

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**Handbook for the
1979 CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY
AIR POLLUTION
AND ITS PROTOCOLS**



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- * As amended ECE/EB.AIR/79/Add.2, annex XIV.
- ** The amendments concern the technical annex and were adopted by the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution at its fourteenth session held on 25-28 November 1996 (ECE/EB.AIR/49, paras. 13-14).
- *** The amendment concerns annex III and was adopted by the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution at its fourteenth session held on 25-28 November 1996 (ECE/EB.AIR/49, para. 17).

FOREWORD

The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, adopted 25 years ago, is the oldest of the UNECE environmental conventions. As a result of the Convention's work our environment is already beginning to recover from the effects of sulphur deposition of the 1980s and 1990s, and further benefits are expected in the coming years as the Convention's protocols are fully implemented. With its three most recent protocols entering or about to enter into force, this is a good time to take stock of the achievements and to make strategic plans for the future.

This Handbook provides a current overview of the Convention, bringing together all the legal texts as well as the ministerial statements made at the time of adoption of protocols and important decisions taken by the Convention's Executive Body. It thus provides an historic view of the work of the Convention and the thinking behind what was done. It also provides up-to-date information on the structure of the Convention and the status of ratification of its protocols.

The environmental conventions are an important part of UNECE work. They bring States together with a common purpose and provide an important forum for solving issues that cannot be addressed by countries or subregions alone. During the Convention's lifetime there have often been political differences between countries and the period has seen many political changes. However, throughout the 25 years the awareness of the need to tackle air pollution has remained unchanged, and the participation of so many UNECE States is an indication of the importance that they attach to the work.

With the recent protocols coming into force we are entering a period of review and assessment. We know that we have some way to go before we solve all our air pollution problems. Increasingly we are taking a holistic approach to our environmental problems and there is a need to consider future controls in relation to global issues such as climate change and sustainable development. For doing so, our starting point must be what has already been agreed, and this Handbook provides the necessary information to support our future work.

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