

**REPORT OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**Paris, 27 May 2013**

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The OIE Regional Commission for Europe met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 150 participants, including Delegates and observers from 42 Members of the Commission and representatives from 9 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

International/regional organisations: CIRAD, COPA/COGECA<sup>59</sup>, EC<sup>60</sup>, EuFMD<sup>61</sup>, FAO, FEL, FESASS<sup>62</sup>, FVE<sup>63</sup>, WFO.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Ago Pärtel (Estonia), President of the Regional Commission, assisted by Professor Nikola T. Belev (Bulgaria), Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and Honorary President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, Dr Nadège Leboucq, Sub-regional OIE Representative based in Brussels, Dr Ivan Bisiuk (Ukraine), Vice-President of the Commission, Dr Lucio Carbajo Goñi (Spain), Vice-President of the Commission and Dr Nihat Pakdil (Turkey), Secretary General of the Commission.

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

## **1. Adoption of the Agenda**

The Agenda, described in the Appendix, was unanimously adopted. The agenda and the annexes related to agenda items were circulated.

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<sup>59</sup> COPA/COGECA: Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations/General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives

<sup>60</sup> EC: European Commission

<sup>61</sup> EUFMD: European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease

<sup>62</sup> FESASS: European Federation for Animal Health and Sanitary Security

<sup>63</sup> FVE: Federation of Veterinarians of Europe

## 2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

The President of the Regional Commission, Dr Ago Pärtel, congratulated the Members of the Regional Commission since outstanding contributions from almost all countries had been made.

## 3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe

Dr Ago Pärtel, President of the Regional Commission, presented a report on the activities of the Commission highlighting that the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe was partially renewed at the 80th OIE General Session and the current Members are: President, Dr A. Partel (Estonia); Vice-President, I. Bisiuk (Ukraine); second Vice-President, L. Carbajo (Spain); and Secretary, N. Pakdil (Turkey).

Dr Pärtel commented that, in compliance with OIE Basic Texts, the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held its 25th Conference in Fleesensee (Germany) in September 2012, where it examined and discussed animal health, animal welfare and animal food production safety issues within Europe. The Conference was well attended, with 42 countries (out of 53) represented, as well as the key stakeholders in the region. The main outcomes of the Conference included two technical recommendations: one on the role of wildlife in the control of domestic animal diseases and the other on regional steps towards the common animal welfare approach in Europe. The two recommendations were scheduled for submission to the Assembly for approval in May 2013, after which they were expected to become important roadmaps for the OIE Regional Commission for Europe. More specifically, the Conference recommended:

- (i) establishing an OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare aimed at improving the implementation of OIE animal welfare standards in the region; and
- (ii) exploring a coordination mechanism for a common regional position on the OIE draft standards being submitted for adoption by the World Assembly of OIE Delegates.

It was decided that the coordination mechanism for a common regional position would be managed through a Task Force. This Task Force is comprised of the Delegates of the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission as well as the Delegates of Russia, Serbia, Norway, Austria, France and a representative of the European Commission. The President of the Regional Commission and Chair of the Task Force has already organised two meetings of the Task Force – one in Brussels (Belgium), in December 2012, and the other in Tallinn (Estonia), in April 2013 – to discuss the *modus operandi* of the Task Force and possible topics for a joint regional position. In preparation of the meeting of the Regional Commission, the Task Force met on Monday, May 27 to identify : (i) the chapters (6) for which a common position could be adopted on behalf of the 53 Member Countries of the region and (ii) the OIE Delegates who would take the floor to present these common positions.

In addition, Dr Pärtel, in his capacity of President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, participated in: (i) a European Union Conference entitled “Need for better animal health global governance” in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2012; (ii) the signing ceremony for the establishment of an OIE Representation in Moscow (Russia) in March 2013; (iii) a Round Table entitled “Emergency diseases situation and its control on the territory of EU and Customs Union” in Moscow in March 2013, including participation in side meetings; (iv) a meeting at the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences of the Estonian University of Life Sciences in January 2013; and (v) a meeting with the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe, to discuss the agenda of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe for the following six months.

