

Communication, outreach and engagement strategy for the Convention

Introduction

1. Since the early 1990s, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has focused on preventing industrial accidents — and especially their transboundary effects — in its region, which extends from Canada and the United States of America in the west to the Russian Federation in the east. In 1992, its work led to the adoption of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention), which was signed by 26 ECE member countries and the European Union and entered into force on 19 April 2000.

2. The Convention aims to protect human beings and the environment against industrial accidents by preventing them to the extent possible, reducing their frequency and severity and mitigating their effects. It provides a framework for enhancing the Parties' prevention and preparedness efforts with a focus on transboundary cooperation before, during and after an accident.

3. As of 2018, the Convention has 41 Parties in Western Europe, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It cooperates closely with the Parties and other United Nations Member States, industry, academics and other stakeholders through activities such as high-level and expert meetings (seminars and workshops), guidance development and capacity-building through its Assistance and Cooperation Programme.¹ The Convention's greatest achievements include:

(a) Facilitating industrial safety governance and horizontal and vertical coordination among government institutions;

(b) Promoting transboundary cooperation among neighbouring and riparian countries and beyond;

(c) Becoming a Centre of Excellence to provide guidance and facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among countries, stakeholders and partner organizations;

(d) Providing capacity-building and assistance to countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia through its Assistance and Cooperation Programme with a structured strategic approach that includes national assessments and action plans;

(e) Enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation between related policy domains such as environmental protection, civil protection, emergency situations, water resources management, land-use planning and disaster risk reduction (DRR); and

(f) Developing strategic partnerships (e.g. with the secretariats of other ECE multilateral environmental agreements, the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) and institutional linkages (e.g. with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk

¹ The long-term strategy for the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents until 2030 renamed the Assistance Programme, established in 2004, the "Assistance and Cooperation Programme" in view of the changes in its mission over time and of the guidance provided at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 3–5 December 2014).

Reduction 2015–2030 (Sendai Framework), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals) in order to promote and implement the Convention.

4. The focus now should be on continued and enhanced engagement of the Parties and Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries, through their national focal points, in implementing the strategy and raising awareness of the Convention, its strengths and achievements; ongoing cooperation with strategic partners in order to bring about synergies and avoid duplication of effort; and outreach to the relevant international organizations and other stakeholders in the fields of industrial safety, environmental assessment, land-use planning and DRR in order to increase the relevance and impact of the Convention.

5. At its ninth Meeting, the Conference of the Parties mandated the Bureau to develop a targeted communications strategy to facilitate ensuring robust and sustainable financing of the Convention's activities (ECE/CP.TEIA/32, para. 92). Pursuant to that request, the present communication, outreach and engagement strategy was prepared by a small group on communications within the Bureau, constituted for that purpose, in cooperation with the secretariat. Its long-term goals are to increase awareness of the Convention within the ECE region and beyond and to support implementation of the long-term strategy for the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents until 2030 (long-term strategy), with which it is aligned, and possibly beyond that date.

6. It is designed to be used by governments (including Parties, non-Parties and Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiaries), the secretariat of the Convention and those of other ECE treaties and United Nations bodies, industry, operators, business associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and other international organizations.

I. Purpose and key objectives of the strategy

7. The strategy provides an agreed set of messages and the tools, together with the actions required for their dissemination to a wide range of audiences.

8. Its overall purpose is to:

(a) Raise awareness of the Convention's relevance and of the tools for its implementation in accordance with the long-term strategy;

(b) Focus communication on priority constituencies while making best use of existing resources;

(c) Create a common understanding of the key messages to be communicated to the various stakeholder groups and constituencies;

(d) Set out key actions for implementing the strategy.

