

**Statement of Dr. Yossi Inbar
Director-General
Ministry of Environmental Protection, Israel
to the Round Table on Waste and Chemicals
of the 18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development
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Mr. Co-Chair, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is my honor and pleasure to take part in this round table on strategies for sustainable chemical and waste management. Waste issues rank at the top of our list of priorities at Israel's Ministry of Environmental Protection. We are determined to use every tool at our disposal to meet the challenge of transforming waste from a hazard into an economic resource.

Our waste policy is based upon three Rs principles:

1. The reduction of waste at its source;
2. The reuse and recovery of waste; and
3. The use of landfilling as an option of last resort.

Our target is 50% recycling by 2015 and zero landfilling by 2020.

In order to achieve these targets we have a staged program which we started more than 17 years ago:

- We closed over 500 old contaminating dumps & opened a few state of the art landfills – this was accomplished by the year 2000.
- In 2007, we enacted a landfill levy, as a means of internalizing the external costs of landfilling. The funds of this landfill levy provide

over 50 millions US\$ annually for recycling infrastructure and recycling projects.

- We are launching a country wide source separation of household & commercial waste.
- We enhance recycling through a variety of laws, including the Deposit Law on Beverage Containers and a Tire Recycling Law. And just a few weeks ago, our government approved a draft packaging law that expands producer responsibility to the treatment of packaging waste.
- We promote markets for the recycled products, through green procurement.
- Last but not least, we increase Israel's recycling rate through education and information programs.

Currently we are investing in rehabilitation of the old closed landfills (domestic & hazardous) with biogas recovery for energy wherever possible.

Mr. Chairman,

On the issue of chemical management, stringent measures for supervision ensure a “cradle to grave” approach to deal with chemical waste. Regulations require owners of industrial plants in which chemicals are stored, processed, sold or produced to take all necessary measures to treat these materials according to the safest and best available technology. These regulations also specify measures that must be taken to prevent and treat accidents.

The system of emergency response to chemical accidents is especially noteworthy and it was the subject of a side event hosted by Israel last

week. At the same time, I am also aware of the challenges that remain. I have no doubt, however, that with careful planning and determination, we will be able to close the remaining gaps for the benefit of our citizens, our economy and our environment.

Thank you.