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INTER-ORGANIZATION PROGRAMME FOR THE SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS	**ILO/HC6/00.15 30.11.2000**

Global Harmonization of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

6th Meeting of the ILO Working Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Hazard Communication
Rome, 30 October-2 November 2000

DRAFT RECORD

Opening, adoption of agenda and record of the sixth meeting

1. Dr. Benassai opened the meeting on behalf of the Director of the Agenzia Nazionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente. A list of participants is at Annex I.

2. Dr Pratt welcomed the new participants to the meeting; Mr. Frits Wybenga, USA Department of Transport and Vice-chairman of the UN CETDG; Mr Alan Roberts representing Hazardous Materials Advisory Council; Ms Elisabeth Fassold representing the European Chemicals Bureau; Mr Bill Lowe, Head of the Canadian Hazardous Materials Information Review Commission.

3. Dr Pratt introduced the agenda and outlined the meeting documents. She confirmed that there were no additional meeting papers to those which had been posted on the web-site. The secretariat had circulated the draft comprehensibility testing methodology but the detail of these would not be discussed at the meeting, rather the University of Cape Town would present an overview.

4. The revised record of the fourth meeting held in Washington, November 1999 (**IOMC/ILO/HC4/99.21)** was agreed. Following a request to elaborate the discussion of consumer product labelling based on the likelihood of injury, it was agreed to expand paragraph 39 of the record of the fifth meeting held in Geneva, 2000 (**IOMC/ILO/HC5/00.4)**

"(or for individuals to be exposed to a chemical in other products e.g. potential for sensitisation). *In addition, arguments against risk-based labelling concerned the label as the sole source of information for the consumer. A number of participants felt that consumers had the right to know about the hazard in order to be able to take necessary precautions when using the product and if possible to consider using a less hazardous product. In response IOE representatives indicated that existing guidance can be used to account for multiple exposures to a chemical in consumer products. In addition they referred to studies which demonstrated that consumers wanted to know whether or not a product would harm them. They believed consumers wanted information in a clear and concise form on the label in order that they can properly and safely use products. IOE undertook to further….."* (additional new text in italics).

There were no further issues and the agenda was adopted.

Presentation of the Step 2B Document 'Further towards harmonisation of hazard communication'.

5. Ms Wyeth presented the Step 2B document **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.2 – 00.4)**. She explained that the document incorporated nine focus papers which examined the key issues raised at the previous meeting and explored some approaches for the Working Group to consider further. As this was the

final meeting of the Step 2 process, she hoped that the meeting would make significant progress in developing the basis for a consensus to many of the issues allowing the detailed work of preparing the Step 3 document to begin. She elaborated the essential points arising from the document and focus papers on which the secretariat wished the working group to concentrate its discussion. Finally, she emphasised that this was a new stage of discussion. Previous meetings concerned with the Step 1 process had allowed the Working Group to exchange information and promote awareness of existing systems, whilst those concerned with the Step 2 process had identified numerous options for developing a harmonised system. The Working Group was now moving into the final Step 3 process and the final shape of the harmonised system would be based on the week's discussions. She thanked everyone who had contributed to the development of the Step 2B documents and wished participants a constructive meeting.

6. Dr Pratt drew participants' attention to the numerous issues that confronted the Working Group and reminded them of the progress that had been made thus far. There were no points arising from the presentation and the Working Group began its consideration of the Step 2B document.

Part A (IOMC/ILO/HC6.00.2)

Building Block Approach

7. Dr Pratt explained that the section of the document had been expanded following the last meeting and three new paragraphs had been developed to highlight the possible interpretation of the building block approach. During the discussion there emerged a broad consensus in favour of simplifying the discussion to application of the harmonised criteria and outlining the specific hazard classes/levels where some flexibility in approach may be given to the competent authority in the use of the harmonised labelling tools.

Target audiences

8. The Labour delegation asked for a revision to the paragraphs describing the information needs of workers to make reference to right-to-know. In addition they wished to see a reference to the needs of medical emergency personnel included in the description of information needs for emergency responders. Sweden indicated a similar concern in relation to consumers' right-to-know. The secretariat undertook to re-examine these paragraphs accordingly.