9. The following objectives have been identified for ongoing and future communication, outreach and engagement:

(a) Increase awareness of industrial safety obligations and of complementarities between the Convention and national legislation and European Union legislative approximation processes;

(b) Enhance communication about the Convention's tools (e.g. benchmarks, safety guidelines and good practices) in order to strengthen its implementation and promote industrial safety in the ECE region and beyond;

- (c) Emphasize the Convention's role as a centre of excellence and a platform for a community of shared technologies and knowledge;
- (d) Highlight linkages between the Convention and regional legislation or approaches (e.g. European Union legislation and the work of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety) and its added value as a bridge between the European Union and countries with economies in transition);
- (e) Present the Convention as a legal instrument with guidance materials that support implementation of the Sendai Framework and of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, thus helping countries to achieve sustainable development as part of the United Nations family;
- (f) Enhance outreach to related areas of policymaking, including chemical ("C") and explosives ("E") (as part of CBRN-E policies in some member countries) issues, civil and environmental protection, land-use planning, water resources management and accidental water pollution (e.g. the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction);
- (g) Draw attention to the Convention as an instrument of diplomacy (increasing trust between countries and promoting economic exchange, trade and investment) and to its role in preventing and resolving conflicts (through peacebuilding and peacekeeping) and fostering transboundary cooperation between countries, especially at the regional and subregional levels;
- (h) Enhance outreach to and awareness by industry, communities and the general public;
- (i) Share knowledge and experience from beyond the ECE region.

II. Key messages for strategic communication, outreach and engagement

10. In order to achieve the Convention's objectives and strengthen its role in fostering effective industrial accident prevention, its key elements and strengths must be strategically and effectively conveyed to various target audiences.

11. The overarching general message concerning the Convention is:

The ECE Industrial Accidents Convention aims to protect human beings and the environment against industrial accidents by preventing them to the extent possible, reducing their frequency and severity and mitigating their effects. It provides a sound legal framework and an active intergovernmental platform for the Parties' efforts to prevent industrial accidents from occurring and to enhance preparedness with a specific focus on transboundary cooperation.

12. Outlined below are an agreed set of key messages that should be communicated to, and broadly disseminated by, the target audiences:

- (a) Industrial accident prevention: The Convention aims to prevent such accidents, reduce their frequency and severity and mitigate their effects;
- (b) Preparedness and response: The Convention promotes rational, economic and efficient use of industrial accident preparedness and response measures, within and across borders, preparation of joint or harmonized contingency plans and accident notifications, and mutual assistance among Parties as needed;

(c) Transboundary cooperation: The Convention focuses on active transboundary cooperation between Parties before, during and after an industrial accident. It requires countries to identify hazards and evaluate and reduce risks within and across national borders by sharing information on industrial risks and agreeing on ways to mitigate their potential effects;

(d) Informing potentially affected Parties: The Convention requires that potentially affected Parties (i.e. neighbouring and riparian countries) be informed of hazardous activities that might have transboundary effects ;²

(e) Accident notification: The Industrial Accident Notification (IAN) system allows Parties to notify each other promptly in the event of an accident or imminent threat and to request and render mutual assistance;

(f) Health and environmental protection: The Convention protects current and future generations and the environment from the effects of industrial accidents;

(g) Scope: The Convention covers prevention, preparedness and response in the context of:

(i) Industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects;

(ii) Industrial accidents caused by natural disasters; and

(iii) International cooperation concerning mutual assistance, research and development and exchange of information or technology;

(h) Key activities: The Convention, through its subsidiary bodies and the secretariat assists and collaborates with Parties and relevant stakeholders in their efforts to implement the Convention by providing training (including seminars and guidance documents) and encouraging international cooperation through the exchange of information and good practices;

(i) Checklists, safety guidelines, examples of good practice and online training: These have been developed under the Convention and are available to the public;

(j) The Convention's Assistance and Cooperation Programme: The Programme enhances the capacity of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe to implement the Convention and requires them to prepare national self-assessments and action plans as part of the Programme's Strategic Approach);

(k) Assistance vs. enforcement: The Convention focuses primarily on helping countries to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents rather than enforcing compliance with their obligations. Its Working Group on Implementation advises and supports Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiaries in their efforts to improve industrial safety;