Dr Pärtel concluded by mentioning that the OIE Regional Commission for Europe was assembled that day in order to: (i) present OIE technical and capacity-building activities in the region; (ii) select the Technical Items (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agendas of the 83rd General Session of the Assembly (in May 2015) and 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (in September 2014); and (iii) propose new Collaborating Centres in the region. In addition, the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe will be represented in: (i) World Veterinary Congress, in Prague (Czech Republic) in September 2013; (ii) OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body, on the subject “Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession”, in Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) in December 2013; and (iii) Fifth Meeting of the GF-TADs Steering Committee for Europe (of which the four Bureau members are permanent members), in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2013. This agenda will be implemented in close collaboration with the OIE Representations in Sofia, Moscow and Brussels.

#### **4. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe, including Focal Point Seminars**

Professor Nikola T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe, provided information on the activities implemented by the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe in the early months of 2013. Two workshops were held in the region as part of the OIE capacity-building programme: a seminar for OIE National Focal Points for animal welfare in Teramo (Italy) on 5-7 March 2013; and a workshop for OIE National Focal Points for aquatic animals in Lisbon (Portugal) on 9-11 April 2013.

Professor Belev presented an overview of other events attended by the Representation:

- Meeting with the 1st Vice-President of the “Fédération Equestre Internationale” (FEI), Mr John Crossley McEwen, in the presence of the Chief Veterinary Officer of Bulgaria, Dr Damyan Illiev, to discuss the practicalities of OIE/FEI cooperation and standard-setting on the transportation of horses (24 January 2013);
- Meeting with Professor Angel Galabov – virologist and Bulgarian national expert on avian influenza and flu infections – to obtain updated information on the status of avian influenza in Europe and worldwide (1 February 2013);
- Meeting with Dr Miroslav Naydenov – Bulgaria’s Minister of Agriculture and Food at that time – to present OIE mandate and activities (4 February 2013);
- Workshop on laboratory networking, organised by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Multibeneficiary Project: supporting the control and eradication of animal diseases in the Western Balkans (Belgrade [Serbia], 11-12 February 2013);
- Meeting on signing an agreement to establish an OIE Representation in Moscow (Russia), including a round table discussion on the topic “Emergency diseases situation and its control on the territory of EU and Customs Union”, together with a detailed presentation on Veterinary Service structure according to OIE standards (Moscow [Russia], 6-7 March 2013);
- OIE Global Conference on the Responsible and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents for Animals on the subject “International solidarity to fight against antimicrobial resistance” (Paris [France], 13-15 March 2013);
- Meeting with the newly appointed Bulgarian Minister for Agriculture and Food, Professor Ivan Stankov, to present a general overview of the OIE (21 March 2013);

- Meeting of the Executive Council of the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations (Apimondia) on boosting collaboration between the OIE and Apimondia (Kiev [Ukraine], 13-14 April 2013);
- Fifth International 'Turkmen Horse and World Horse-Breeding Art' Conference and Third Meeting of the International Association of Akhal-Teke Breeders (Ashgabat [Turkmenistan], 26-28 April 2013).

To conclude, Professor Belev presented the following activities, scheduled for the period 1 May to 31 December 2013, to be attended by the Regional Representation for Eastern Europe:

- World Veterinary Congress 2013 in Prague (Czech Republic) on 17-20 September 2013;
- OIE Seminar for National Focal Points for animal production food safety in Belgrade (Serbia) on 15-17 October 2013;
- Annual Meeting of Regional and Sub-Regional Representations at OIE Headquarters in Paris (France) on 21-25 October 2013;
- Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body, on the subject "Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession", in Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) on 4-6 December 2013.

**5. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels including an update on the GF-TADs mechanism**

Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels, reported that, since 1 January 2013, the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels had been hosted by Belgium's Federal Agency for Food Safety (AFSCA) and that the official Agreements had been officially signed on 14 March 2013. On that occasion, Dr Leboucq had reiterated warmest thanks to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium and to AFSCA. She added that the staff of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels had been reinforced in March 2013 with the appointment of Dr S. Ralchev, technical assistant, who would be assigned specifically to the Secretariat of the OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare.

