

**PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 2017 MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCES OF THE PARTIES TO
THE BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM
CONVENTIONS
AND
WORKING SESSION TO ADDRESS REGIONAL SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO RATIFICATION AND
EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY**

*FOR THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION
RIGA, LATVIA, 21 TO 24 MARCH 2017*



Meeting Venue:

The meeting will be held at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development in Riga Peldu iela 25.
http://www.varam.gov.lv/eng/par_ministriju/

A name tag will be provided by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Central Europe in Slovakia (BCRC-Slovakia) at the entrance to the building on the first day of the meeting which will provide access to the building for the duration of the meeting.

Dates and openings:

- The regional preparatory meeting for the 2017 meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions will be opened at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 21 March 2017 and is scheduled to finish by 4.30 p.m. on Thursday, 23 March 2017.
- The working session to address regional specific issues related to ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury will start at 9 a.m. on Friday, 24 March 2017 and is scheduled to finish by 6 p.m. on the same day.

Registration:

Registrations for both meetings will be open at 8.30 on Tuesday, 21 March 2017.

Working languages:

Both meetings will be conducted in English and Russian, with simultaneous interpretation.

Accommodation:

Please note that participants are responsible for making their own hotel reservations. Please make your reservation in your preferred hotel via the contact or link provided in the list of hotels below. Participants are urged to make their reservations as soon as possible.

Daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and payment:

Participants receiving financial assistance will be provided with an economy class return ticket, using the most direct route and least costly fare, as well as the payment of daily subsistence allowances (DSAs) in accordance with applicable United Nations rules.

An advance of 75% of the DSA will be paid via money transfer to each funded participant. The remaining 25% as well as the allowance for terminal expenses shall be paid upon receipt of airline boarding passes. Participants that have received the advance payment of the DSA and that are not able to attend the meeting, shall be responsible to return the funds to the BCRC-Slovakia. **Please provide banking information for the bank transfer by 7 March 2017** to Ms. Dana Lapesova: (tel: +421 906 314 033, email: dana.lapesova@sazp.sk) or Ms. Ivana Jasikova: (tel: +421 906 314 008, email: ivana.jasikova@sazp.sk).

Travel will be organized by BCRC-Slovakia, which will send a proposed flight itinerary to each concerned participant.

UNEP shall not be liable for any costs or damages, including:

- Costs incurred by participants for travel insurance, accident insurance, medical or hospital expenses, as well as any compensation for death, disability or illness of participants as part of their participation to the meetings;
- International travel expenses, such as costs for obtaining/renewing passports, visas, or costs related to vaccinations, stopovers, transport to and from airport;
- Material losses or damages;
- Purchase of items or compensation for damages caused by weather or other conditions;
- Any other unforeseen expenses.

Visa Arrangements:

Participants are responsible for obtaining their own visa(s) if required. Please also ensure that you are in possession of any necessary transit visas, depending upon your final itinerary. Visas must be obtained prior to arrival. If support is required for the issuance of your visa, please contact Ms. Linda Tilta from the Latvian Government (linda.tilta@varam.gov.lv) **by 28 February 2017**. Upon contacting Ms. Tilta, please provide your travel dates, passport information, date of birth and accommodation while in Latvia.

Transportation from/to the airport**Airport**

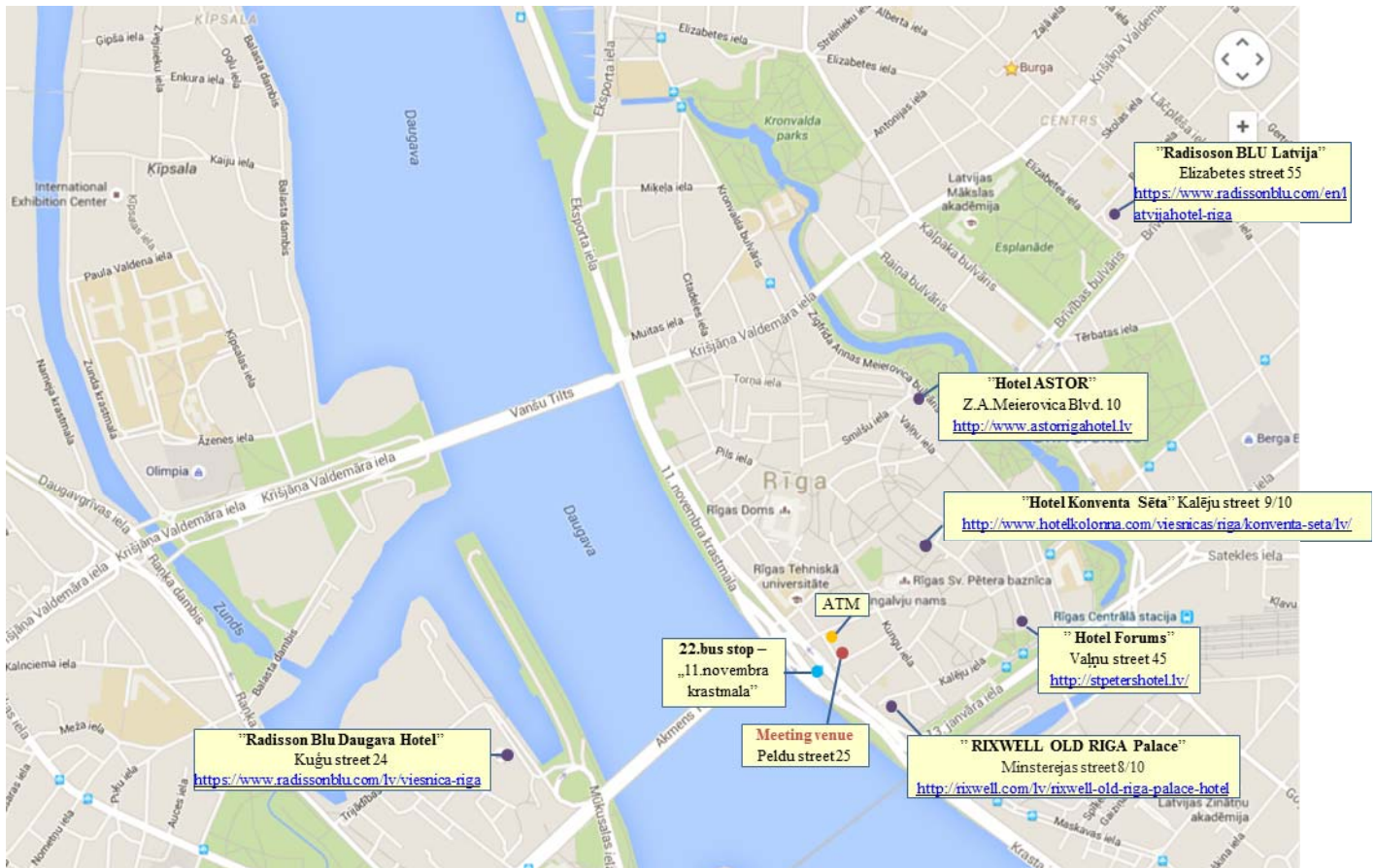
[Riga International Airport](#) is located just 10 km from the city centre and is easily accessible by public transport or taxi. Getting to the city centre from the airport takes ~25-30 minutes.

