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“Elimination of obsolete pesticide stockpiles and addressing POPs contaminated sites within a Sound Chemicals Management Framework in Armenia” UNDP-GEF full-sized Project

PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOARD AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING

RA Ministry of Emergency Situations, Conference hall

June 16, 2017

17: 00-20: 00

Participants

<i>Project management board members</i>		
1.	Davit Tonoyan	Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia (replacing co-chairman V. Gabrielyan)
2.	Khachik Hakobyan	Deputy Minister of Nature Protection, Co-Chair of the Project Management Board
3.	Lilia Shushanyan	Adviser to Minister-Chief of Government Staff
4.	Ashot Harutyunyan	Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Armenia
5.	Dmitri Mariyasin	UNDP Deputy Resident Representative
<i>UNDP</i>		
6.	Gayane Gharagebakyan	Project Coordinator, UNDP
7.	Vardan Tserunyan	Project Technical Task Leader, UNDP
8.	Kristina Tereshchatova	Project Assistant, UNDP
9.	Gagik Karapetyan	Project Expert, UNDP
<i>Participants</i>		
10.	Artavazd Davtyan, Colonel of Rescue Service	Ministry of Emergency Situations of the RA, Head of department of population protection and disasters consequences elimination of Rescue Service of the RA
11.	Hovhannes Yemishyan Colonel of the Rescue Service	Ministry of Emergency Situations, Head of Protection services of the Rescue Service Department

12.	Karine Yesayan	Ministry of Agriculture of the RA, Head of The Horticulture Development and Plant Protection Division of Department of Plant Growing and Plant Protection
13.	Irina Hakobyan	Ministry of Nature Protection of the RA, Chief specialist of the Hazardous substances and waste policy division
14.	Nune Bakunts	Ministry of Health of the RA, Deputy Director of “National center for Disease Control and Prevention” SNCO
15.	Lilik Simonyan	AWHHE NGO, Head of Department of Hygiene and Ecological Risks
16.	Albert Manukyan	Director of "Electronnakhagits" CJSC
17.	Edita Vardgesyan	Project Expert
18.	David Harutyunyan	Project Expert
19.	Marat Grigoryan	YSU, Dean of the Faculty of Geography and Geology
20.	Hakob Mkrtychyan	Invited geologist, USA, California

Submitted documents / materials.

- Reference on the issue of the establishment of the National Center for Hazardous Chemical Waste (HCW) Storage and Management in Kotayk Region and discussions evolved on this topic;
- Presentation on "Establishment of Hazardous chemical waste temporary storage/center on the base of MES of the RA storage facility located in Hrazdan administrative area".

Introduction / Opening Speech:

Opening speech was delivered by the RA Minister of Emergency Situations, Mr. Davit Tonoyan, on whose proposal the joint meeting of the Council and the Committee was organized as an extraordinary session to discuss the issue of the establishment of the National Center for Storage and Management of Hazardous Chemical Waste (HCW) in Kotayk Region. Mr. Tonoyan called on the Co-chair Khachik Hakobyan, who welcomed the participants, highlighted the topic of the session, briefly presenting that a number of meetings were held with NGOs and Hrazdan impacted community members, in the course of which their problems and concerns were raised and highlighted, and as a result - the hazardous chemical waste storage (HCW) facility to be established by means of reconstruction at the designated site is considered not feasible, and is deemed appropriate to consider alternative, more secure location.

Then Mrs. Gayane Gharagebakyan has delivered a presentation on "Establishment of Hazardous chemical waste temporary storage/center on the base of MES of the RA storage facility located in Hrazdan administrative area", highlighting the importance of the issue and the background information on the area selection, review of alternative areas for storage facility, hazardous chemical waste storage and management national facility design and construction time-schedule, related legal-regulatory framework, secondary regulatory requirements, engineering construction and operational safety measures.

The presentation was followed the exchange of views between the Project Management Board members. Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin mentioned that the Project covered the technical aspect of the issue, whilst the political decision is within the government's coverage.