(l) The Convention as the first and only legally binding multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) on industrial accident prevention in a transboundary context: It provides a legal framework on transboundary cooperation and industrial safety and promotes industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response in a transboundary context. As such, it can inspire other regions to strengthen their countries' governance, legislation and transboundary cooperation;

(m) Public information and participation: Article 9 of the Convention provides that adequate information must be given to the public in the areas capable of being affected by an

² "Transboundary effects" means serious effects within the jurisdiction of a Party as a result of an industrial accident occurring within the jurisdiction of another Party, as defined in Article 1 of the Convention.

industrial accident arising out of a hazardous activity and that the public must be given an opportunity to participate in decision-making processes on industrial accident prevention and preparedness;

(n) The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: The Convention helps to prevent and reduce environmental pollution and to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development, thereby contributing to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achievement of its Sustainable Development Goals;³

(o) The Sendai Framework: The Convention supports implementation of the Framework across its four priority areas, particularly in relation to technological hazard management, by encouraging countries to identify hazards, set up governance mechanisms for regional cooperation to address transboundary risks, promote investments in preventive measures and ensure the preparation and regular updates of disaster preparedness and contingency planning strategies;

(p) Complementarities and linkages to other legislation and frameworks:

(i) The Convention supports countries' efforts to achieve the Goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework;

(ii) It also has strong linkages to other disciplines and policy areas, such as technological DRR, land-use planning and environmental assessment;

(iii) It helps countries to meet their obligations under other MEAs, such as the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA);

(iv) It promotes coordination with regional legislation and approaches (e.g. European Union legislation, such as the Seveso Directive, and the experiences exchanged through the CIS Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety);

(q) A centre of excellence: The Convention provides a platform for technology- and knowledge-sharing;

(r) An instrument of diplomacy: By fostering transboundary cooperation, the Convention increases trust between countries, and therefore economic exchange, trade and investment.

III. Target audiences

13. In order to maximize the impact of work under the Convention and in light of the resource limitations of governments, the secretariat and other stakeholders, there is a need to set priorities among communication efforts and to recognize that some target audiences can also serve as channels for the dissemination of information to others. Each of the following section describes one of these audiences and the key messages that should be communicated to it.

³ Of particular relevance are Goals 3 (Good health and well-being), 6 (Clean water and sanitation), 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), 12 (Responsible consumption and production), 13 (Climate action) and 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

A. Governments

14. Governments (Parties, non-Parties, including United Nations Member States beyond the ECE region, and particularly neighbouring countries, Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries; and donor countries) are the top-priority audience in terms of obligations and donations.

15. The authorities responsible for industrial safety and other related issues, such as environmental protection, environmental impact assessment, land-use planning and DRR, at the national, regional, city and local levels are key to successful implementation of the Convention.

16. When working with governments, it is important to highlight the Convention's relevance and usefulness to the country at the national and international levels.

1. Parties

17. This target audience includes national policymakers, regulators, practitioners and enforcers in the field of industrial safety, preparedness and response, and in related fields such as water resources management, environmental protection (specifically Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)) and land-use planning.

18. Communication with Parties should focus on:

(a) Enhancing implementation of the Convention's provisions and monitoring and reporting on its implementation;

(b) Encouraging countries to coordinate their policies and legislation with regional instruments (e.g. the Convention and the Seveso Directive);

(c) Fostering cooperation between experts in the field of industrial safety and those in related policy areas and formally coordinating their procedures;

(d) Enhancing institutional coordination and linkages between industrial safety policies and procedures and other relevant platforms (e.g. land-use planning, environmental protection (specifically EIA and SEA) and DRR);

(e) Raising awareness and coordinating with high-level decision-makers, such as federal government ministers and city mayors, on industrial safety procedures and other matters relevant to the Convention.

