



ARMENIA

MARCH 1, 2011

CSD-19 Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting

Chemicals: Policy options to address barriers and constraints, taking into account lessons learned and best practices

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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

During the last few years, the production, trade and use of chemicals have significantly increased in my country. The use of chemicals has great advantages in many spheres, but their misuse in any phase, such as production, storage, calculation, import/export, packaging, labelling, may cause adverse impact on human health and the environment.

The risk assessment implementation in connection with the adverse impact caused by chemicals must be regarded as an essential part of sustainable social, economic development both on national and international levels.

Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 sets the creation of environmentally sound national systems of chemical substances management as the main goal. Although there are still some outstanding issues connected to the deficiencies in legislation and inter-ministerial coordination of resources, over the last decade, Armenia has carried out a large amount of substantive work to facilitate the effective use of chemicals.

Armenia has in place the system of legislative and institutional regulations of chemical substances, including persistent organic compounds and wastes. Regulation and control of chemical substances and wastes, including POPs, are based on development and implementation of an integrated approach aimed at efficient organization of safe production and application of chemicals.

In addition, Armenia has ratified Rotterdam, Stockholm, Basel Conventions, UNECE Convention on the “Trans-boundary Effects of Industrial Accidents” and relevant regional agreements, and has carried out a number of activities within the framework of “National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants”.

The ratifications stipulated a very important provision – “Safety Certificates” of enterprises carrying out hazardous activities, in order to prevent industrial accidents, to reduce the risk, thereof, and to eliminate consequences, if they occur. Authorized bodies have been designated to

implement the Conventions, and focal points of those Conventions have been appointed to secure information sharing, as well as mutual assistance, when such industrial accidents happen.

Within the framework of state mechanisms on management of chemicals and wastes, the following is carried out by the Ministry of Nature Protection:

- Registration/inventory of industrial entities, at which chemicals are produced and used and wastes are generated;
- Inventory/accounting of wastes generated at the territory of Armenia and their classification according to hazardous properties; and
- Registration/inventory of industrial entities, which are potentially subject to industrial accidents and at which hazardous chemicals are generated, used, re-used and stored.

Different projects were carried out in Armenia and a number of actions and programmes are ongoing aimed at developing integrated approaches to chemicals and waste sound management, establishment of the system for their harmonized management, strengthening the capacity and the national legal/legislative basis in this area. Some of the projects include: strengthening of cooperation in the field of chemicals and waste management between various state structures at the national level; strengthening waste integrated management in Armenia; development and implementation of the National Cleaner Production Programme in Armenia; updating a National Chemicals Management Profile, Inventory, Monitoring and Analysis of Obsolete Pesticides, training on risk assessment of chemicals at national level in a global context and many others.

Lastly, the following priorities for action in the area of environmentally friendly use of chemical substances have been proposed and are under consideration:

- Expansion of the process of information, knowledge, and experience sharing on assessment of chemical hazard;
- Creation of standards on chemical safety, harmonization of the classification and marking of chemical substances;
- Development of projects aimed at reducing the harmful impact of chemicals and creation of a “National Profile for Harmonic Use of Chemicals”;
- Prevention of the illegal circulation of toxic and hazardous products; and
- Drafting the “Law on Chemicals”.

Given the importance of efficient use of chemicals in the process of sustainable development and its contribution to the preservation of human health and the environment, Armenia remains committed to the implementation of its national regulatory policies and will work with the relevant international bodies to achieve its goals in this context.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.