Comprehensibility

9. It was agreed to incorporate the following amendment to paragraph 26 concerning translation to reflect the experience of translating the North American Emergency Response Guidebook by adding:" *Similar experience has been gained in North America where the North American Emergency Response Guidebook which uses key phrases has been translated into three languages and is currently being translated into Russian and Chinese*."

Standardization

10. The revised paragraphs were accepted with the proviso that the reference to supplier was suitably amended to clarify that the paragraph referred to the person with responsibility for labelling the product.

Updating information

11. Dr Pratt drew participants' attention to Focus Paper 1 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.5)**. The Drafting Group had worked on defining what was meant by new and significant information to clarify the intention of the options for updating information. In addition the paper included new options for updating information to take account of previous recipients of information. She asked participants to

explore these new elements of the paper before considering whether the issue of updating should be referred to the guidance document or left to competent authorities. There was considerable discussion around the merits of the options and providing practical guidance to competent authorities. A broad consensus emerged in favour of elaborating advice in the guidance document but specifying in the Step 3 document that implementation of the GHS should also include arrangements for updating information to avoid the circulation of inaccurate information.

Confidential Business Information

12. Dr Pratt reported on the work of the CBI working party as contained in focus paper 2 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.6).** Considerable progress had been made by the working party which had drafted some principles in annex 2A of the paper for the disclosure of confidential information based on the ILO 1993 Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Chemicals at Work. She regretted that it had not been possible to reach consensus within the working party on the issues of the scope of classifications for which CBI could be claimed, the criteria which could be applied to claims and the role of the competent authority in verifying claims. Nevertheless the working party had considered approaches for these issues which it had developed into annex 2B of the paper to highlight detailed options for discussion by the Working Group. Dr Pratt indicated that options for considering the elaboration of guidance for competent authorities would also be considered as a possible means of reaching consensus on this difficult issue.

13. There was considerable diversity in the opinions expressed by participants. The Canadian government representative wished to see greater account of consumer labelling reflected in the principles elaborated in annex 2A. There was some concern raised that the principles did not make it clear that the issue of CBI related only to ingredient disclosure and not to hazard information. On this issue the question of the environment was raised and some participants wanted to ensure information about environmental hazards would be included in the principles for disclosure of information. Opinion was divided on the criteria for CBI and scope of classification for which CBI could be claimed. Some participants believed it was essential to make further progress towards harmonizing CBI arrangements in order that the same information would be available in all countries. Some participants were concerned that the complexity of trade secret law meant this was an issue which could not be resolved within the discussions on GHS. Dr Pratt thanked all participants for their clear statements on the issue of CBI. She noted that there was little consensus beyond the general principles outlined in annex 2A, but felt that it would be worth reconvening the working party to examine the issues raised during the discussion to see if further progress could be made on the approaches outlined in Annex 2B.

Working Definitions

14. Dr Pratt asked participants to indicate whether there were any concerns about the working definitions detailed at annex I of the document. Some concerns remained about the definition of common name which Dr Pratt undertook to consider following the discussion on the use of product identifiers. Following a request for clarification on the status of alloys, Dr Koeter confirmed that alloys would be considered mixtures within the definition developed by the OECD Mixtures Group. There was some concern voiced to ensure a consistent use of the terms hazard class and level, and not to use the term supplier when referring to the person with responsibility for preparing the label. The secretariat undertook to examine these issues.

Part B – Labelling (IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.3)

Symbols

15. Dr Pratt indicated that the symbol discussion would fall into four discrete parts: all issues concerning the allocation of symbols to the physical hazard classifications, all issues relating to the allocation of symbols to health hazards, all issues relating to the allocation of environmental hazards

and finally consideration of how to select the most appropriate symbol from the symbols currently in use.

i) Physical hazards

16. Ms Wyeth illustrated the options elaborated in paragraphs 53 – 57 for allocating symbols to the criteria for the harmonised physical hazard classes and levels using slides to demonstrate:

- which classifications would result in the use of a flame symbol;
- which would result in an exploding bomb symbol;
- which classifications would result in the use of a corrosivity symbol;
- which classifications required the Working Group to decide whether a flame or flame over circle symbol should be used; and
- where the working group needed to consider whether a symbol should be used at all.