19. The Convention's focal points and competent authorities, in cooperation with other national counterparts, have an important role to play in facilitating the dissemination of information on the Convention at the national level, supporting its implementation and raising awareness of it with a view to accession or ratification. The Guidance on the role and tasks for focal points to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents,⁴ prepared under the auspices of the Convention's Working Group on Implementation, establishes their role in communication and awareness-raising.

20. As focal points and competent authorities often focus primarily on obligations related to implementation of the Convention and have limited resources for promotion and communication activities, the strategy and its key messages can help them to improve their outreach and advocacy. Furthermore, the 2017 brochure, "Cross-border concerns, shared

⁴ Available at: <https://www.unece.org/env/teia/contact.html>.

strategies: Why transboundary cooperation matters in preventing industrial accidents”,⁵ highlights the Convention’s approach, successes, products and key achievements and the video⁶ on the Industrial Accidents Convention stresses the importance of continued investment in preventing accidents and mitigating their transboundary effects.

21. Focal points and competent authorities also contribute to the Convention’s trust fund for implementation of the workplans agreed at the Conference of the Parties. Donors may contribute either regular resources for, among other things, core activities under the Convention or project-related resources to support the implementation of specific Assistance and Cooperation Programme activities. It is therefore important that they are involved in implementation of the Convention and preparation of its workplans and are aware of its achievements.

2. Non-Parties

22. Non-Parties are countries that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention. They include States in the ECE region that are not Parties to the Convention, some of which are Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries, and United Nations Member States beyond the ECE region.

23. This target audience is critical in expanding the Convention’s relevance and impact.

Non-Parties in the ECE region

24. Communication with non-Parties in the ECE region should focus on:

- (a) Encouraging them to accede and ratify the Convention by focusing on its strengths and the benefits of its implementation;
- (b) Raising awareness of the advantages of the Assistance and Cooperation Programme for non-Parties in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- (c) Addressing country- and subregion-specific needs identified in national action plans or at subregional workshops.

United Nations Member States beyond the ECE region, and particularly neighbouring countries

25. These States, and particularly neighbouring countries where industrial accidents might have transboundary effects on ECE member States or vice versa, should be made aware of work under the Convention.

26. Communication with United Nations Member States beyond the ECE region should focus on:

- (a) Highlighting the Convention as the only legal framework for industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response in a transboundary context and its ability to inspire other regions to strengthen national legislation and transboundary cooperation;
- (b) Explaining that the Convention’s tools, guidelines and good industry practices are available to all United Nations Member States;

⁵ Available at <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/publications/official-publications/2017/cross-border-concerns-shared-strategies/docs.html>.

⁶ Available at <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/videos.html>.

- (c) Emphasizing that accidents do not stop at borders and that transboundary cooperation is key to prevention and preparedness;
- (d) Encouraging involvement in the Convention's expert and knowledge networks;
- (e) Promoting the sharing of experiences and good practices under the Convention in order to achieve the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and to implement the Sendai Framework, particularly with regard to technological hazards.

3. Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries

27. The Assistance and Cooperation Programme, developed in order to build the capacity of countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe to implement the Convention, currently has 15 beneficiary countries. It is important to maintain their interest and engagement in the Programme.

28. Communication with Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries should focus on:

- (a) Enhancing industrial safety and implementation of the Convention in all beneficiary countries;
- (b) Emphasizing the need for further progress in meeting commitments under the Programme by, for example:
 - (i) Assessing needs and identifying priority actions;
 - (ii) Drafting assistance project proposals;
 - (iii) Increasing ownership of assistance activities;
 - (iv) Ensuring sustainable outcomes;
 - (v) Identifying synergies between the Programme and the assistance programmes and initiatives of other regional and international organizations;
- (c) Promoting linkages between the Convention and relevant European Union and other legislation in order to support implementation and ratification;
- (d) Strengthening linkages with capacity-building efforts in related policy areas (e.g. DRR strategies and action plans and national platforms under the Sendai Framework).