Dr Leboucq said that, in line with the OIE Fifth Strategic Plan for 2011-2015, the work programme of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels for 2013 carried on from the work of previous years, focusing on two main areas of intervention: (i) participation in OIE sub-regional and regional activities in Europe, in collaboration with the Regional Representation for Eastern Europe and the new OIE office in Moscow; and (ii) providing an interface for Brussels-based organisations.

In the first area of intervention, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels participated in a PVS Evaluation mission to Turkmenistan in April 2013 as well as in the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare in Teramo (Italy) in March 2013.

In the second area of intervention, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels took part in around 20 coordination meetings between 1 January 2013 and 30 April 2013, including a symposium entitled "Preventing human pandemics by improving animal health" at the European Parliament in Brussels (Belgium) in January 2013.

Dr Leboucq also reported that, in its capacity as Secretariat for GF-TADs Europe, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels monitored implementation of the GF-TADs Europe Five-Year Action Plan and would also be organising the Fifth Meeting of the GF-TADs Steering Committee for Europe in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2013.

Dr Leboucq concluded by presenting the following programme of activities of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels for the coming months.

- Operational start-up of the OIE Regional Animal Welfare Platform, to be endorsed by the 81st General Session of the OIE in May 2013;
- OIE seminar for National Focal Points for animal production food safety, to be held in Serbia in October 2013;
- Support for countries in the region to increase participation in the OIE standard-setting process, by means of two technical seminars - one in the Balkans in November 2013 and the other for Russian-speaking countries in December 2013;
- Further capacity-building activities for national Veterinary Services, based on the OIE PVS Pathway.

Dr Leboucq also reminded participants that all the activities of the Regional Representation and the Sub-Regional Representation are published regularly on the OIE regional website for Europe ([www.rr-europe.oie.int](http://www.rr-europe.oie.int)), managed by the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels.

## **6. Update on the OIE Representation in Moscow**

Prof. Kazimieras Lukauskas started his presentation by informing the Regional Commission that, thanks to the initiative of Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General, and the good collaboration between OIE and Russian Authorities, the OIE proceeded to the opening of an OIE Representation in Moscow. The agreement regarding that new office has been officialised with the OIE Director General and the Honourable Minister of Agriculture of Russia, Nikolay Fyodorov, during a special ceremony that took place in Moscow on 6 March 2013. He informed the Regional Commission that he was nominated as the OIE Representative for this office.

The scope and the activities of the Representation will include:

1. To monitor the zoosanitary situation;
2. To advocate for exchange of relevant information related to disease control;
3. To promote the collection, analysis and dissemination of scientific information on animal diseases;
4. To assist in improving the veterinary legislation and governance; and
5. To perform other tasks assigned by the OIE Director General in accordance with the 5th Strategic Plan.

Prof. Kazimieras Lukauskas provided the Commission with information regarding some recent activities in which he recently participated. He then gave an idea of the activities to be undertaken by this new office. He finally concluded by expressing his hope for the successful implementation of this Representation.

**7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates, to be held in May 2015**

The Regional Commission proposed the following technical item (including a questionnaire to Members) to be included in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “Implementation of OIE standards under the WTO SPS Agreement<sup>64</sup>”

**8. Confirmation of the date and venue of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe**

Dr Hans Wyss, OIE Delegate of Switzerland, confirmed his country’s offer to host the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe. The Conference will be held in Bern from 22 to 26 September 2014.

**9. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to be held in September 2014**

The following technical item (with questionnaire) was adopted for the 26th Regional Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe:

- “Animal health in the light of natural disasters and bioterrorism”

**10. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre**

Dr Romano Marabelli, OIE Delegate of Italy, presented the Commission with an application for the OIE to consider “Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Lombardia e dell’Emilia Romagna (IZSLER), Brescia, Italy” as an OIE Collaborating Centre for “Cell Cultures”.

He provided a brief review of IZSLER and its activities and said that full details could be found in the Working Document of the meeting.

The Commission approved Italy’s proposal. It will be presented for endorsement by the World Assembly of Delegates.