She explained that the secretariat wished to test whether participants believed the use of a symbol for oxidising classifications was an area for simplification, particularly as the UN RTDG used both a discete colour and symbol to convey an oxidising hazard.

17. There was broad consensus amongst participants for the use of the flame symbols for flammable liquids, flammable gases, flammable solids, pyrophoric liquids and solids, self-reactive substances and substances, which in contact with water emit flammable gases. However, a number of participants expressed reservations about the necessity of using a symbol at all for flammable liquids hazard level 4. It was not a classification that was currently included in the UN RTDG although such a classification did demonstrate the product was ignitable. The Canadian government questioned whether the flame symbol should be allocated to flammable liquid hazard level 3 classification.

18. There was consensus in favour of using the exploding bomb for the explosive hazard class. A number of participants were not in favour of using the symbol for products meeting the criteria of Divisions 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 in the UN RTDG. In their view it was important that there was a graphical means of distinguishing between these less severe explosivity hazards and the more severe levels for which the exploding bomb symbol was currently used. The secretariat agreed to explore whether an exemption could be included for products falling into these categories.

19. The majority of participants were in favour of using a single symbol to communicate both metal corrosion and the health hazard classifications for skin and eye irritation. Some were cautious about the implications for UN RTDG which currently did not include labelling of products which were corrosive to eyes but nonetheless believed a single symbol for all corrosion classifications was the preferred approach.

20. There was considerable support expressed for the use of the flame over circle symbol to communicate the oxidising hazard. Whilst some participants recognised the concerns about comprehensibility of the symbol for consumers, they believed products with oxidising would be rarely on sale to the public. Furthermore, the information was important to emergency responders and workplace users and the use of the flame could lead to an inaccurate assessment of the appropriate precautionary action when chemicals with oxidising properties were present or used in workplaces.

ii) Health hazards

21. Ms Wyeth introduced focus paper 3 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.7A)** which detailed the eight approaches identified for the allocation of symbols to communicate health hazards, including those approaches which did not use a symbol to convey certain health hazards. She explained that the issue of health hazards was more complicated because there was greater variance in the use and meaning of health symbols within systems that existed for physical hazards. Rather than discussing the merits of the eight approaches therefore, the secretariat wished to consider whether it would be possible to gain

consensus on the allocation of the skull and crossbones to certain acute toxicity hazard levels. In addition whilst it might not be possible to develop a new symbol to convey chronic effects before the next working group meeting, this could be a longer term project for the new GHS committee to undertake. The remaining discussion points would therefore be:

- whether irritation hazard and acute toxicity level 5 should communicated through the use of a symbol or whether a signal word alone could be used;
- whether the eye and skin corrosion hazards should use a common symbol with metal corrosion;
- what interim arrangements for the use of symbols for chronic hazards may be required; and
- whether and what symbol would be appropriate to convey the sensitising hazard and acute toxicity level 4.

22. Participants confirmed they favoured use of a single corrosion symbol for eye, skin and metal corrosion hazards. In addition, there was broad consensus for using the skull and crossbones to convey the acute toxicity hazard for levels 1 – 3, although there was reservation expressed by some industry representatives about its use for acute toxicity level 3. There followed a lengthy discussion about the merits of using the skull and crossbones to convey other health hazards. Opinion was divided between those who wished to use it for certain chronic hazards, such as proven human carcinogens and those wishing to reserve its use for immediate and severe acute toxicity hazards. Some participants felt that the effects could be distinguished by the use of colour.

23. This led to a discussion about the use of a symbol to convey chronic effects, e.g TOST and CMR. There was support from a number of participants for the development of a new symbol to convey the meaning of such a hazard, although some expressed reservations about whether this could be accomplished. In the absence of such a symbol, some doubted whether a symbol should be used at all on comprehensibility grounds. A number of participants wished to continue the use of different symbols for chronic hazards to convey severity between hazard levels 1 and 2, whilst others favouring the use of a symbol did not believe it was necessary to distinguish between these levels in such a way. Those favouring the use of different symbols wished to continue to use the skull and crossbones for hazard level 1.