4. Donors

29. Fundraising is essential to the continued development of the Convention, and engagement with and outreach to donors (both countries and foundations) is crucial in that regard. The primary responsibility for fundraising lies with the Parties who adopt the Convention's biannual workplans and budgets, as reaffirmed by the sustainable financial mechanism adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (Stockholm, 14–16 November 2012). Other stakeholders are also encouraged to provide funding and the Parties are encouraged to reach out to them. The Bureau has a special responsibility to meet and correspond with representatives of stakeholders, raise awareness of the Convention and its Assistance and Cooperation Programme and explore possibilities for financial or in-kind contributions and other forms of cooperation, e.g. the coordination of joint efforts to strengthen industrial safety. The secretariat supports these efforts by sending official correspondence, preparing project proposals, responding to questions from donors and engaging in related exchanges.

30. It is critical to strengthen the engagement of the Parties and other interested countries by identifying countries to be approached and developing a customized donor strategy (e.g. for implementation by the Bureau).

31. Donors must be confident that activities are managed properly and produce the desired outcomes. Ensuring that information is readily available increases the likelihood of funding for future work. In the interests of transparency, the secretariat prepares regular reports on implementation of the Convention's workplans and posts on its website the agenda and minutes of meetings and the text of presentations delivered.

32. Communication with donors should focus on:

(a) Promoting the added value that the Convention provides and its linkages with other policy areas of donor interest (e.g. land-use planning, environmental protection, chemicals management, DRR, public information and participation);

(b) Emphasizing strong linkages with donor priorities in initial approaches and project proposals;

(c) Highlighting the desired outcomes and expected success of Convention activities that will enhance the donor's reputation.

B. Industry, operators and business associations

33. Ongoing efforts to ensure that operators take all necessary measures to ensure the safe performance of hazardous activities and the prevention of industrial accidents require effective communication with industry and business associations.

34. Communication with industry, operators and business associations should focus on:

(a) Increasing the involvement of industry associations in helping countries to implement the Convention;

(b) Promoting the distribution, use and development of the Convention's safety guidance and good industry practices;

(c) Encouraging the involvement of industry and operators in training, exercises and capacity-building.

C. International organizations and forums

35. The representatives of the Convention's Parties, in particular its focal points, office holders, and the secretariat will endeavour to make the Convention a driver of strategic partnership development. Its priority strategic partners include:

(a) The European Commission, including the Seveso expert group, the European Investment Bank and the Joint Research Centre's Major Accident Hazard Bureau;

(b) The CIS Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety;

(c) OECD;

(d) The United Nations Environment and the United Nations Environment /Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Joint Unit;

(e) The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction;

(f) International river basin commissions (including the International Commission for the Protection of the Oder (ICPO), the International Commission for the Protection of the

Danube River (ICPDR) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR));

(g) The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE);

(h) Other ECE Conventions, committees and programmes, including the Water Convention, the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA, the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS);

(i) The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and other United Nations regional commissions.

36. In 2011, ECE co-founded the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Industrial Accidents, which meets annually to discuss synergies among organizations, avoid overlapping and agree on common activities. The Convention's engagement in these inter-agency processes is an important means of sharing information on recent developments and providing input into global processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework (e.g. through the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction) and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

37. International forums may include any multilateral international organization or environmental decision-making process related to the environment and safety, such as the secretariats of treaties, United Nations institutions and other international organizations. These forums provide opportunities for governments, the secretariat and stakeholders to promote the work of the Convention at major international events.

38. Communication with international organizations and forums should focus on:

(a) Highlighting the relevance of industrial safety to numerous policy areas and the need to incorporate safety considerations into strategies, action plans and national or regional platforms, particularly with regard to land-use planning, environmental protection (specifically EIA and SEA), DRR and sustainable development;

(b) Promoting the Convention as a key instrument for achieving technological DRR with regard to industrial accident prevention and preparedness;

(c) Enhancing awareness of the Convention's contribution to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, which are addressed at seminars and meetings and in guidance documents and are integrated into the Convention's workplan and communication products.

