

Scientific and Technological Community

Statement on Chemicals

Gisbert Glaser, International Council for Science (ICSU)

Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for CSD-19

New York, 1 March 2011

Mr. Chair,

The Scientific and Technological Community considers as a priority for action that implementation of the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management (SAICAM), aimed at strengthening capacity for sound chemicals management and a life cycle approach, must be enhanced and accelerated. Sound management of chemicals must be addressed in all relevant sectors, not the least in agriculture, with full involvement and education of farmers.

CSD-19 should address the challenges identified for developing countries, particularly lack of sufficient scientific information and inadequate human resources capacity for carrying out assessment of risks related to the use of many chemicals. North-south scientific and technical cooperation in the area of sound chemicals management should be enhanced substantially.

CSD-19 takes place in this International Year of Chemistry (2011). The Commission's negotiated outcome document of its session coming May (2011) should incorporate recommendations and commitments on enhancing university education and research in pure and applied chemistry, as well as on consumer information and public awareness of potential risks that chemicals pose. We recommend launching an international mechanism to support education and capacity building in the implementation of the three Conventions of Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel.

The Scientific and Technological Community sees an urgent need of strengthening national science-based regulation systems, in particular in developing countries. Specific attention must be paid to strengthening national agencies tasked with ensuring enforcement and compliance.

Last but not least, Mr. Chair, our Community calls on industry and governments to increase significantly investments in “green chemistry” research and development. In fact, all stakeholders should demonstrate enhanced support for the development and use of safe, environmentally benign substances in

replacement of more hazardous ones. Green chemistry needs to be supported through economic incentives and favourable market conditions, and through much enhanced international cooperation, including transfer of technology and dedicated scientific and technological capacity building.

Thank you.