24. During the discussion of symbols to convey the respiratory and skin sensitising hazard, the idea was raised of using the skull and crossbones for respiratory sensitisers. Some participants believed skin sensitisation did not require the use of a symbol but others disagreed believing that the use of a symbol distinguished the severity of the hazard from irritation which was a reversible effect.

25. There was some support voiced for not using symbols for the irritation hazards and for acute toxicity hazard level 5. However, whilst some of these participants felt that the use of a blank frame with a coloured background containing an appropriate signal word would be required in such a situation, others felt it would not be necessary and may lead to confusion if the system continued to use signal words more generally. Other participants were in favour of maximising the use of symbols.

26. Dr Pratt summarised the discussion noting the clear majority of participants were in favour of using the skull and crossbones to convey acute toxicity hazard levels 1 – 3, whilst noting the concerns of some sections of industry. Further there seemed some consensus in favour of not using a symbol to convey acute toxicity hazard level 5. The secretariat would explore further the mechansim by which a new symbol could be developed for chronic hazards. In addition the secretariat would reflect on the points that had been made following discussion of the other label elements. It would ask the Drafting Group to consider how to progress the use or non-use of symbols for irritation, sensitisation and acute toxicity level 4 and an interim solution to the use of symbols for chronic hazards in the light of these discussions.

ii) Environmental hazards

27. Ms Wyeth illustrated how symbols would be allocated to the aquatic toxicity hazard classes and levels using the three approaches that had been identified in focus paper 3B **(IOMC/ILO/HC6.007B)**. Dr Pratt explained that there had been some discussion prior to the meeting to clarify the relationship between the acute and chronic classification criteria, and to take account of the bulk transport of products. She believed that adjustments might be needed to the grouping of hazard levels accordingly.

28. Participants involved with the transport of dangerous goods explained that the UN CETDG was currently considering the inclusion of acute aquatic toxicity hazard level 1 and chronic aquatic toxicity hazard levels 1 and 2. There was broad consensus for the use of an appropriate environmental symbol for these hazard levels. There was some discussion on whether acute aquatic toxicity hazard levels 2 and 3 require labelling in the GHS. Products meeting these criteria were currently labelled under the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code for storage purposes, but were not labelled for other transport purposes or for 'supply'. Some participants felt that there was concern about the effect of repeated emissions of products meeting these classification criteria in non- marine environments. The need for labelling for chronic aquatic toxicity hazard levels 3 and 4 was similarly discussed at length.

29. Dr Pratt in summarising noted that there was a consensus in favour of using a symbol to convey aquatic toxicity acute hazard level 1 and chronic levels 1 and 2. There appeared to be divided opinion on the merits of using a symbol for the remaining hazard levels, although she noted there was significant support voiced in favour of using a symbol to convey chronic toxicity levels 3 and 4. The secretariat would reflect on the discussion and ask the Drafting Group to consider further.

iv) Selection of a symbol set

30. Dr Pratt drew participants' attention to the table of symbols in paragraph 63 of the Step 2B document. The main issue was whether a standardised symbol should be selected from the choices available, or whether some flexibility in design could be accommodated. Additionally, there were some symbols which were quite different in appearance and she wished to have a preliminary indication of the most appropriate symbol to use in the GHS. At this stage she wished to put the general warning symbol aside pending further discussion of health hazard symbols.

31. There was some difference in opinion on the merits of standardisation. The Canadian government representative explained that the results of consumer comprehensibility testing on the skull and crossbones were at variance with the ANSI results. In addition whilst a dual symbol for metal, eye and skin corrosion was preferable, consumers in the same study had not ranked the dual corrosive symbol as highly as other corrosivity symbols. Many participants found the selection of the appropriate symbol for aquatic toxicity more complex. It was anticipated that further terrestrial environmental classifications would be incorporated in the GHS over time. A number of participants believed that a single symbol might be preferable for these rather than designing new symbols to convey specific classifications. However, it was recognised that IMO had a specific requirement in respect of the marine pollutant and this would require further consideration.