D. The general public

39. Members of the public need to be aware that they have specific rights under the Convention, including the right to be informed and to participate in decision-making procedures relating to industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response.

40. When communicating with the public (at public forums and meetings, via social media or in other ways), it is important to keep the content relatively simple by using direct and everyday language, focusing on smaller parts of the bigger picture and making clear distinctions between the issues covered by the Convention.

41. Communication with the general public should focus on:

(a) Raising awareness that the Convention supports governments, industry and stakeholders in their efforts to protect human health and the environment;

- (b) Emphasizing that it contains provisions on public information and participation and its role in ensuring adequate prevention of and preparedness for industrial accidents;
- (c) Promoting its efforts to encourage industry safety authorities to cooperate with regard to industry and public preparedness;
- (d) Encouraging community involvement in the development of off-site contingency plans through cooperative dialogue with industry and other relevant authorities with a view to effective accident preparedness.

E. Non-governmental and civil society organizations

42. Non-governmental and civil society organizations play an important role in facilitating dialogue with local communities and citizens within and across borders. They also help governments to understand and meet their obligations and can shape attitudes and behaviour.

43. Communication with non-governmental and civil society organizations should focus on:

- (a) Encouraging them to engage with citizens, governments and the private sector (within and across borders) in dialogue on industrial safety and related matters such as DRR, land-use planning and environmental assessment;
- (b) Emphasizing that their active involvement is particularly important in ensuring the sustainability of projects and activities, sharing information and exchanging best practices;
- (c) Increasing awareness of the Convention and other ECE multilateral environmental agreements.

F. Academia

44. The education provided by academic institutions is an essential tool for good governance, informed decision-making and the promotion of multilateral agreements such as the Convention. Academics and other educators are a powerful force in building knowledge and influencing attitudes and are therefore an important audience.

45. Communication with academia should focus on:

- (a) Providing information and updates on the Convention's provisions and activities relating to research, development and the promotion of scientific and technological cooperation;
- (b) Raising awareness of the Parties' needs and seeking support for efforts to address them;
- (c) Encouraging academic institutions to incorporate the Convention into their curriculums, invite ECE experts to give guest lectures and offer special programmes on the Convention and industrial safety;
- (d) Referring academics and other educators to a standard online presentation on the Convention and industrial safety, which could be mentioned in or incorporated into university documents and papers.

IV. Communication, outreach and engagement methodologies and channels

46. A wide range of methodologies and channels can be used for communication, engagement and outreach. However, in light of the budget and resource limitations of governments, the secretariat and other stakeholders, the present strategy focuses on a few of the available options for communicating on matters related to the Convention.

A. Important events

47. Attendance at important events by office-holders, focal points, other representatives of Parties and non-Parties and the secretariat is crucial in raising awareness of the Convention to different audiences (e.g. technical experts, other organizations and countries beyond the region) and building relationships with strategic partners.

48. It is also important to involve these partners, country (both Party and non-Party) representatives, academics, local and international organizations, and the general public in activities under the Convention. Other regional economic commissions, environmental NGOs, private experts, international river commissions, the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, Zoi Environment Network and the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Programme can also help to raise awareness of its provisions.

49. The events and meetings of partner organizations with which the Convention should continue to engage include, among others:

- (a) Meetings organized under the auspices of the OECD Working Group on Chemical Accidents;
- (b) Meetings of the Seveso Expert Group and of the European Union Community of Users on Safe and Resilient Societies;
- (c) Meetings of the Environment and Emergencies Forum of the United Nations Environment/OCHA Joint Unit;
- (d) Annual meetings of the CIS Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety;
- (e) United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction global and regional platform and expert meetings;
- (f) Meetings and events organized by partner organizations and donors, e.g. the European Investment Bank;
- (g) Meetings of the relevant international river basin commissions;
- (h) The Loss Prevention Symposiums;
- (i) Other meetings involving academics and the research community.