**11. Recommendations of the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held in Fleesensee, Germany, from 17 to 21 September 2012**

Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels, introduced the presentation by highlighting the high turnout for the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, with 42 of the 53 OIE Members of the Regional Commission for Europe represented.

Dr Leboucq reported that the technical items presented at the Conference had related to two areas of interest: (i) the role of wildlife in the control of domestic animal diseases (Technical Item I, with a questionnaire); and (ii) the common animal welfare approach in Europe (Technical Item II, without a questionnaire).

With regard to Technical Item I, Dr Leboucq reported that, as the complexity of infectious disease transmission between domestic animals and wildlife and the persistence of pathogens transmissible from wildlife made it very difficult to control some diseases in domestic animals, it had been recommended to continue implementing effective monitoring

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<sup>64</sup> The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

systems, as well as biosecurity measures designed to avoid direct or indirect contact with wildlife, using zoning or compartmentalisation where appropriate. One statement at the Conference in Germany was that a new OIE Collaborating Centre on the role of wildlife in controlling domestic animal diseases could provide countries in the region with greater technical support in this field.

With regard to Technical Item II, Dr Leboucq explained that contrasting levels of animal welfare policy implementation in the national legislation of the 53 OIE Members of the Europe region had led to endorsement of the need for West and East European countries to work together and share best practices to achieve the progressive and harmonious implementation of OIE animal welfare standards region-wide. She said that the Conference recommendations had therefore included setting up an OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare, based on discussions that had begun at the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare held in Kiev (Ukraine) in March 2012. Dr Leboucq reported that, after discussing the Platform's objectives, activities and governance, an agreement on the main principles had been reached. It had also been decided to make the initiative a major project of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels in 2013, with expected financial support from the European Union.

Dr Leboucq explained that, in order to implement the Conference recommendations, it would be essential to strengthen national Veterinary Services in accordance with OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services. Dr Leboucq concluded by saying that the two recommendations would be submitted to the Assembly for endorsement during the week and that they would provide an important “roadmap 2013-2014” for the 53 OIE Members of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe.

## **12. Update on the OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Eastern Europe**

Dr Stanislav Ralchev, Technical Assistant at the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels, started his presentation by providing some relevant outcomes from the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe in Fleesensee (Germany) in September 2012. He focused especially on Technical Item II on “Regional steps towards a common animal welfare approach in Europe”, building on the outcomes of the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare in Kiev (Ukraine) in March 2012.

Dr Ralchev explained that, following the recommendations and outcomes of both these fora, OIE Member Countries had recommended setting up an OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe, to become a key activity of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels, which would house the Platform Secretariat.

He explained that the overall idea was to develop an “incremental two-step approach” to improve the implementation of animal welfare standards in Eastern Europe. That would be done through a selection of practical activities discussed on the Platform and subsequently bridging the interests of East and West European countries through sustainable long-term collaboration on animal welfare. Once operational, the Platform would explore the need for a regional strategy.

After explaining that the Platform's Steering Group, *modus operandi*, list of future activities and priority topics would be proposed for adoption by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe at the 81st OIE General Session in May 2013, Dr Ralchev described the Platform's governance, which would tentatively include representatives from: OIE Headquarters; three Eastern European countries; two European Economic Area countries; Directorate-General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission (DG SANCO<sup>65</sup>); OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre in the region; Regional

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<sup>65</sup> DG SANCO: The Directorate General Health and Consumers

Representation for Eastern Europe; Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels; and one donor organisation.

He highlighted that the transport of animals (by land), stray dog population management and slaughter of animals (for consumption) as priorities for the Platform over the next three year period.

Dr Ralchev concluded by saying that the first meeting of the Steering Group would take place in the second half of 2013, where a concrete action plan would be discussed, adding that the European Union is expected to provide the Platform with appropriate financial support.

### **13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS): Status of Notification by Members in Europe**

Dr Simona Forcella, Chargée de mission at the OIE Animal Health Information Department, gave a brief update of the most relevant topics on animal disease reporting in Europe. She started by emphasising the importance of timely disease reporting through WAHIS by the countries, and of the provision of other epidemiological information on disease prevention and control, in order to maintain transparency, enhance trade and contribute to the global early warning system and to the dissemination of the sanitary information worldwide.