Signal words

32. Ms Wyeth introduced the discussion with a presentation of the approaches identified in Focus Paper 4 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6.00.8).** A number of participants had identified that signal words could be used to replace symbols for hazard classes/levels where the Working Group decided a symbol was not appropriate. This was an approach identified in the paper on which the secretariat wished to test opinion. For the approach of using signal words to convey severity, the paper identified suggested groupings of hazard classes/levels based on using two or three signal words. Ms Wyeth suggested that this approach could be combined with the idea of reserving a certain signal word for instances where a

symbol was not used as a gateway to the warning message. There was also the approach of whether a single signal word should be used, or whether signal words should be considered supplemental information to provide flexibility in their use. A final approach of linking the selection of signal words to individual symbols was also included for consideration.

33. The opinion of participants on the purpose and merit of signal words was mixed. A number of participants were concerned that the words could not be translated from English to convey a difference in severity. Those favouring the use of more than one signal word to convey severity believed they should be used with symbols as the label elements were read together to convey a specific meaning. In these cases the absence of a signal word could be taken to mean that the chemical presented a less severe hazard than was the case. Whilst a number of participants indicated support for the concept of using a signal word to replace a symbol for hazards such as irritancy, there were concerns voiced about the comprehensibility of using of a signal word within a symbol frame. In addition, some believed this would undermine the use of signal words to convey warnings about more severe hazards.

34. In summarising the discussion Dr Pratt believed the option of using two or three signal words to convey severity should be explored but further consideration of the impact of using these with or without symbols was required. She indicated that the Drafting Group would need to elaborate the issues raised during the discussion and examine the possible basis for a consensual resolution of the concerns on the use of signal words.

Product identifiers

35. Dr Pratt drew participants' attention to paragraphs 67 – 77 of the main document. This contained options for identification of the product in the case of both substances and mixtures, and for the identification of individual ingredients in the case of mixtures. The options in the document had been refined in the light of the previous discussion and she hoped that further progress could be made in identifying the basis for continued discussion.

i) Substances

36. The majority of participants spoke in favour of the option of using either chemical or common name. However, a number were concerned that the definition of common name currently included brand or trade names and felt these to be inappropriate identifiers for substances. The use of numerical codes to precisely identify substances was raised with participants believing these should be included as supplemental label information. Dr Pratt believed that the issue had been simplified to considering the role of trade and brand names in the identification of substances.

ii) mixtures

37. For identification of the product the majority of participants were in favour of option one in paragraph 73. This was to use the same identifier on the label and (M)SDS with the proviso that if it did not uniquely identify the mixture and its composition, more detailed information would be provided on the label for consumer use and/or (M)SDS for workplace use.

38. The merits of the options for ingredient declaration were discussed in some detail. There was some support for paragraph seventy-five outlining the flexibility which competent authorities could exercise on labels for products being supplied for exclusive use at a workplace, although further work was required to develop this further. Following discussion of the possible link with the concentration of an ingredient in the mixture, it was agreed that further discussion should consider this on the basis of actual concentration and not concentration range as elaborated in option three of paragraph 76. There was some support for listing all ingredients classified as hazardous but it was felt that this required further consideration on the implications. Dr Pratt summarised the discussion and believed

the Drafting Group could now make progress in identifying an approach which would resolve the outstanding concerns.

Hazard statements

39. Ms Wyeth introduced the approaches identified in focus paper 5 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.9)** by explaining how the standardisation mechanism had been used to identify candidate statements in the annexes. Dr Pratt asked participants to consider the extent to which standardised statements could be developed and the relationship between standardised statements and what might be considered as supplemental information. In response it was agreed that there should be further work to standardise the statements in annex I. The following points were noted in relation to their further development:

- consideration of hierarchy in the statements to reflect severity of hazard;
- consideration of whether the mixture was tested or untested;
- expectation of worker behaviour in response to the hazard statement;
- need to understand clearly the rationale behind the statements; and
- whether simpler statements could be developed with more detail in supplemental statements and what might appear on a primary label panel.

The Drafting Group would consider these points in taking the work on standardised hazard statements forward.