50. Many of these meetings take place via webinars and other online discussion forums.

51. Side events can also be used to promote the Convention and its activities; however, ensuring their inclusion in the official meeting agendas often requires contacts within the host organization as there is usually strong competition for the available time slots. It may also be possible to set up stands and displays at major events.

B. Outreach through partners

52. Key opportunities for communication with countries outside the ECE region include:

(a) Outreach and awareness-raising beyond the ECE region through partners such as ESCAP and other United Nations regional commissions, as well as United Nations and international offices, agencies and organizations (e.g. the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, OECD, United Nations Environment and United Nations Environment/OCHA Joint Unit);

(b) Outreach through the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, jointly with the Water Convention, open for accession beyond the region and involving United Nations Member States broadly in its activities and events of other ECE MEAs open for accession to United Nations Member States outside the region;

(c) Ongoing communication with other communities through the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Industrial Accidents;

(d) Ongoing cooperation through the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

C. Written and electronic products (guidelines, brochures and similar materials)

53. Printed and electronic products such as publications, brochures and similar materials provide opportunities for disseminating information about work under the Convention, including ways to access and use its tools. The graphics and content should focus on the topic of the publication and, where possible, be updated in order to maintain their relevance.

54. The secretariat has issued a number of publications, brochures, postcards and other materials (printed and electronic) on the Convention and its key achievements in English, French and Russian. It is important to distribute and update them and to develop others as resources allow.

55. In particular, the following materials should be promoted:

(a) “*Cross-border concerns, shared strategies: Why transboundary cooperation matters in preventing industrial accidents*”. This brochure highlights the key provisions and achievements of the Convention and can be used for awareness-raising with focal points, stakeholders and Party and non-Party donors;

(b) “*Guidelines on safety and good industry practices*”.⁷ These provide guidance and awareness-raising for the technical community and can serve as a mechanism for outreach to industry, business associations and other organizations. These include, for example, Guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects, and Safety guidelines and good practices for tailing management facilities, pipelines and oil terminals;

(c) Postcards. Small (normally A5) postcards on the Convention’s linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals and DRR have been produced and additional ones on other topics, such as natural-hazard-triggered technological accidents (NATECHs), might be envisaged with a view to distribution at meetings and events;

⁷ Available at <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/envteiaguidelines/listing-of-guidelines.html>.

(d) “*Benchmarks for the implementation of the Convention*”.⁸ These can be used by Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary countries in preparing their national self-assessments, action plans and project proposals;

(e) Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents communication products. A brochure on the Group’s work on preventing accidental water pollution will be developed jointly with the secretariat of the Water Convention, and the lead countries. Other materials, including a postcard on the forthcoming safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water, are envisaged.

D. Innovative and interactive tools

56. A wide range of innovative and interactive tools for promoting the Convention are available and should be widely disseminated and updated in order to maintain their relevance:

(a) Videos on the Convention and industrial safety are available on the Convention’s webpage.⁹ The most recent video, entitled “The benefits of enhanced coordination and cooperation between land-use planning and industrial safety,” was launched at the Seminar on Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety (Mechelen, Belgium, 16–17 May 2018) and should continue to be widely disseminated to other United Nations bodies, international organizations, countries and the general public;

(b) Cartoons¹⁰ are an effective way of conveying a process or situation to the audience in a visual, user-friendly manner in order to make it more widely accessible to all interested stakeholders. They are particularly useful in communicating with audiences that are relatively unaware of the Convention, such as non-Parties and the general public;

(c) Online training helps to promote the Convention and the integration of industrial safety into other platforms and disciplines. Further education and training tools on the Convention — such as online training on legal obligations under the Convention and guidance on land-use planning and industrial safety — might be developed, subject to the availability of resources;

