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## Press Release

Thursday 14 May

# UN Honours Chemical Champions

GENEVA, 14 May – The United Nations has saluted the contribution made by governments, industry and other groups to reducing the chemical risks the world faces. The awards were presented here by the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme, Achim Steiner, on the penultimate day of ICCM2, the second International Conference on Chemicals Management.

The awards, in the form of certificates, recognise the winners' record in supporting SAICM, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management: ICCM is its governing body.

Dr Steiner, accompanied by the ICCM2 president, Dr Ivan Erzen, presented SAICM awards to 32 governments, 11 intergovernmental organisations, one business organisation, and the European Commission.

Dr Steiner said: "Today we are celebrating the champions of international chemicals management in the hope that their commitment and engagement will inspire all of us.

"SAICM is an ambitious voluntary framework... without its implementation, the world will suffer the consequences of unsound chemicals management. It requires our collective efforts, not only in word but more importantly in deed."

Dr Erzen said: "It goes without saying that more support will be necessary. The presentation of the awards today should encourage all stakeholders to make contributions and share the burden currently carried by a few. Our target must be that all of us will receive a SAICM award."

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The SAICM awards come in three types – gold, silver and bronze. Gold awards are made to contributors whose direct financial contributions to SAICM exceed US\$1 million. Silver awards are for those who have given direct financial support in more than one year and/or are developing countries. They will also be given for contributions of staff to the SAICM secretariat. The bronze awards are for other contributors.

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### **Notes to Editors**

**Gold** awards were presented to the Governments of Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA, and also to the European Commission.

**Silver** award winners: the Governments of Australia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Japan, Madagascar, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Slovenia, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Two intergovernmental organisations were also honoured: the UN Environment Programme and the World Health Organisation.

**Bronze** awards went to the Governments of Belgium, Barbados, Canada, Chile, Egypt, Hungary, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Latvia, Panama, Tanzania and Thailand. Intergovernmental organisations honoured were the Food & Agriculture Organisation, the International Labour Organisation, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of American States, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programmes, the UN Development Programme, the UN Industrial Development Organisation, and the UN Institute for Training and Research. The International Council of Chemical Associations, a non-governmental organisation, also won a bronze award.

### **MEDIA INQUIRIES**

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