#### High-level segment

34. The Secretariat reported on the survey it had carried out on behalf of the Presidents of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. Out of 45 responses, 87% were in support of holding a high-level segment, while 11% were against it. The European Union indicated it was sceptical about a high-level segment. 67% of respondents preferred organizing the high-level segment towards the end of the two-week period. Different options for plenary sessions, ministerial round tables and speeches on a wide array of topics, linked to synergies, technical assistance, financial resources and regional delivery of the conventions were suggested.

35. The bureaux concurred that ensuring that the topic and working arrangements were attractive to ministers was crucial to stimulate their participation. For example, the high-level segment should be kept short (maximum two 3-hour sessions), involve ministers in solving any outstanding issues and allow them to interact with their peers and other high-level actors, such as the Executive Director of UNEP, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of chemical companies or heads of relevant intergovernmental organizations.

36. The bureaux members agreed that holding back-to-back meetings of the conferences of the parties together with extraordinary meetings of three conventions was a unique event and that organizing a high-level segment would be appropriate to highlight the importance of synergies among the three conventions. The high-level segment could help raise ministers' awareness to chemicals and wastes issues, build synergies among ministries at the national level and help include the topic in national development agendas. The theme of the high-level segment could focus on the synergies process and the implementation of the three conventions at the national level.

37. Mr. Perez proposed that the high-level segment be held in parallel to the ordinary and extraordinary meetings to avoid adding a day to the overall duration of the meetings on Thursday afternoon, 9 May and on Friday morning, 10 May. On the Thursday afternoon ministerial round tables could be organized. On the Friday morning the ministers could either give speeches or participate in plenary sessions and work to solve any outstanding issues. A ministerial dinner, hosted by Switzerland, could be organized on the 9 May. The bureaux agreed to this proposal.

38. The joint bureaux meeting agreed to set up a small group to help prepare for the high-level segment composed of the following bureau members present: Mr. Luis Vayas-Valdivieso (Ecuador), Mr. Mohammed Oglah Hussein Khashashneh (Jordan), Ms. Gladys Njeri Maina (Kenya), Ms. Tatjana Markov Milinković (temporary replacement for Mr. Aleksandar Vesić from Serbia who was unable to attend the meeting), Mr. Franz Perez (Switzerland) and Mr. James Mulolo (Zambia). The group would develop the arrangements and decide on the theme of the high-level segment with the support of the Secretariat. The bureaux agreed that the work would be carried out by electronic means, in accordance with the schedule set out in annex III to the present report. The outcome of the work would provide input into a document for the high level segment.

39. The bureaux requested that invitation letters for the high-level segment be sent to all relevant ministers, including ministers of foreign affairs, environment and agriculture. Additionally, the bureaux decided that the high-level segment did not need to be reflected on the agenda of the extraordinary

meeting of the conferences of the parties. With this change, the bureaux agreed on the provisional agenda for the extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties.

## **5. Update by UNEP on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes and sessions of the intergovernmental negotiation committee (INC) to prepare a globally binding instrument on Mercury**

40. Mr. Tim Kasten, head of the UNEP Chemicals Branch, provided an oral progress report on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes and the intergovernmental negotiation committee to prepare a globally binding instrument on mercury. On the consultative process, he mentioned that the Executive Director's proposal would be considered by the UNEP Governing Council at its 27<sup>th</sup> session in February 2013. The proposal would contain the so-called integrative approach covering three main elements:

- (a) Mainstreaming sound management of chemicals and wastes into national development planning;
- (b) Industry involvement, i.e. internalizing costs of sound management of chemicals and wastes;
- (c) External financing to provide new and additional resources through institutional strengthening, an integrated chemicals and wastes focal area under the Global Environment Facility and a special programme fund for chemicals and wastes.

41. Upon a question from a bureau member, Mr. Kasten added that a series of consultations with stakeholders have taken place over the last four years on financing options for chemicals and wastes, including specialized meetings and discussions at other international fora, such as the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. The document to be presented to the Governing Council constituted the Executive Director's proposal on this matter. The bureaux took note of the information provided and expressed their hope that the process would result in predictable and additional funding becoming available for the chemicals and wastes cluster.

42. On the intergovernmental negotiations to prepare a globally binding instrument on mercury, Mr. Kasten informed the bureaux that the fifth and last meeting of the international negotiation committee would take place in Geneva from 13 to 18 January 2013. The chair would propose a chair's text for consideration by the fifth meeting, building on the results of the fourth negotiation committee meeting and consultations with various stakeholders. The chair's text would contain some brackets and a certain number of options. The results of the fifth meeting would be presented to the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Governing Council (18-22 February 2013), who would then decide on calling for a Diplomatic Conference to adopt the convention and setting up an interim Secretariat until entry into force of the convention. The bureaux took note of the information provided.

43. The bureaux asked for information about the upcoming meeting held in the framework of the "consultative process on the challenges to and options for further enhancing cooperation and coordination in the chemicals and wastes cluster in the long term". Mr. Kasten informed the bureaux that the meeting was scheduled for early February 2013 with the venue not being determined yet. The bureaux expressed concern that scheduling the meeting at such a short notice at a very busy time of the year, without the documents related to the meeting being available in advance, would not allow them to work on the topic constructively. It was suggested that UNEP consider re-scheduling the meeting. Additionally, concern was raised whether this process would be country-driven, as was the process on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The Presidents asked Mr. Kasten to keep them informed of the meeting and its agenda. Mr. Kasten promised to consult with his colleagues preparing the meeting and convey the bureaux's views to them.

