REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Paris, 23 May 2006

The OIE Regional Commission for Europe met on 23 May 2006 at the Maison de la Chimie from 8.30 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. The meeting was attended by 94 Delegates and observers from 46 countries member of the Commission, and representatives from 4 international or regional organisations:

Member countries: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldavia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and the United Kingdom

International and Regional Organisations: Council of the European Union, European Commission, FAO\(^1\), WHO\(^2\)

The meeting was chaired by Prof. Nikola T. Belev (Bulgaria), President of the Commission, assisted by Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas (Lithuania) and Dr Patrick Rogan (Ireland), Vice-Presidents.

The President welcomed the Delegates and representatives of the regional and international organisations.

1 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
2 World Health Organization
1. **Adoption of the Agenda**

The Agenda given in the Appendix was adopted, with the following additional items under ‘Other matters’:

1) Steering Committee of GF-TADs for Europe.
2) New OIE Collaborating Centre and Reference Laboratories.

2. **Report on the activities of the Regional Commission for Europe and of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe**

Dr Patrick Rogan, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, presented the report on the activities of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe for the year 2005, laying emphasis on the structure and importance of Veterinary Services in accordance with the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan.

The Commission accepted the report.

3. **Outstanding contributions of Member Countries**

The President urged OIE Member Countries of the Regional Commission for Europe to increase their contributions to the OIE by upgrading wherever possible the category of their membership.

4. **Fourth OIE Strategic Plan 2006-2010**

Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, updated the Commission on the Fourth Strategic Plan. The Commission considered the Fourth Strategic Plan as a fundamental goal. The Plan incorporates and consolidates the policy directions of the Third Strategic Plan, and in particular:

1) Transparency in the animal health situation.
2) Strengthening of the role of the Veterinary Services of the European OIE Member Countries.
3) Encouraging cooperation between official and private veterinary sectors. Private veterinarians, who are usually the primary link between farmers and veterinary authorities, are expected to apply the provisions of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*.
4) Organisation by Regional Commissions of more frequent conferences and seminars covering a broader spectrum of topics.
5) Promotion of the veterinary profession to increase its prestige and improvement of cooperation among veterinary schools.

The Commission also noted that safety and quality of food, and correspondingly public health and consumer protection, depend on a favourable epizootic situation, animal welfare and efficient veterinary controls.

5. **22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe**

Dr Monique Eloit, Delegate of France, on behalf of the Government of her country, confirmed arrangements for the organisation of the next Conference of the Commission in Lyon, France, from 25 to 29 September 2006.
The technical items retained for the Conference are the following:

a) Epidemiological surveillance and on-farm inspections: rural veterinary network, public-private sector relations, training of farmers and veterinarians
b) Live animals and food smuggling: current practices and prevention and repression tools.

6. **Seminars on ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’ in 2006**

Significant improvement was achieved in joint activities with the European Commission under the programme ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’. A total of 25 countries are participating in the programme.

In accordance with the implementation of the Fourth Strategic Plan, the First Seminar for Europe for the period 2005-2008 was held in Sofia, Bulgaria, under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr Georgi Parvanov.

Seminars have been organised in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Serbia-and-Montenegro. Experts from the OIE and the European Union DG SANCO3 and TAIEX4 have made presentations on topics of major importance.

7. **Other seminars/conferences/meetings of the Regional Representation:**

- **Conference on Rabies held in Kiev, Ukraine, from 15 to 20 June 2005**

  The most important aim of the conference was to bring together veterinarians, scientists, wildlife experts, clinicians and public health officials, to share their experiences on modern methods of rabies control.

- **Seminar on the Structure of National Veterinary Services of Member Countries in Europe held in Suzdal, Russia, from 12 to 14 September 2005**

  The structure of national Veterinary Services of OIE Member Countries of the Regional Commission for Europe was identified as a key factor for achieving the OIE objectives, for the benefit of society.

- **Seminar on the new OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 23 to 27 October 2005**

  This seminar was attended by representatives of 33 countries. The First Vice-President of the Parliament of Georgia and the Director General of the OIE also participated in the seminar.

- **Meeting on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Europe held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris, France, on 27 and 28 February 2006**

  The Commission regarded the implementation of all nineteen recommendations of the meeting as essential in order to ensure effective action in the control of avian influenza.

The Commission adopted the recommendations of all the above meetings/seminars.

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3 Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General
4 Technical Assistance Information Exchange Unit
8. **Proposal of a technical item to be included in the Agenda of the 76th General Session of the OIE International Committee to be held in May 2008**

The Commission proposed the following technical item:

‘The impact of climate change on animal health and welfare’.