Mr. Davit Tonoyan wished to clarify whether the project has the flexibility in case of changing the storage location and whether the selected design company may perform design works for the newly selected venue to avoid losing time, in response to which Mr. Mariasin mentioned that it is necessary to maintain UNDP procurement requirements. The possibility of using former storehouse facilities of “Hayberriutyun” was discussed. Ms. Gharagebakyan clarified that those storehouses are either destroyed or in private ownership, which was confirmed by the representative of the RA Ministry of Agriculture, member of the Project Advisory Committee Mrs. Karine Yesayan. Mr. Hovhannes Yemishyan noted that the area should be a state-owned venue, as it is also considered as a State investment into the project on a co-financing basis.

During the discussion, the types of wastes which can be stored in that storage were considered, and it was also referred to as a possible one single national facility for storage of hazardous waste, and this issue was discussed from the standpoint of security. Mr. Khachik Hakobyan expressed an opinion that it is necessary to take into account the public concerns and to carry out more thorough research in that area and even suggested that additional drilling of cavities be needed for this purpose, and suggested separating the amounts intended for the design and construction works to more clearly identify the amount of resources allocated for warehouse construction / reconstruction. In response, it was reported that the cost of the warehouse design works tender was \$ 62,500, and that the Program provided \$ 175,000 for safety systems in storehouse reconstruction.

Ms. Lilia Shushanyan also emphasized the importance of public discussions and additional fieldwork, in particular the drilling of a new cavity, noting that available archival data are outdated and the problem is of such strategic importance and that all efforts should be exercised to expedite the decision-making in this respect.

Ms. Gharagebakyan further clarified that sampling from the existing two cavities adjacent to the area was made, fresh data were obtained and the conclusions were based on those data. Ms. Gayane Gharagebakyan also noted that the opening of new cavity requires investment of a longer time and resources, which was confirmed by the head of the "Electronakhagits" CJSC (Kotayk Storage Facility design Contractor).

Mr. Ashot Harutyunyan also stressed the importance of public opinion.

Discussions evolved on types of pesticides and appropriate selection of their storage space.

Mr. Davit Tonoyan also invited expression of opinions from invited experts, namely - Mr. Marat Grigoryan, the Dean of the Department of Geography and Geology of Yerevan State University and Mr. Hakob Mkrtchyan, Director of Geologic Consulting Company - EON GEOCONSULTING, a certified geologist in the US State of California, who insisted that based on the data provided by the study documents it is impossible to provide a positive conclusion for establishing such a structure in the area in question. Mr. Marat Grigoryan mentioned that the hydrogeological layout of the territory of Armenia does not allow (except for one venue) to build such a storage.

Mr. Davit Tonoyan proposed to consider an opportunity to apply to the GEF for allocation of financing for construction of an alternative, second storage (to store hazardous waste) from the Project.

Mr. Dmitry Mariyasyn noted that the Project funds are allocated for achieving a clear objective: to eliminate from the country the POPs obsolete pesticides accumulated in Nubarashen burial site. He also mentioned that in this case, Kotayk's storehouse is only an intermediate storage facility for temporary storage of excavated obsolete pesticides, prior to their destruction, and that the project does not aim to harm the environment in any way.

Mr. Albert Manukyan commented that the company faces a number of issues while performing the assignment. He noted that all the archive data are accessible to them. The company, as a solution, suggests creating a closed dry storehouse and as for the rest of the details - as provided by the Project Coordinator. Mr. Albert Manukyan stressed that they are waiting for the final decision to organize the further progress of their work.

Mr. Dmitry Mariyasyn pointed out that the Project starting point for which the GEF has provided money is the solution to Nubarashen issue, in which Kotayk issue implies only an establishment of an temporary storage.

This issue requires a political decision by the government, for which RA Minister of Emergency Situations Mr. Davit Tonoyan asked for a one-month term.

THE FOLLOWING WAS PROPOSED

- 1. Temporarily suspend (freeze) design works of Kotayk HCW management and interim storage warehouse facility prior to finding technical solutions and making a political decision, for which a month term was proposed.**
- 2. Continue to work with Hrazdan community.**

DECISION

Temporarily freeze design works before finding technical solutions and making a political decision.

Signatures:

Khachik Hakobyan

Davit Tonoyan

Deputy Minister of Nature Protection, Co-Chair of
the Project Management Board

Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of
Armenia (replacing co-chairman)