

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

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized  
System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals**

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**Thirty-second session**

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**Capacity building**

### **Activities of the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and UNITAR/ILO/OECD WSSD GHS Partnership**

**Transmitted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
(UNITAR)**

1. This document provides an update regarding activities under the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) GHS Partnership for the period July to December 2016.

#### **Country-based activities**

2. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund-supported GHS projects in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guatemala, Mexico and Uzbekistan have continued during the second half of 2016. UNITAR is serving as the international executing agency for these projects.

3. The project in Mexico has undertaken its final activities and is preparing final reports. Furthermore, additional training is taking place to enhance skills that could support implementation. Key outcomes so far of this project are a National GHS Implementation Strategy, increased coordination among sectors, awareness-raising and training of stakeholders, and agreement on next steps for GHS implementation.

4. In Guatemala, the final, national workshop took place in August 2016, with the presence of a UNITAR senior expert. Two governmental agreements have been drafted: one on the GHS, one on transport. Both of the agreements are awaiting approval by the Council of Ministers and will be the legal instruments upon which GHS implementation will be based. GHS is expected to enter into force two years after being approved for workplace and transport sectors (substances and mixtures at the same time). Final reporting is underway in order to close the project.

5. The project in Colombia has now finished activities and is looking to present the national GHS strategy in March 2017. Notably, the project was able to leverage domestic resources, related to accession to the OECD, to undertake related activities.

6. The project in Uzbekistan has initiated planning for the opening workshop and implementation of activities.

7. In addition, UNITAR is currently serving as the international executing agency for three broader QSP Trust Fund-supported projects with a GHS-related component

(preparation of national GHS situation and gaps' analyses, and support for GHS capacity building) in Burundi, Haiti, and Tunisia. An agreement is also under development with UNEP in order to commence activities in the Republic of Guinea.

### **Guidance, training, and resource materials**

8. The sixth edition of the GHS e-Learning course - "Classifying and Labelling Chemicals According to the UN GHS" – took place between 27 April and 10 July 2016. Eighteen participants took part, from the African, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern European, Latin American and Caribbean, and Western European and Others regions. Thirteen of the participants successfully completed the course. Participants represented government (3 participants), industry (11), international organisations (1), and academia and civil society (3).

9. The seventh edition of the GHS e-Learning course started 26 September 2016, running until 7 December 2016. Fifteen participants are taking the course, again across a range of stakeholders and sectors. Final results and information will be provided at the thirty-third session of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

10. The eighth edition of the GHS e-Learning course is already being prepared, and will run from 6 March to 17 May 2017. The course will be first advertised during December 2016, to as many stakeholders as possible.

11. During 2016, UNITAR has undertaken a translation of the GHS e-Learning course into Spanish. This translation will be verified by a Spanish-speaking senior expert in early 2017. Subsequently, a Spanish version of the e-learning course is expected to be available to participants from the middle of 2017. Additional languages will be considered in 2017, depending on resources.

12. As part of an EU-supported project to develop further, promote, and train on the IOMC Toolbox<sup>1</sup> for Decision Making in Chemicals Management, UNITAR, in collaboration with ILO, has developed a management scheme for implementing a classification and labelling system for chemicals. In addition, new updates to the toolbox have been published, including new toolkits on: the OECD Environmental Risk Assessment Toolkit, the UNIDO Chemical Leasing toolkit, and the FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit.

### **Other training**

13. On 17 – 28 October 2016, the Chemistry Faculty of the Universidad de la República, Uruguay, hosted four participants at a two-week training session on chemical safety. This programme was supported by UNITAR, the Government of Switzerland and the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). The main objective was to provide comprehensive safety training to a small group of practitioners from the region.

14. The programme included eight thematic units, with theory complemented by practical exercises, videos and activities (including a risk assessment in a laboratory of the Chemistry Faculty, observation of an emergency and evacuation plan at the Faculty, and a visit to the Akzo Nobel plant in Uruguay). The eight units were: Basic concepts;

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<sup>1</sup> The IOMC Toolbox is an internet-based tool that enables countries to identify the most relevant and efficient tools to address specific national problems in chemicals' management. Awareness-raising of the tool is undertaken on an ongoing basis by Participating Organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

Occupational safety; Chemical products; GHS; Emergencies; Management; Building security and safety; and Work culture.

15. UNITAR is open to working with all entities, including the Universidad de la República, in 2017 to support further training.

### **Acknowledgement of support**

16. UNITAR and the ILO would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland and the SAICM QSP Trust Fund for financial support to UNITAR/ILO Partnership activities, including the Partnership Secretariat and national GHS implementation projects. Other in-kind contributions, such as that from US OSHA, Health Canada, KemI, ECHA, EPA New Zealand, CIS Center, and UNECE are also kindly acknowledged as having contributed to the setup and ongoing support of the programme.

17. GHS capacity building activities organised by UNITAR and the ILO continue to be funded by extra-budgetary resources. UNITAR and the ILO welcome suggestions and proposals from the Sub-Committee of Experts regarding how to ensure sustainable funding to meet the continued demand for GHS capacity-building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

18. UNITAR will continue to update the Sub-Committee of Experts on these and other activities. UNITAR and the ILO continue to appreciate greatly the efforts of the UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme Advisory Group and the GHS Training Course Review Group for their time and expert inputs to our projects and activities.

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