Then, she provided detailed regional information on the compliance with reporting for 2012, thus within Europe 39 (72%) countries provided on time complete annual report. Dr Forcella also showed the evolution of the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from countries of Europe compared with the submission time of all the countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012; demonstrating an overall improvement in the reporting by reducing the reporting time particularly over the last three years.

Finally, Dr Forcella presented some of the improvements implemented in the new version of WAHIS allowing a better reporting for disease notification in wild species. Concerning the Wildlife Annual reports, Dr Forcella explained that 63 countries worldwide had provided their reports and that those interested countries that had not yet provided a report on the section dedicated to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wild animals, to do so at any time in the near future.

Following a question from Dr P. Naassens, OIE Delegate of Belgium, Dr Forcella clarified that, for OIE listed diseases, the reporting of wildlife diseases follows the usual mandatory 6 monthly reporting procedure, while for the other wildlife diseases, countries are encouraged to report voluntarily on an annual basis only, after transmission of the 2 semestrial reports, which are required for a given year.

### **14. On-going collaboration between the OIE and WHO/‘One Health’ activities**

Dr Stéphane de La Rocque, OIE Project Officer for Veterinary Public Health, presented a briefing on good governance of human and animal health services within the framework of on-going collaboration between the OIE and the World Health Organization (WHO) (‘One Health’ activities).

Dr de La Rocque said that the fact that more than 60% of animal diseases are transmissible to humans and 75% of recent emerging diseases are zoonotic called for strong human and animal health systems, working in close partnership, in order to jointly address common issues of early detection, assessment and response to events of potential international health concern. Dr de La Rocque pointed out that human and animal health services shared a need to enhance their surveillance, early detection, reporting and rapid response capacity, which was encompassed by the international standards developed by WHO, in its

International Health Regulations (IHR), and by the OIE, in its *Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes and Manuals*.

Dr de La Rocque explained that individual countries needed to be provided with appropriate material and guidance to: make an objective evaluation of their situation and compliance with international obligations; address deficiencies; and build capacity to improve their operational capability and comply with international requirements. He explained that the following specific tools had been developed in the human and animal sectors.

- By WHO: (i) a list of minimum core public health capacities to guide effective implementation of the IHR; (ii) a checklist and indicators for countries to assess their degree of compliance with the expected levels of capability described in the IHR;
- By the OIE: (i) the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway, including in particular the OIE PVS Tool (qualitative assessment) and the PVS Gap Analysis Tool (qualitative and quantitative assessment) used by countries to objectively assess and address the main weaknesses in their Veterinary Services' compliance with OIE quality standards, and to determine the scope and costs of upgrading.

Those tools are continuously refined and updated to take recent developments into account, including the strengthening of cooperation with partners.

Dr de La Rocque said that the emergence of major zoonotic infectious diseases over the last decade had resulted in steadily increasing dialogue and joint initiatives among WHO, the OIE, FAO and the World Bank. In 2010, the tripartite WHO-OIE-FAO developed a joint Concept Note describing areas of common interest to share responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the human-animal-ecosystems interfaces. He added that, since then, the three organisations had stepped up their collaboration to develop benchmarks for good governance across the animal and human health sectors.

Dr de La Rocque explained that a mapping exercise – based on a review of existing tools used for assessing national animal and human health systems, conducted using the OIE PVS Pathway (including a PVS 'One Health' pilot evaluation tool) and the IHR – had helped to identify existing initiatives and additional synergies to optimise and optimally address national cross-cutting human and animal health priorities. This had led to a proposed joint OIE-WHO programme of work focusing on strengthening existing tools to better address the human-animal interface and developing new tools where necessary. He said that the programme provided for concrete actions including but not limited to the: development of a Gap Analysis-compatible costing tool prototype for building required national capacity through the IHR; adjustment of the WHO/IHR assessment tool to better address the human-animal interface; and improvement of the WHO laboratory assessment tool in relation with developing the OIE PVS Pathway laboratory tool. Dr de La Rocque reported that the OIE and WHO, in partnership with the World Bank and using a European Union-funded mechanism, had agreed to jointly develop a methodological guide for countries that would gather together a collection of these tools and the results of all these adjustments. He added that these outputs would be instrumental for identifying the operational strategies and synergies upon which to base future global and national collaboration and actions for strengthening national human and animal health systems governance.