Precautionary statements

40. Ms Wyeth introduced the approaches identified in focus paper 6 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.10)** once again explaining how the standardisation mechanism had been applied to identify candidate statements. Unlike the exercise for hazard statements, it had not been possible to detail possible criteria for their allocation as the criteria for this was not as clear as that for the allocation of hazard statements. Dr Pratt asked participants to consider the extent to which statements should be standardised and criteria developed for their allocation. After discussion of the timetable available for the work, it was agreed that an attempt would be made to standardise the statements and consider harmonised criteria for their allocation, if the time available made this possible.

Colour

41. Dr Pratt referred participants to focus paper 7 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.11)** which identified the approaches for harmonising the use of colour in the GHS. There was considerable discussion on the use of colour in the hazard pictograms. Here opinion was divided on whether to develop a single set of pictograms which could be used by all target audiences, or whether hazard pictograms appearing on consumer/workplace labels should use different colour backgrounds to those used intransport. The availability of a suitable colour not already in use by transport was seen as a problem. Some participants did not wish to use different coloured backgrounds on consumer/workplace labels to those used in transport pictograms. However some of these believed the complexity of colour used on transport pictograms was problematic in this respect and wished to see some simplification of colour in order that a single set of hazard pictograms could be used by all target audiences. Other participants did not believe that the use of different colours in hazard pictograms for consumer/workplace labels would cause significant problems and believed it necessary only to state that colour could be used in these circumstances provided it contrasted with the rest of the label.

42. The remaining use of colour on labels as an indicator of severity in pesticide labelling and as a background colour for signal words and hazard statements was discussed and the majority of participants favoured the inclusion of these elements as supplemental information in the GHS. For precautionary pictograms there was support expressed for maintaining consistency with the ISO standards used for their development. Dr Pratt summarised the discussion and welcomed the progress that had been made. She believed further discussion was needed on the important issue of whether

there should be a single set of harmonised hazard pictograms remained unclear. The Drafting Group would consider the implications of this further when considering the emerging decision-logic for selection of label elements. The issue of the use of background patterns was inextricably linked to the use of colour in hazard pictograms and this work of the Drafting Group would also encompass background patterns.

Pictogram Frame

43. The majority of participants favoured the use of a standard shape from for all hazard pictograms and a different shape for precautionary pictograms. A number of participants however, wished to consider reserving the diamond shape for hazard pictograms for transport only, if separate hazard pictograms were used for workplace/consumer labels.

Providing label information to different target audiences

44. Dr Pratt referred participants to focus paper 8 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.12)**. She recalled the papers previously tabled by IOE **(IOMC/ILO/HC5/Room Document1)** and Mr Oberreuter and Mr Haas **(IOMC/ILO/HC5/00.Inf.4)**. These had considered label layout in addition to identifying which label elements would need to be included on labels used in transport and labels used by workers and consumers. She explained that this latest focus paper had not repeated the detail of these earlier papers, rather it sought to concentrate discussion on the broad approach of how to deal with the differences that existed between systems. The following points were raised during the discussion:

workplace labeling: There was concern to clarify the application of the GHS to workplace labelling. Whilst it was clear that the GHS labelling arrangements should apply to products at the point of supply to workplaces, it was less clear whether GHS labels would be needed within workplace facilities e.g. pipelines, temporary containers and storage facilities. A number of participants believed some flexibility would be required. There was concern expressed about allowing storage facilities to be labelled by a means other than the GHS. Some participants felt that it would be possible to specify how to apply the GHS to special workplace situations in guidance to clarify the flexibility that might apply.

container size/purpose: Participants felt that the situations where the same container might be used for workplace/consumer and transport use would be rare. Therefore the consensus was to consider arrangements for small and large containers as part of the guidance document to take account of the disparity that existed conceptually between the needs of those in the transport chain and consumer/workplace containers. However, participants believed it necessary to state what arrangements should apply in the rare circumstances that a container would be used for transport and workplace/consumer use.

Supplemental information and label format: There was consensus for developing standardised label format and a number of participants advocated a preference for delineation of GHS information whilst acknowledging the difficulties of developing such arrangements.

Arrangements for tactile warnings

45. It was agreed that tactile warnings could be used on GHS labels and in such circumstances would need to conform to EN ISO 11683 relating to the use of tactile warnings of danger.