Riga International Airport
Mārupes novads, Rīga, Latvia
Airport inquiries service: +371 2931 1817

Some options for transfer to the city centre:

Taxi services are available at Riga International Airport 24 hours a day and are located outside the arrivals area. The average fare from the Airport to the city centre (Old Town) is € 15-20. The fare depends on both distance and time. Green *AirBaltic* and red *Riga Cab* taxi services are available and recommended.

Public transport bus No. 22 (Lidosta-Centrs) and minibus No. 222 connect the Airport with the city centre. The bus stop is located behind the car parking place. The service operates up to every 15 minutes from Monday to Friday. Single journey tickets can be bought from the driver and cost € 2.00 (cash only). The bus stop "11. novembra krastmala" will put you closest to the meeting venue and by the Old town.



All hotels are within 10 minutes walking distance of the meeting venue.

IT services and support

Wireless Internet access (WiFi) is available in the meeting rooms of the venue.

Paperless meeting:

The meetings will be paperless; printed documents will not be available. Each participant should bring their own copies of supporting documents they may need for the meeting as well as a laptop for accessing documents on the internet as necessary.

Weather:

The average temperature in Riga in March is slightly cold at -0.5 °C. Afternoons can be very cool with average high temperatures reaching 2 °C. Overnight temperatures are generally cold with an average low of -5 °C. However wonders are always possible in early spring in Latvia, so the best is to check the weather reports for Riga shortly before travelling.

Currency:

The currency used in Latvia is the Euro.

About Riga:

Riga is the capital of Latvia. Officially founded in 1201, the city presents a mix of cultures and architectural styles developed throughout different historical periods. The Daugava, also referred to as the River of Destiny by Latvians, flows through Riga into the Gulf of Riga about 10 kilometres from the city centre. Because of its location and harbour, which rarely freezes, Riga has developed into a significant transportation hub. Riga has always been a dynamic and innovative centre, and remains to this day a vibrant and lively city with a host of creative quarters to explore. It is therefore with good reason that Riga has been called the ‘city of inspiration’. Enjoy a leisurely walk around the Old Town – the historic centre of Riga, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site – and its surroundings.

Useful information about Riga can be found on www.liveriga.com/en.

**List of recommended hotels in Riga, Latvia
20-25 March, 2017 (5 nights)**

For reservations please contact travel agency Averoja, consultant Ms. Silja Petersone: silja@averoja.lv

Please mention this event for special prices: CEE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR 2017 COP TO THE BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS

Hotel ASTOR 4*

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 81.00 (payment through agency)**

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 88.00 (payment at the hotel)**

Date until which the special rate is available: **15.03.2017.**

Website: <http://www.astorrigahotel.lv>

TripAdvisor reviews: https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g274967-d4092397-Reviews-Astor_Riga_Hotel_Conference-Riga_Riga_Region.html

RIXWELL OLD RIGA Palace 3*

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 50.00 (payment through agency)**

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 60.00 (payment at the hotel)**

Date until which the special rate is available: **15.03.2017.**

Website: <http://rixwell.com/lv/rixwell-old-riga-palace-hotel>

TripAdvisor reviews: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274967-d1552301-Reviews-Rixwell_Old_Riga_Palace_Hotel-Riga_Riga_Region.html

AVALON hotel 4*

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 75.00 (payment through agency)**

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 85.00 (payment at the hotel)**

Date until which the special rate is available: **15.03.2017.**

Website: <http://www.hotelavalon.eu/>

Wellton Riga Hotel & Spa 4*

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 60.00 (payment through agency)**

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 70.00 (payment at the hotel)**

Date until which the special rate is available: **15.03.2017.**

Website: <http://wellton.com/lv>

TripAdvisor reviews: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274967-d8147305-Reviews-Wellton_Hotel_Riga_SPA-Riga_Riga_Region.html

Konventa Sēta 3*

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 57.00 (payment through agency)**

Price for SGL room including breakfast/ per night: **EUR 65.00 (payment at the hotel)**

Date until which the special rate is available: **15.03.2017.**

Website: <http://www.hotelkolonna.com/viesnicas/riga/konventa-seta/lv/>