9. **Proposal of candidates for the election of the Bureau of the Regional Commission, the Administrative Commission and the Specialist Commissions**

**Regional Commission for Europe**

- **President**: Prof. Dr Nikola T. Belev (Bulgaria)
- **Vice-President**: Dr Kazimierz Lukauskas (Lithuania)
- **Vice-President**: Dr Patrick Rogan (Ireland)
- **Secretary General**: Dr Evgueny Nepoklonov (Russia)

**Administrative Commission**

- **President**: Prof. Dr Nikola T. Belev (Bulgaria)
- **Dr Romano Marabelli (Italy)**

**Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission**

- **Dr Wolf Arno Valder (European Commission)**
- **Dr Nikolay Vlasov (Russia)**

**Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases**

- **President**: Prof. Vincenzo Caporale (Italy)

**Biological Standards Commission**

- **President**: Prof. Steve Edwards (United Kingdom)
- **Member**: Dr Vladimir Drygin (Russia)

**Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission**

- **Vice-President**: Prof. Barry Hill (United Kingdom)
- **Member**: Dr Franck Berthe (Canada)

10. **Creation of an OIE office in Brussels, Belgium, and of a website for Europe**

The Commission noted that an OIE Sub-Representation for Europe will be created in Brussels, Belgium, soon. An intern from Lithuania will help to establish the website for the Region by October 2006.

11. **Other matters:**

- **Coordination of animal welfare**

  Mr Georges Adelbrecht, of the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, spoke of the need for the coordination of animal welfare issues, by strengthening the relationship between the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the OIE. A meeting under the aegis of the OIE Regional Commission for

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5 Prof. Nikola Belev was proposed as President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and member of the OIE Administrative Commission by Dr Tulegen Omarov (Uzbekistan), on behalf of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
Europe organised by the European Commission and the Council of Europe will be held in Strasbourg, France, in November 2006. The meeting will involve animal experts from 51 countries.

- **First meeting of the Steering Committee of the GF-TADs (Global Framework for Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases) for Europe held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris (France) on 13 and 14 October 2005**

  Dr Keith Sumption, Secretary of EUFMD, updated the Commission on the activities of the Steering committee for GF-TADS for Europe.

- **OIE Collaborating Centre and Reference Laboratories**

  The OIE Biological Standards Commission has recommended the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Isle of Riems, Germany, as an OIE Collaborating Centre for Zoonoses in Europe. This recommendation has been approved by the Regional and Administrative Commissions and is awaiting endorsement by the International Committee during the week.

  The Commission noted that the following laboratories will be proposed for approval as Reference Laboratories during the week:

  o **OIE Reference Laboratory for rabies**: Zoonoses Group, Virology Department, VLA-Weybridge, United Kingdom
  
  o **OIE Reference Laboratory for Trypanosoma evansi (surra)**: Institut de médecine tropicale, Antwerp, Belgium
  
  o **OIE Reference Laboratory for avian tuberculosis**: Veterinary Research Institute, Czech Republic
  
  o **OIE Reference Laboratory for contagious agalactia**: Department of Exotic Diseases, VLA-Weybridge, United Kingdom
  
  o **OIE Reference Laboratories for equine influenza and equine rhinopneumonia**: Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom.

  The Commission also noted that the meeting on highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Europe held at the OIE Headquarters on 27 and 28 February 2006 has recommended the establishment of an OIE Reference Laboratory for avian influenza in Vladimir, Russia. The European Union was requested to support the project.

  The meeting ended at 10.00 a.m.

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6 European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (established under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – not to be confused with the European Commission in Brussels)
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Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report of activities of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe (activities and work programme)
3. Outstanding contributions of Member Countries
4. Fourth OIE Strategic Plan 2006-2010
5. 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, to be held in Lyon (France) from 25 to 29 September 2006
6. Seminars on ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’ in 2006
7. Other seminars/conferences/meetings of the Regional Representation:
   • Conference on Rabies held in Kiev, Ukraine, from 15 to 20 June 2005
   • Seminar on the Structure of National Veterinary Services of Member Countries in Europe held in Suzdal, Russia, from 12 to 14 September 2005
   • Seminar on the new OIE World Animal Health Information System held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 23 to 27 October 2005
   • Meeting on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Europe held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris, France, on 27 and 28 February 2006
8. Proposal of a technical item to be included in the Agenda of the 76th General Session of the International Committee to be held in May 2008
9. Proposal of candidates for the election of the Bureau of the Regional Commission, the Administrative Commission and the Specialist Commissions
10. Creation of an OIE office in Brussels, Belgium, and of a website for Europe
11. Other matters
   • Coordination of animal welfare (European Commission)
   • First meeting of the Steering Committee of the GF-TADs (Global Framework for Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases) for Europe held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris (France) on 13 and 14 October 2005
   • Collaborating Centre and Reference Laboratories.