## 15. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Europe

Dr N. Leboucq, OIE sub-regional Representative based in Brussels, started her presentation by providing the Members of the Regional Commission with a brief overview of the state of play regarding the implementation of the different OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the Region. As of May 2013, 16 OIE PVS evaluation missions - the last 2 OIE PVS evaluation missions in the region were recently carried out in Serbia (March 2013) and in Turkmenistan (April 2013) - and 6 PVS gap Analysis missions have been carried out in Europe. She indicated the countries that would be eligible for certain categories of PVS Pathway missions and invited them to officially request missions accordingly.

She then went on to provide the audience with an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. She explained that all the tools used in the PVS Pathway are regularly updated with experienced experts in order to ensure that they are in line with the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services, she indicated that starting this year, the OIE will give the opportunity to countries requesting a PVS Evaluation Follow-Up mission to evaluate upon request their capacity to implement the One Health concept. She explained that following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. She also informed the meeting participants of the development of the first edition of the PVS Tool-Aquatic, dedicated to evaluating the performance of the Aquatic Animal Health Services.

After offering background information regarding how the OIE was developing the tools used as “treatment” under the PVS Pathway, Dr. Leboucq gave details regarding the current and new “treatments” available to Members. She indicated that the OIE considered Twinning Projects between laboratories and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established “treatments”. She further explained that new “treatments” were recently made available to Members, namely the PVS Pathway Laboratory missions, as well as the possibility to undertake a Veterinary Education Twinning Project and a Twinning Project between Veterinary Statutory Bodies. She also indicated that a new laboratory Twinning project was launched in April 2013 on Brucellosis between Kazakhstan (candidate) and USA / Italy (‘parents’).

Prior to concluding, she reminded the Regional Commission of the efforts made by the OIE to share the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the PVS Pathway with donors and partners when requested by the countries. She indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share PVS Pathway mission reports with the relevant ministries that could be involved in supporting, at national level, the activities related to the strengthening of their Veterinary Services.

Dr. Leboucq concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aiming to sustainably improve the compliance of Veterinary Services with international standards. The OIE is continuously working to convince governments and donors to not only support the PVS Pathway itself, but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Finally, she stated that the improvement of the Veterinary Services could only occur with the strong commitment and ownership of the countries.

## 16. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

- **European Commission (EC)**

Dr Bernard Van Goethem, Director for Veterinary and International Affairs, DG SANCO, European Commission, informed that on 6 May 2013, various measures strengthening the health and safety standards for the entire agri-food chain, had been adopted by the EC, providing a modernised and simplified, more risk-based approach

to the protection of health, and more efficient control tools to ensure the effective application of the rules guiding the operation of the food chain. These measures are also reported to include a new Animal Health Law, a single and clear legislation to regulate animal health in the EU, based on good governance and a principle according to which "prevention is better than cure". The speaker underlined that these measures, compliant with international standards (e.g. those of the OIE) and taking into account all relevant stakeholders, were aimed to improve standards and provide a common system to detect and control diseases better, in addition to tackling health, food and feed safety risks in a coordinated way, focusing on long-term preventative measures.

According to Dr Van Goethem, in order to reduce the risk of trade disruption, the Animal Health Law was aimed at guaranteeing an appropriate level of convergence with the international standards of the OIE regarding animal health conditions for international trade.

The presentation, in general, highlighted the new elements of the Animal Health Law, including prevention policies and tools, the categorisation and prioritisation of diseases and enhanced convergence with OIE standards and response to emerging diseases.

