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Interim Chemical Review Committee

Fifth session

Geneva, 2–6 February 2004

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Organizational matters:

Organization of work

**Scenario note for the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review
Committee**

Note by the secretariat

1. The secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Interim Chemical Review Committee, in annex to the present note, information for the fifth session of the Committee prepared by the Chair of the Committee, Mr. Reiner Arndt (Germany).

* UNEP/FAO/PIC/ICRC.5/1.

Annex

Scenario note for the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee

1. I have prepared the present scenario note for the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee to communicate my plans and general expectations to participants and assist them in preparing for the meeting. The documents for the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee were sent to all Committee members in December 2003 and, on request, to all interested observers. They are also available on the Rotterdam Convention website (www.pic.int).

A. General objectives of the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee

2. This meeting will consider decision guidance documents for all formulations of the pesticide parathion and two industrial chemicals, tetraethyl and tetramethyl lead, as well as five new chemicals submitted under Article 5 of the Convention, dimefox, endrin, endosulfan, mevinphos and vinclozolin.

3. This will be the last session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee. The practical experience gained during the interim PIC procedure has been invaluable in developing the operational processes necessary for the Committee to fulfil its responsibilities. I am optimistic that at least some of this work will be usefully considered by the Committee established under the Convention. For example the working papers on the development of decision guidance documents are one way in which we have tried to capture our experience while at the same time help to ensure consistency and transparency in our work.

4. The overall goals of this fifth session are to conclude the decision guidance documents developed by the intersessional drafting groups, review new chemicals to determine if they meet the requirements of the Convention and to respond to the requests of the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The following are some of the principal issues to consider:

(a) The Committee will review the outcome of the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in particular where the Committee has been asked to provide specific advice. This will include a further consideration of the report on inconsistencies within Annex III of the Convention and inconsistencies between Annex III and decision guidance documents, as well as guidance to the International Programme on Chemical Safety on the alternatives to chrysotile asbestos that might be the subject of their evaluation.

(b) The drafting groups have had an opportunity to use the working papers in the preparation of internal proposals and decision guidance documents for banned or severely restricted chemicals. The working paper has been amended to reflect the experience gained in the drafting groups. Similarly, the working paper on severely hazardous pesticide formulations has been revised as agreed at the fourth session of the Committee.

(c) The Committee will need to finalize the decision guidance documents on parathion, tetraethyl and tetramethyl lead and prepare recommendations for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

(d) In line with the process for drafting decision guidance documents approved at the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, intersessional task groups have undertaken a preliminary assessment of the submitted notifications and supporting documentation for five new chemicals, dimefox, endrin, endosulfan, mevinphos and vinclozolin. These preliminary assessments will be the basis for further review by the Committee and comparison with the relevant criteria in the Convention (Annex II). The Committee will then decide whether to recommend the inclusion of any or all of these chemicals in the PIC procedure.

B. Possible outcomes of the fifth session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee

5. The following is a list of the expectations that I have for possible outcomes of the meeting:

(a) Finalization of the decision guidance documents for parathion, tetraethyl and tetramethyl lead and recommendations to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, including a summary of the Interim Chemical Review Committee deliberations, a rationale based on the criteria listed in the Convention (Annex II), and a tabular summary of comments received under step 4 of the process for developing decision guidance documents, including how they were addressed;

- (b) A determination and recommendation as to which of the five new chemicals dimefox, endrin, endosulfan, mevinphos and vinclozolin meet the requirements of the Convention and merit inclusion in the PIC procedure;
 - (c) Revised working papers on preparing internal proposals and decision guidance documents for both banned and severely restricted chemicals and severely hazardous pesticide formulations;
 - (d) Clarification of the rationale for the recommendations from the fourth session of the Committee concerning inconsistencies within Annex III of the Convention and inconsistencies between Annex III and decision guidance documents;
 - (e) Guidance to the International Programme of Chemical Safety on the alternatives to chrysotile asbestos that may be the subject of their evaluation.
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