## **6. Communication and consultation with regions**

44. The Secretariat informed the bureaux members about the elections of officers and members of subsidiary bodies taking place at the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties. The Secretariat invited the bureaux to inform their constituencies about elections, to make sure that parties came prepared to nominate candidates. The Secretariat noted that parties who were in arrears of two years or

more with their assessed contributions were not eligible to become a member of any bureau of the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies, with the exception of least developed countries, small island developing countries or parties that have an agreement on and are respecting a schedule of payments of such arrears.

45. The bureaux took note of the information provided and requested the Secretariat to send the information on elections, as well as the chosen option of the organization of work, to the regional members on their behalf. The send-out should include information on the terms of reference for those members, where applicable.

46. Additionally, the bureaux asked the Secretariat to share a provisional list of participants of the 2013 meetings with them as soon as available, to allow them to get in contact with their counterparts from the regions that would attend the meetings.

## **7. Other matters**

47. The bureaux discussed one other matter, the invitation letters for the 2013 meetings of the conferences of the parties.

48. The Secretariat explained that the invitation letters would contain a model for credentials, which would allow parties to submit credentials for all meetings of the conventions, to which they were parties, in one document.

49. The Secretariat furthermore stated that the invitation letters would be sent to the ministries of foreign affairs, with a copy to all focal points under the conventions and the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva and to the FAO in Rome. Due to the extraordinary nature of the simultaneous and back-to-back meetings, the Secretariat was striving to obtain coordinated nominations for delegates from parties through the ministries of foreign affairs, in particular from those parties that applied for financial assistance. Since funds may be limited, parties needed to indicate the level of priority of each participant for whom assistance was requested.

50. Most bureaux members who expressed a view felt that the invitations should be sent to the official contact points<sup>8</sup> under the conventions, as these had been nominated with the purpose of performing administrative functions and all formal communications under the conventions. The official contact points should be in charge of nominating delegates for the meetings, as opposed to ministries of foreign affairs. In particular, it had to be made sure that the bureaux members were nominated and suggested for financial support.

51. Some bureaux members, however, pointed out that the ministries of foreign affairs were in charge of relations with international organizations and were thus the appropriate body to receive invitation letters, nominate delegates and suggest them for financial support. Additionally, the ministries of foreign affairs were usually the entities issuing credentials<sup>9</sup>, and it could thus make sense to have them also nominate the participants.

52. Following the discussion on the matter, the bureaux agreed that the secretariat should address the invitation to both the foreign ministries and the official contact points under the conventions and, to send the invitations as soon as possible, taking into account the need for countries to process their nominations before 28 January 2013<sup>10</sup>.

## **8. Closure of the meeting**

53. The meeting was declared closed at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, 14 December 2012.

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<sup>8</sup> So-called “focal points” under the Basel Convention and “official contact points” under the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

<sup>9</sup> Credentials can be issued by ministries of foreign affairs, heads of State or heads of Government. In the case of a regional economic integration organization, credentials must be issued by the competent authority of that organization.

<sup>10</sup> According to the financial rules under the conventions (decisions BC-10/28, RC-5/1 and SC-5/2, respectively), requests for financial assistance need to be made three months before the meetings.

## **Annex I**

### **List of participants**

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## **Annex II**

### **Joint meeting of the bureaux of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

**13 – 14 December 2012**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

#### **Agenda**

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Matters for consideration or action by the extraordinary meeting of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions:
  - (i) Review arrangements;
  - (ii) Proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
  - (iii) Joint activities for the biennium 2014–2015;
  - (iv) Budget for joint activities and possible necessary amendments to the budget of the three conventions for the biennium 2014–2015;
  - (v) Outcome of the United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director's consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.
4. Organization of work of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.
5. Update by UNEP on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes and sessions of the intergovernmental negotiation committee (INC) to prepare a globally binding instrument on Mercury.
6. Communication and consultation with regions.
7. Other matters.
8. Closure of the meeting.

## **Annex III**

### **High-level segment Information paper development process**

- 18 January: Secretariat to send out initial draft concept paper to small group
- 1 February: Deadline for small group comments
- 8 February: Secretariat to prepare second draft and share it with small group.
- 11-13 February: Teleconference of small group
- 15 February: Deadline for final small group comments
- 16- 20 February: Incorporation of final comments of small group
- 20 February: Secretariat to send third draft concept paper to all Bureaux members
- 28 February: Deadline for Bureaux members comments
- 1 March – 5 March: Finalization of concept paper by secretariat
- 5-11 March: Final review and clearance by COP presidents
- 12-18 March: Finalization by secretariat as information document
- 18 March: Distribution of information document and letter to registered ministers, HLS participants and focal points and posting on the website

### **Members of the small group**

Mr. Franz Xaver Perrez, Switzerland, Basel Convention President

Mr. James Mulolo, Zambia, Basel Convention Vice-President

Mr. Luís Vayas Valdivieso, Ecuador, Rotterdam Convention Vice-President

Mr. Mohammed Oglah Hussein Khashashneh, Jordan, Rotterdam Convention Vice-President

Ms. Gladys Njeri Maina, Kenya, Rotterdam Convention Vice-President

Ms. Tatjana Markov Milinković, Stockholm Convention, Vice-President (temporary replacement of Mr. Aleksandar Vesić)