

Item 6: Activities under other international forums

Statement of

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UN Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights  
of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes

Aarhus Convention Task Force on Access to Information

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Thank you Madam Chairperson. I would like to briefly describe the mandate of the Human Rights Council to the Special Rapporteur on hazardous substances and waste, and some of my upcoming activities.

As the Special Rapporteur, I am mandated to submit one thematic report to the Human Rights Council per year. As briefly mentioned earlier, my thematic report to the Council, to be presented in September 2015, will focus on the right to access information in the area of sound management of hazardous substances and waste. In preparation of this report, I intend to distribute a set of questionnaire early next year to consolidate input from all relevant stakeholders, including Governments, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, academia as well as business entities. I would hope that many of you here could respond to this questionnaire.

The hazardous substances mandate includes a monitoring function. As warranted, Special Rapporteurs send letters of allegation and urgent appeals regarding human rights violations from the mismanagement of hazardous substances and wastes. In addition, I am expected to undertake two country missions per year, and report on these missions to the Human Rights Council. I have one country visit, tentatively scheduled to take place in late March next year, to Kazakhstan. I would appreciate any input you may have that would contribute towards the successful undertaking of the visit.

The council has also asked me to focus on some specific issues, and provide certain deliverables:

(a) Business and human rights, as it relates to the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes;

(b) The human rights implications of the transfer of polluting industries, industrial activities and technologies from one country to another and new trends therein, including electronic-waste and the dismantling of ships;

(c) The ambiguities in international instruments that allow the movement and dumping of hazardous substances and wastes, and any gaps in the effectiveness of international regulatory mechanisms; and

(d) Human rights abuses and violations committed against human rights defenders owing to their activities relating to the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes.

In addition, resolution 27/23 adopted in 2014 requested that the Special Rapporteur to develop, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, a set of best practices on the human rights obligations related to environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and waste.

Regarding upcoming activities, I would like to mention that I will be participating on a side-event at the OEWG of SAICM, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> on a rights based approach to sound chemicals management, and I encourage all of you to attend if your schedules allow.

I further avail myself for any questions you may have or for any information that you wish to share with me.

Thank you, Madam chairperson