

**FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
*GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009***

Agenda item 6. Chemicals

Intervention by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research¹

Thank you Ms. Chair,

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has been involved in capacity building and training in the field of Sound Chemicals Management for some 20 years. We are a Participating Organization in, and presently Chair the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management (IOMC), which comprises six UN organizations (UNITAR, UNEP, UNIDO, ILO, WHO and FAO), the OECD and two observers – UNDP and the World Bank. Through this mechanism, which operates at the “head of programme” level, we coordinate our work in this field. Various IOMC Participating Organizations have participated in this process to-date, and we intend to continue to be a strong partner. IOMC was a co-convenor of the SAICM negotiation process, and continues to be a major implementer in cooperation with other SAICM partners. We are therefore pleased to hear today the many references to the SAICM process in your deliberations.

With regard to UNITAR, we are by far the most active international organization assisting countries with SAICM implementation and enabling activities, with projects related to the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund in some over 50 countries, with donor support from Switzerland, the USA and the European Commission. Our focus is on what we would call “foundational” capacity building – given the myriad international, regional and national commitments and priorities countries face with regard to chemicals management, our approach is to develop and implement guidance and training to assist with prioritization, assessment and action at the national and regional levels in order to achieve the 2020 goal. However, it is clear that demand outstrips supply – far too few resources are going into SAICM in order to achieve the 2020 goal. Any assistance in raising the profile of chemicals management issues that CSD can provide will be warmly welcomed in that regard.

Lastly, I would like to cite one other key issue mentioned by several delegations. The issue of Nanotechnology and Manufactured Nanomaterials was endorsed as an emerging issue at SAICM’s ICCM-2 here in Geneva in May. UNITAR and our partner OECD are pleased to acknowledge the support of Switzerland, and firm commitments from the United States and United Kingdom, for a global series of regional awareness-raising workshops, the first of which was held in Beijing, China last week back-to-back with a SAICM regional meeting. For Nano, as a subset of chemicals management, awareness, let alone capacities, are almost non-existent in most developing and transition countries. Those faced within government and among other stakeholders with this incredibly exciting new field, which, as is the case with sound chemicals management in general, requires action on risks to protect human health and the environment – and capacities to ensure it is

¹ The text is presented as received from the author.

possible. We hope that SAICM and CSD will both be able partners to assist us, at the international level, with achieving these targets in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner.

Thank you, Ms. Chair.

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