
**Framework Convention
for the Protection of the Marine
Environment of the Caspian Sea**

Distr.: General
9 May 2007

Original: English

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

First Meeting

Baku, 23 – 25 May 2007

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Preparation of the Statement of the High-level segment of the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

DRAFT

STATEMENT of MINISTERS
at the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine
Environment of the Caspian sea

The Ministers of Ecology, Environment and Natural Resources and High-level Officials of the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea , ~~(Tehran Convention)[‡]~~ done at the city of Tehran on the fourth day of November 2003, (hereinafter referred as the Tehran Convention):

Conscious of the major challenges to the marine environment of the Caspian Sea, including depletion of biological resources, erosion of biodiversity, marine pollution and unsustainable use of coastal areas;

Acknowledging the high potential of international environmental cooperation in the Caspian Sea region, ~~and the potentials available in the Caspian Sea region necessary~~, for sustainable development and use of natural resources, including biological diversity, hydrocarbon reserves, and for sustainable ~~transboundary~~ transportation and eco-tourism;

Further acknowledging the ongoing investments of the Caspian States in the Caspian Environment Programme and the support by the international community to the development of the Tehran Convention:

Determined to further intensify the regional dialogue and partnership towards safeguarding the marine environment of the Caspian Sea and sustainable use of its natural wealth for the benefit of present and future generations;

Recognising the key role of the Tehran Convention in ~~providing~~ defining, an international legal framework for the protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea and in sustainable utilization of its natural wealth;

[‡]The Convention adopted in Tehran, I.R of Iran in 2003

* The document is revised on the basis of written submissions of the State Parties to the Tehran Convention, received by the interim Secretariat. The amendments are underlined for easy reference.

Noting with satisfaction the entry into force of the Tehran Convention on 12 August 2006;

1. Reaffirm the intention of their Governments to continue the regional negotiations on the three priority area Protocols to the Tehran Convention, *i.e.*, Protocol on Conservation of Biodiversity, Protocol for the Protection of the Caspian Sea against Pollution from Land Based Sources [and Activities] and Protocol on Environmental Impact Assessment in Transboundary Context, allowing for the Protocols to be adopted and signed at the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
2. Noting the need to establish a regional mechanism for effective cooperation and coordination in case of major oil spills confirm the readiness of their Governments to expedite finalization of the national approval processes of the Protocol Concerning Regional Preparedness, Response and Cooperation in Combating Oil Pollution Incidents with a view to its adoption and signature before or at the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
3. Agree to further develop protocols as envisaged in the provisions of the Tehran Convention.
4. Express gratitude to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for providing services to the Convention process in accordance with article 23 of the Convention and requests UNEP to continue the functions of the Convention Secretariat ad interim until a permanent Secretariat has been put in place.
5. Acknowledge the need to align the Caspian Environment Programme and its instruments to the objectives of the Tehran Convention and its implementation.
6. Welcome the offer and recommendation of the Steering Committee of the Caspian Environment Programme to use, if it is considered necessary, the advisory and the technical services and assistance of the Caspian Environment Programme for the further development and implementation of the Tehran Convention.
7. Agree to finalize [all pending] decisions on institutional arrangements for the Tehran Convention at second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
8. Confirm the commitment of their Governments to collectively provide an amount of US\$ 360,000 (US\$ 72,000 per country) as their estimated annual contribution to the budget of the Tehran Convention for the first budget year.
9. While recognizing that the Contracting Parties bear the responsibility to ensure predictable funding for the operation of the Tehran Convention, call upon the concerned international agencies, financial institutions and donor community, in particular UNDP, UNEP, the European Union, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility, to continue to contribute to further development and effective implementation of the Tehran Convention and its programmes.
10. Propose to the Governments of all the Caspian States to proclaim the twelfth day of August, on which in 2006 the Tehran Convention entered into force, as the Regional Caspian Day and to celebrate this date accordingly and to reflect the date in official national calendars.
11. Express their gratitude to the Government of Azerbaijan for the organization of the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea.

12. Agree that the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties will take place in the first half of 2008 in the Islamic Republic of Iran.