

Chair's Summary of the CSD Chemicals Seminar **Advance Unedited Text**

The CSD Thematic Seminar on Chemicals was held at UN Headquarters on 23 February 2010. The event was moderated by Ms. Tania Valerie Raguz, Vice Chair of CSD-18. An introductory statement was made by Mr. Tariq Banuri, Director of Division for Sustainable Development (DSD). Mr. Banuri put “Chemicals” in the broader sustainable development perspective, highlighting the value of CSD for strengthening coherence at the national, institutional and international levels on the work of sound management of chemicals.

A film entitled “*Management of Ozone Depleting Substances*” was shown as a lead-in to the panel presentation by Mr. Klaus Tyrkko of UNDP. He focused his presentation on governance and means of implementation on chemicals management. He emphasized that the implementation needs differentiate from country to country. The resources for implementation may include both the public and private. Mainstreaming the sound management of chemicals with the development planning processes is important to ensure a broader financial basis for chemicals management by fostering national budget commitments as well as bi-lateral support. Capacity building and technology transfer should be strengthened at both national and international levels. He also introduced the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and the work by its member organizations on sound chemicals management.

Ms. Kei Ohno of the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention in her presentation provided a comprehensive picture of the global action towards the risk reduction of POPs, including the history of the negotiation, the overview of the Stockholm Convention, as well as the achievements and challenges on the management of POPs. She conveyed the message of Mr. Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention who emphasized that there are still a lot of challenges around the world on achieving the sound management of chemicals and a world free of POPs.

Another film entitled “*ICCA: Looking to the Future*” was shown before the last presentation by Mr. Phil Snyder, the representative of Royal Dutch Shell and the member of the International Council of Chemicals Associations (ICCA). Mr. Snyder introduced the work of ICCA and its partnership initiatives, such as “Responsible Care” and the “Global Product Strategy”, in helping to meet the 2020 goal on sound management of chemicals. He highlighted that the challenges on sound chemicals management include lack of appropriate expertise and resources, lack of data and scientific information, lack of mature risk management models, lack of compliance infrastructure, and lack of regulatory harmonization. The future actions should include regulatory initiatives, voluntary initiatives and cooperation among intergovernmental organizations, business sector and NGOs.

Following the panel presentations, the interactive discussion revolved around several key issues, including:

- The concept of “mainstreaming chemicals management into development process” is important in understanding the linkages between chemicals and poverty reduction by translating chemicals management into a language understood by development and finance ministries;
- Partnerships among Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders on the ground are essential for implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the legal instruments on chemicals;
- The CSD can add value to the existing chemicals processes by mainstreaming these issues into the broader context of sustainable development, linking chemicals to climate change, energy, health and other issues, raising awareness and prioritizing chemicals management in the national development plan, enhancing synergy among existing mechanisms and legal instruments, and promoting life cycle approach;
- One of the challenges faced in development and use of chemicals is how to foresee problems and hazards in their application. Industrial research and development and scientific risk assessment must be partnered with sound political decision-making and policy coherence at all levels;
- Resources for capacity building in developing countries must be increased and technologies must be scaled-up in order to meet the agreed goals and targets related to the sound management of chemicals. Need assessment is essential in utilizing financial mechanisms available, for example, through the Stockholm Convention;
- The complexity of chemicals management demands a high level of information sharing through regulatory framework and voluntary initiatives. The existing information sharing platforms should be used more effectively and visibly.