

# **African Group Statement for the 1st Meeting of the Intersessional Process on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020**

**Brasilia, Brazil-February 7-9 2017**

## **Thank you Co-Chair,**

The African Group wishes to congratulate the co-chairs on their election to lead this important process. We have no doubt that your able leadership will guide us through this process successfully and we will achieve our desired outcomes.

Our gratitude also goes to the Secretariat for the excellent logistical arrangements, the development partners for their financial support and the Government of Brazil for hosting this meeting in this wonderful City of Brasilia.

As the African region, we underscore that the sound management of chemicals and waste, now and beyond 2020, is critical for our region, because Africa is on the receiving end of banned and restricted chemicals and wastes, products with restricted chemicals and has experienced documented episodes of chemical poisoning, dumping, and there is evidence that our populations still continue to be exposed to these hazardous chemicals through various exposure routes.

## **Co-Chair**

Africa has to some extent, benefited from SAICM, the Region continues to be faced with many challenges related to implementation of agreed measures for sound management of chemicals and wastes. At national level, government has already entered into bad contracts with multinational chemicals companies, the ports of entry are porous, the legal frameworks are weak, surveillance and monitoring mechanisms are poor and institutional and enforcement capacities are weak. Therefore appropriate actions need to be taken at policy level to reduce the risk to chemical exposure and strengthen monitoring mechanisms.

However, we are aware that more resources are needed. The sound management of chemicals and wastes requires adequate, predictable and a sustainable financial mechanism to enable the implementation of SAICM activities.

Africa is of the view that the private sector needs to own up and do more with regards to ESM of chemicals. We therefore, suggest that SAICM could play an active role in the application of the extended producer responsibility principle to the chemical industry. The chemical industry could do more to financially support the effective implementation of relevant SAICM activities as well as support the capacity building for mainstreaming of sound chemicals management priorities across governments and national development policies and plans for strengthening national chemicals management capacities.

### **Co-chair**

Africa appreciates the support received so far from UNEP, GEF, IOMC member organisations and other international development partners. However, beyond 2020 there is need to do more. Therefore, we collectively call upon all development partners to continue providing financial and technical support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

It is therefore very important that this process comes out with a clear roadmap on mobilization of existing and new predictable, sustainable and dedicated sources of financial support for the implementation of SAICM.

### **Co-chair,**

The African Region also believes that beyond 2020, there is need to strengthen SAICM mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders play their roles and honour their commitments. As such we need to re-think of new approaches on how we can better SAICM for the benefit of human health and the environment.

### **Finally Co chair,**

The African region is ready to engage in constructive discussions and embrace the spirit of cooperation, dialogue and flexibility throughout our discussions. We look

forward to this dialogue which we believe will result in providing overall direction and guidance on areas of focus for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

**Thank you**