The topic of the questionnaire is relevant for the Parties to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention). The response is submitted by the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention secretariat, including reference to the respective provisions of the Convention. The 1992 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) is designed to protect people and the environment against industrial accidents involving selected hazardous substances. The Convention aims to prevent accidents from occurring, or to reduce their frequency and severity and to mitigate their effects if required. The hazardous substances within the scope of the Convention and their respective thresholds are listed in Annex I to the Convention.

1. What obligations does your Government have to ensure the right of access to information under international, regional and national laws? Please provide, in detail, the relevant legislation that guarantees the right of access to information on hazardous substances and wastes, as well as the mechanisms, including grievance mechanisms, which may be used by individuals and groups.

*According to Article 9 of the Convention, “Information to, and participation of the public”, adequate information must be given to the public in the areas capable of being affected by an industrial accident arising out of a hazardous activity.*

*Moreover, Parties are obliged to give the public in the areas capable of being affected an opportunity to participate in relevant procedures with the aim of making known its views and concerns on prevention and preparedness measures and to ensure that the opportunity given to the public of other affected Party (neighbouring country) is equivalent to that given to the representatives of the domestic public.*

2. Please provide, in detail, the scope and characteristics of hazardous substances and wastes-related information that is or may be accessible to the public? More specifically, please explain what type(s) of information is produced, by whom, based on what criteria, and the time frame/frequency of data production including whether data collected is disaggregated by gender, age, disability status, etc.

*The hazardous substances covered by the Industrial Accidents Convention are included in its Annex I. Details about the content of such information are given in Annex VIII to the Convention and include the name and address of the hazardous activity, explanation in simple terms of the hazardous activity, including the risks, common or generic names or the general danger classification of the substances and preparations, with an indication of their principal dangerous characteristics, general information relating to the nature of an industrial accident that could possibly occur in the hazardous activity, etc. Also details of where further relevant information can be obtained must be specified.*

3. Please explain, in detail, how the information on hazardous substances and wastes is made available to the general public. In addition, what actions does the Government take to disseminate this information and to raise awareness about the adverse impacts of hazardous substances and wastes on human rights? How is this information tailored to the different constituencies?

*According to Article 9, the information, given to the public in the areas capable of being affected by an industrial accident, is transmitted through such channels as the Parties deem appropriate. It is usually done by the means of public announcements, leaflets, information boards in public locations, etc.*

4. Please provide examples of how information on hazardous substances and wastes has been used to:

monitor human rights affected by hazardous substances and wastes (e.g., rights to health, safe and healthy working conditions, water and sanitation, healthy environment, etc.);

protect the human rights of individuals and groups from the adverse impacts of hazardous substances and wastes;

promote other human rights (e.g., rights to health, safe and healthy working conditions, water and sanitation, healthy environment, etc.);

prevent potential human rights violations caused by the improper management of hazardous substances and wastes; and

hold perpetrators accountable and seek remedy for victims.

*According Article 6 of the Convention, Parties must require the operator to demonstrate the safe performance of the hazardous activity,* ***inter alia*** *by the provision of information as detailed in Annex V, including The quantities and properties of hazardous substances on the site. This information is used by the Parties to take appropriate measures for the prevention of industrial accidents, including measures to induce action by operators to reduce the risk of industrial accidents.*

5. Which businesses are required to provide information on hazardous substances and wastes (e.g., size, sector, operational context, ownership and structure)? Please explain, in detail, the obligations of these businesses, have with regard to the type of information they are obliged to provide, to whom the information is made available, and what measures may be taken if businesses fail to meet these obligations.

*All establishments, in which one or more hazardous substances are present or may be present in quantities at or in excess of the threshold quantities listed in Annex I of the Convention and which are capable of causing transboundary effects, are obliged to provide information on hazardous substances as specified in the Convention and its Annexes.*

6. When does the Government limit the right of access to information on hazardous substances and wastes? Are these criteria on limitation provided by law? Who has the authority to make decisions on the disclosure/non-disclosure of such information?

7. How does the Government ensure that the right of access to this information is fulfilled while also respecting the confidentiality of business information? If available, please indicate relevant cases and attach copies of relevant judgements.

*According Article 22 of the Convention, its provisions do not affect the rights or the obligations of the Parties in accordance with their national laws, regulations, administrative provisions or accepted legal practices and applicable international regulations to protect information related to personal data, industrial and commercial secrecy, including intellectual property, or national security.*