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

Distr.: General
2 July 2007

Original: English

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

First Meeting

Baku, 23 – 25 May 2007

Report of the meeting

This report has been prepared by the interim Secretariat, for information and convenience of the participants providing a brief record of the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention)

1. Opening of the Meeting

The first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (COP I) took place in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, from 23 to 25 May 2007. The preparatory part of the meeting was held at Gulistan Palace on 23 to 24 May 2007, and the high level (Ministerial) segment was held at the hotel Excelsior on 25 May 2007.

Mr. Goussein Bagirov, Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Azerbaijan, made the opening statement. He thanked the participating delegations and the United Nations Environment Programme for their hard work in preparing for COP I. He noted the importance of collaboration in the region and the benefits that the Convention will bring to all the Contracting Parties, and he acknowledged the progress that has been made on preparing the draft protocols to the Convention. The Minister also highlighted his Government's offer to host the Convention permanent Secretariat.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the five Contracting Parties to the Convention, as well as by observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations including the UNDPI, the UNDP, World Bank, the European Commission, the Global Environment Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the IPIECA and the Caspian Environment Programme.

2. Organizational matters

The meeting elected Minister G. Bagirov as its Chairman by acclamation. It then agreed to establish a three-member Bureau, with the Islamic Republic of Iran (Mr. S. M. Bagher Nabavi) as Vice Chair and Kazakhstan (Mr. S. Akhmetov) as rapporteur. The meeting also established a working group on financial rules, moderated by Turkmenistan (Mr. Y. Kochumov), and a working group on the rules of procedure, moderated by the Russian Federation (Mr. A. Pronin).

The provisional agenda of the meeting (TC/COP1/1) was presented by the interim Secretariat and adopted as amended by the Islamic Republic of Iran (TC/COP1/1/Add.5). The meeting agreed to organize its work according to the proposal contained in the Provisional organization of work (TC/COP/INF.2/Rev.1), with preparatory sessions on Wednesday and Thursday, 23 – 24 May and a high-level Ministerial segment for the adoption of the Ministerial Statement and the Decisions of COPI, on Friday, 25 May.

3. Report on the credentials of representatives to the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

In accordance with Rule 12 of the draft rules of procedure (TC/COP1/2), the Bureau examined the credentials of the representatives of the five Contracting Parties participating in the meeting, and found them in order.

4. Adoption of the rules of procedure for the Meetings of the Conference of the Parties and of the financial rules for the administration of the Trust Fund of the Convention

Following a comprehensive discussion on the rules of procedure and agreement on a series of amendments reached by the relevant working group, the meeting adopted the Convention's rules of procedure as contained in Annex 3, (Decision I, Annex 1), in the understanding that the few pending items will be dealt with by second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The working group on financial rules extensively reviewed and finalized the draft document. The financial rules as contained in Annex 4 were adopted by the meeting (Decision II, Annex 1), with the request to the interim Secretariat to prepare a Convention budget for the first financial period.

5. Programme of work, budget and other decisions

The Convention work programme for the year in between the first and second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties was adopted (Decision III, Annex 1). The programme, which is attached as Annex 5, features a set of activities including the preparation of the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the elaboration of a Convention Action Plan as well as National Implementation Plans, and the finalization of draft protocols in priority areas of concern.

Decision IV, (Annex 1) invites UNEP to continue to provide functions of the interim Secretariat until a permanent Secretariat has been put in place.

Decision VI, (Annex 1) establishes the level of the Parties' contribution to the 2009 budget of the Tehran Convention. The collective contribution of \$360,000 is to be equally shared by the Parties (\$72,000 each).

By Decision VII, (Annex 1) delegations expressed their sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

By Decision VIII, (Annex 1) delegations agreed to hold the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties during the first half of 2008 in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

6. Ministerial segment and Statement of Ministers

The Ministerial segment was preceded by a visit to the memorial complex in the Alley on Honors and laying wreathes on the tomb of the national-wide leader Heydar Aliyev .

Minister Bagirov inaugurated the high-level segment of COPI by reading the address of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E Mr. Ilham Aliev. Welcome addresses on behalf of the host country were made by H.E Mr. A. Sharifov, Deputy Prime Minister, and H.E Mr. G. Bagirov, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources.

The Rapporteur, Mr. Serik Akhmetov of the Republic of Kazakhstan, presented a brief oral report on the working sessions.

Statements were made by H.E. Ms. F. Vaez Javadi Vice-president and Head, Department of the Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Z. Sarsembaev Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environment Protection of Kazakhstan, Mr. A. Varlamov, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. M. Akmuradov, Minister of Nature Protection of Turkmenistan.

Mr. S. Kakakhel, UNEP Deputy Executive Director, made a statement on behalf of UNEP's Executive Director Mr. Achim Steiner, expressing, *inter alia*, readiness of UNEP to continue the functions of the Convention Secretariat *ad interim*, until a permanent Secretariat has been put in place.

The following observers made statements: Mr. B. Pouezat, UNDP Resident Coordinator, Mr. Y. Mäkela, European Commission, Mrs. P. Charlebois, IMO, Mr. G. Jedrzejczak, the World Bank, Mr. H. Ghaffarzadeh, CEP, Mr. F. Askerov, British Petroleum, Mr. H. Amirebrahimi, FSC Environmental Education.

The Ministers and Heads of delegations considered the two documents forwarded by the preparatory sessions. The first (Annex 1) contained draft Decisions; the high-segment formally adopted this document after reviewing the text article by article. The review of article V concerning institutional arrangements for the Convention included voting on draft text proposals before consensus could be reached.

The Ministers and Heads of delegations then reviewed and adopted the draft Statement of Ministers as contained in Annex 2.

The Statement, *inter alia*, reaffirms the Parties' intention to complete the three priority protocols on (a) conservation of biodiversity, (b) the protection of the Caspian Sea against pollution from land-based sources [and activities], and (c) environmental impact assessment in transboundary context, so that they can be adopted and opened for signature at the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It further confirms that the protocol concerning regional preparedness, response and cooperation in combating oil pollution incidents should be adopted and opened for signature before or at the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Statement requests the interim Secretariat to produce a scoping paper before the second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the interrelationship between fisheries and the protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea.

The Statement also confirms that the Parties will continue their discussions on the institutional arrangements for the Convention at the second and subsequent meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

7. Closure of the meeting

Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was declared closed at 14.30 on Friday 25 May 2007. A press conference and a cultural event followed.

Annex 1

Decisions 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

Annex 2

Statement of Ministers

Annex 3

Rules of Procedure for the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea

Annex 4

Financial Rules for the Administration of the Trust Fund for the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea

Annex 5

Programme of Work, June 2007 - May 2008