Consumer Product Labelling Based on Hazard and Likelihood of Injury

46. Mr Sedlak representing IOE, presented focus paper 9 **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.13)** outlining a possible basis for applying risk to consumer product labelling. He referred to the detailed criteria which had been developed to consider the appropriate data for the exposure conditions under which consumer products could be used safely in respect of possible chronic hazard effects. Furthermore he

believed studies of consumers responses to label information indicated their preference for simple information on the precautions which they should take to use the product safely. Ms Hardeng presented a paper which had been prepared by the governments of Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/RD1)** concerning hazard based labelling for the consumer target audience. She referred to the importance of consumers right-to-know about all the hazards associated with a product in order that they may make an informed choice about product purchases. During the discussion some participants raised concerns about the potential for consumer products to be used in workplaces and the definition of consumer product in the IOE paper. Some participants wished to see some further development of the criteria to take account of the USA CPSC guidance on consumer labelling. Mr Sedlak acknowledged believed the definition of a consumer product and criteria for the labelling system could be developed further and wished to work collaboratively with other participants on these issues.

47. Dr Pratt thanked Mr Sedlak and Ms Hardeng for their presentations. She believed that it would not be possible to reach a consensus on applying the criteria for labelling on the basis of likelihood of injury for all consumer labelling systems. Nonetheless the IOMC scope document and Terms of Reference made it clear that the possibility of risk-based labelling should be included within the GHS for those governments wishing to incorporate this approach in their legislation. She invited participants to volunteer for a small working party to work with IOE representatives to further develop the criteria for applying labelling to consumers on the basis of likelihood of injury. The resulting document would be incorporated into the GHS guidance document.

Step 2, Part C – (Material) Safety Data Sheets

When the (M)SDS is required

48. Dr Pratt explained that the key issue for resolution was whether the (M)SDS should be produced for products which were classified solely on account of an environmental hazard. Whilst some participants believed the number of products which would be classified solely on account of environmental concerns would be limited, others wished to reflect on the possible implications of classifications beyond aquatic toxicity. There was some concern at the terminology used in paragraph 101 of the document regarding classification which the secretariat undertook to consider.

(MS)DS content: Use of symbols

49. Mr Fasey presented a paper **(IOMC/ILO/HC6/00.Inf.4)** reporting on emerging research in the UK which he believed raised a number of important issues for consideration within the Working Group. This highlighted the inaccuracies that existed in data sheets, the gaps in information and the difficulty recipients had in locating the appropriate information. He referred to the surveys of recipients- which the HSE had undertaken, the results of which indicated their needs were for a means of easily identifying classification information. He believed this strengthened the case for replicating label information including symbols to maximise redundancy and facilitate identification of classification information.

50. During the discussion, a number of participants spoke in favour of replicating the symbols used on labels onto the (M)SDS, although none were in favour of using colour. Some spoke of the benefits of the approach for comprehension of information where a statement of the hazard class or level alone may not be well understood. Representatives of industry spoke of the serious practical difficulties for incorporating symbols on the (M)SDS, particularly for small business suppliers. Other participants believed an alternative means of conveying this information might be possible, for example by referring to the name of the symbol.

Product identifier

51. There was concern raised about the use of a trade name or brand name to describe a mixture composition on the (M)SDS. On the options for declaring ingredients the two key issues which emerged were:

- whether all substances present in the mixture above 0.1% or 1% should be declared or whether this should be limited to those which contributed to the classification of the mixture as hazardous

- whether the concentration or concentration range of the substances should be provided

52. The opinions expressed by participants were mixed on the merits of these approaches with some doubting the necessity of including an ingredient which was for example classified as flammable in instances where the mixture had been tested and not found to be flammable. Others felt it important to ensure all ingredients were declared on the (M)SDS as an important principle of the right-to-know. Some systems allowed the inclusion of concentration ranges to minimise CBI claims and again some questioned whether this was necessary. Dr Pratt believed the issues had been clarified and would ask the Drafting Group to consider the issues further alongside the work being undertaken on CBI.