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dr Andriy Rozstalnyy, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, reported that FAO assistance to Veterinary Services in European and Central Asian countries focused on three strategic areas: (i) prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases, including zoonoses; (ii) good governance and capacity-building of Veterinary Services; and (iii) provision of animal disease and zoonosis information. The FAO representative explained that technical assistance and capacity-building of state Veterinary Services addressed issues of early detection and early response to priority diseases, such as: African swine fever, foot and mouth disease, brucellosis and peste des petits ruminants. The representative said that FAO had provided emergency assistance to Armenia and Georgia to assist with African swine fever outbreaks and to Bulgaria for investigating foot and mouth disease outbreaks.

Dr Andriy Rozstalnyy, added that FAO also contributed to good Veterinary Service governance and to fostering regional and cross-border cooperation between Veterinary Services, giving as an example the regional meeting entitled "Threat of African Swine fever spread in Eastern Europe: urgent need for international collaboration", which had been held by FAO Regional Office in December 2012. The FAO representative said that the meeting had discussed mechanisms for fostering regional cooperation between Veterinary Services and relevant international organisations. In addition, a set of recommendations for improving the prevention and control of African Swine fever had been agreed by the representatives of: 14 state Veterinary Services, FAO, OIE, European Commission, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), together with international and European Union/national reference laboratories and research institutions in Spain, Russia, Poland, Italy and France.

The FAO representative explained that FAO plans for 2013-2014 included two main events: (i) a summit entitled "Global Wellbeing – a Partnership of Animal and Human Health" at the Prague World Veterinary Congress, to be held in the Czech Republic in September 2013, in coordination with the World Veterinary Association, WHO and the OIE; and (ii) a regional meeting on rabies control strategies for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, to be held jointly with the OIE and WHO.

## 17. Other matters

Dr N. Galon, OIE Delegate of Israel, raised the issue of lumpy skin disease in the region and requested that the OIE and FAO provide guidance and knowledge to countries to best prevent and control the disease.

Dr M. Taitubayev, OIE Delegate of Kazakhstan, enquired about the possible ranking of countries within a sub-region using the results of the PVS Evaluations. Dr M. Eloit, OIE Deputy Director General, stated that it is not the aim of the PVS Evaluation for countries to compare themselves to other countries, but rather to help them to sustainably reinforce their own capacities in line with OIE standards. However, the OIE has conducted sub-regional PVS studies in Northern Africa and Western Africa, for example, and such regional studies could be relevant in the context of Central Asia or the Customs Union in order to support a sub-region in its efforts to harmonise the quality of their Veterinary Services. Dr Belev concluded the discussion on the topic by reemphasising the need for countries to become fully compliant with OIE standards, using the PVS Pathway.

The meeting officially ended at 6:00 p.m.

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**MEETING OF THE  
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**Paris, 27 May 2013**

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**Agenda**

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr Ago Pärtel, Delegate of Estonia and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe)
2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Ago Pärtel)
3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (Dr Ago Pärtel)
4. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe including Focal Point Seminars (Prof. Nikola T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe)
5. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels including an update on the GF-TADs mechanism (Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub Regional Representative in Brussels)
6. Update on the OIE Representation in Moscow (Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas)
7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015 (Dr Ago Pärtel)
8. Confirmation of the date and venue of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (Dr Hans Wyss, Delegate of Switzerland)
9. Selection of a Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to be held in September 2014 (Dr Ago Pärtel)
10. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre (Dr Romano Marabelli, Delegate of Italy)
11. Recommendations of the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held in Fleesensee, Germany, from 17 to 21 September 2012 (Dr Nadège Leboucq)
12. Update regarding the OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for the Eastern Europe (Dr Stanislav Ralchev, Technical Assistant, OIE Sub Regional Representation in Brussels)
13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in Europe (Dr Simona Forcella, OIE Animal Health Inf. Dept)
14. On-going collaboration between OIE and WHO/‘One Health’ activities (Dr Stéphane de la Rocque, OIE Project Officer for Veterinary Public Health, OIE Sub Regional Representation in Brussels)
15. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Europe (Dr Nadège Leboucq)
16. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
  - European Commission (EC)
  - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
17. Other matters