

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION (AUC) CONTRIBUTION TO WASTE AND CHEMICAL CLUSTER OF CSD 18 MEETING

Waste

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to thank the presenters for such remarkable presentations. We have all heard of the concerns of Africa in terms of waste management. Many African countries and the Chair of the African Group have spoken and AUC wishes to align itself with their positions. We also acknowledge the giant steps undertaken by African countries in the field of waste management and wish to spur them to keep up the momentum.

Mr. Chair it is recognised that the responsibility of waste management in most African countries is under the purview of the municipalities and this trend has to be reversed if waste has to be more effectively and efficiently managed and controlled. Waste management requires the participation of all stakeholders from government, private sector to the public at large and these stakeholders should have the requisite capacity or knowledge to deal with waste issues. Waste management in Africa is turning out to be a lucrative business and livelihood for some sectors of our society and this is an aspect which merits to be given due attention by government and development partners.

The AUC is planning to support the Basel Convention Regional Centers in Africa to better execute their mandates as waste managers on the continent thus contributing to sustainable development. We know that most African countries are signatories to the Basel Convention, but some of these countries are lagging behind when it comes to ratification of the Bamako Convention. In this connection, the AUC is developing policy papers and strategies to promote its ratification and sensitise Heads of State on the importance of its ratification and implementation. Furthermore, the AUC in collaboration with UNEP ROA plans to organise the first Conference of Parties to this Convention in 2011 in Mali. Discussions have already been initiated with the Mali Government to this effect. Many speakers have evoked the problem of illegal dumping of waste on the African continent and we hope that by ratifying, domesticating and implementing the Bamako Convention and the Basel Protocol related to dumping, this phenomenon will be arrested or minimised.

We wish at this juncture, Mr. Chair to register our appreciation for the invaluable work being done by FAO through its ASP Project to rid Africa of pesticides waste. We therefore call on our development partners to put in the necessary resources so that the objective set by the ASP for Africa would be attained.

In conclusion, I wish to remind all African countries present here that they are all member states of the African Union and as such should not hesitate to contact the AUC for matters that need to be addressed at the highest political level. We urge the international community to make all efforts through prevailing agreements and protocols to put a stop to the obnoxious act of illegal dumping in Africa where the capacity to deal with these wastes is limited. The AUC will use its political leadership role to ensure that the concerns of Africa are adequately addressed.

We hope that this meeting will take due cognizance of the concerns raised by African countries. The AUC will continue to work closely with UNECA to ensure successful organisation of CSD meetings.

I thank you all.