Identification of information for the (M)SDS

53. Dr Pratt explained that in developing this section of the document it had become clear that the issue for resolution was whether a limited amount of information should be identified for inclusion in the (M)SDS and any existing standard used for its presentation, or whether there should be a GHS recommendation for the presentation of all (M)SDS information within each the 16 headings to be used. There were some doubts expressed about whether it would be possible to harmonise the existing standards used to present information although participants agreed to consider proposals further. Dr Pratt referred this to the Drafting Group for further consideration.

Placement of GHS information on the (M)SDS

54. A number of participants spoke in favour of the arrangements of information described in option A1 of paragraph 114. Dr Pratt noted this but felt that the issue required further consideration as part of the development of recommended information for inclusion in the data sheet as a whole.

Access to (M)SDS

55. It was agreed to expand the reference to those who had access to the (M)SDS to include emergency responders.

Presentation of the comprehensibility testing methodology

56. Dr Pratt welcomed Professor Leslie London and Andrea Rother from the University of Cape Town who had compiled a draft testing methodology for participants to use in assessing the comprehensibility of the GHS hazard communication tools. She explained that the University had submitted an outstanding response to the ILO invitation to undertake the project and had achieved the impossible in meeting the extremely tight timescale for the project's completion. Professor London then presented the methodology to the meeting emphasising the following points:

- that no hazard communication system was intuitively obvious and that labels and (M)SDSs needed to be complementary to training;
- that comprehensibility had to take into account emotive, behavioural and cognitive factors including risk perception;
- a description of different target populations;
- cross-cultural issues;

- key issues for workers in developing countries

He then provided an overview of the eleven testing modules, the sampling methodology, and pre and post test procedures. Ms Rother gave a practical demonstration of the interviewing methodology used in one of the modules to assess the comprehensibility of an example label. Finally he paid special thanks to all members of the University of Cape Town team and others who had provided comment and advice on the development of the methodology. The full presentation is available on the ILO web-site.

57. Dr Pratt thanked Professor London and Ms Rother for the presentations and noted that many of the participants had indicated informally the need for additional time to study the detail of the proposed methodology. She confirmed that further time would be available for reflection whilst the University undertook the practical validation of the proposed methodology. The discussion revealed basic support for the methodology proposed although there were some concerns about the number of tests that might need to be undertaken. Professor London agreed to look at this and the length of time that would be needed to complete the interviews. He also confirmed that a minimum number of interviews would be recommended.

58. The discussion turned to more practical issues concerning timescale and application of the testing methodology. Concerns were raised about the need to translate the document for use in languages other than English. A number of participants believed further work was needed on how the tests would be undertaken. Dr Pratt would ask the comprehensibility working party to consider these issues further.

Work Programme

59. Dr Pratt explained that the next meeting would be the final meeting of the Working Group. The meeting would be expected to agree the basis of the harmonised system for presentation to the ILO Governing Body at its November 2001 session. Whilst this presented a challenge for participants she believed it would be possible for the Drafting Group to consider final options for presentation to the Working Group. Following a request for clarification of how the Step 3 proposals would be adopted, Dr Pratt confirmed that the intention was for the Drafting Group to present a first draft of the document which would be sent to the Working Group for consultation. The Drafting Group would then refine the document. The final documentation for the Working Group meeting would clearly indicate the issues on which consensual agreement was required. In addition the secretariat would notify the Working Group of the Drafting Group schedule and invite proposals and comments to be submitted. It was likely that the Drafting Group would meet early in 2001 in Washington but this had to be confirmed.

Date and venue of future meetings

60. Dr Pratt announced that the next and final Working Group meeting would be held in May in Geneva, most likely on 21-25 May 2001. She noted that Berlin and Vienna had been offered as alternatives in the event that a venue in Geneva would be difficult to obtain.

Other business

61. Dr Pratt thanked Dr Bennassai for a perfectly hosted meeting, the participants for their contributions and the secretariat for the preparation of the meeting documents. Mr Wright moved a vote of thanks on behalf of the meeting to Dr Pratt for the efficient and orderly conduct of the meeting. Participants warmly endorsed this vote and the meeting concluded at 13.00.

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