(d) Newsletters are an effective mechanism for informing and updating focal points and contacts on events, activities and other news and should be developed, subject to the availability of resources. Follow-up e-mails with updates on activities should also be sent;

(e) The web platforms of partners (e.g. the Environmental Emergencies Centre of the United Nations Environment/OCHA Joint Unit¹¹ and the European Commission’s Community of Users on Secure, Safe and Resilient Societies¹²) could be used to promote the Convention’s safety guidance and other materials and events;

(f) Social media plays an increasingly important role in communicating information on the Convention, especially to young people. Simplified messages and slogans can be disseminated to a broader public through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The secretariat and the Convention’s focal points should continue to post strategically on key dates, such as World Environment Day;

⁸ Available at: <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40233>.

⁹ Available at: <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/industrial-accidents/videos.html>.

¹⁰ Available at: <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36970>.

¹¹ Available at: <https://www.eecentre.org>.

¹² Available at: <https://www.securityresearch-cou.eu/node/1>.

(g) Consideration should be given to attending or recording messages promoting the Convention at events (e.g. TEDx talks).

V. Implementation of the strategy

57. The key messages, target audiences and communication, outreach and engagement methodologies and channels described above in sections 2, 3 and 4, respectively, should be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the following activities:

(a) Awareness-raising and exchange of information: Attending high-level meetings, and relevant conferences and seminars will provide opportunities for awareness-raising on the Convention and for the identification of links and synergies with a view to cooperation with partners. Involving senior decision makers in national governments will keep the Convention high on countries' policy agendas and ensure support for activities while outreach to related policy areas (e.g. DRR) will avoid duplication and ensure the efficiency of activities and projects;

(b) Capacity-building and the Assistance and Cooperation Programme: Capacity-building provided through the Assistance and Cooperation Programme will emphasize the added value of the Convention for beneficiary countries and highlight linkages with related policy areas and national efforts to reduce disaster risks under the Sendai Framework. Involving relevant organizations and other stakeholders active in their respective regions will expand outreach to additional beneficiaries and attract new resources;

(c) Transboundary exercises: Transboundary exercises facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation and allow countries and hazardous facility operators to communicate with each other, thus enabling efficient mutual assistance and coordinated action in the event of an emergency;

(d) Past accidents and lessons learned: Past accidents and lessons learned will inspire communication about the Convention's importance, particularly to audiences less familiar with it and to the general public, and will guide decisions on the involvement of countries and partner organizations in its activities;

(e) Communication with strategic partners: Strategic partnerships will be maintained and new ones sought in order to reach the Convention's long-term strategic goals and extend its outreach. Partners will be updated regularly on ongoing and planned activities in order to expand the scope of potential cooperation and avoid duplication;

(f) Targeted dialogue with potential donors: The Convention's focal points, in particular the members of its Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, will engage in targeted dialogue with potential donors, bearing in mind their priorities in terms of subject and geographical regions and highlighting the role of the Convention in supporting countries' efforts to implement the Sendai Framework and achieve the relevant Sustainable Development Goals;

(g) Cooperation with business associations and industry: The Convention will cooperate increasingly with business associations and industry by inviting their representations to attend events, contribute to the development of safety guidelines and good practices and engage in information-sharing;

(h) Promotion of flagship projects: The Convention's focal points, office holders and the secretariat will promote flagship projects, such as the Project on hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta (Danube Delta Project) and the Project on strengthening industrial safety in Central Asia, by publicizing their achievements and working with partners to plan future activities;

(i) Awareness-raising, promotion of the Convention's products and enhancement of its visibility. Subject to the availability of resources, the Convention will continue to promote its existing products and develop new ones, including:

- (i) Brochures;
 - (ii) Flyers;
 - (iii) Infographics;
 - (iv) Videos;
 - (v) Webinars;
 - (vi) Newsletters;
 - (vii) Celebration of international days;
 - (viii) Commemoration of the anniversaries of accidents;
 - (ix) Press releases and articles;
 - (x) Social media posts.
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