

Distinguished co-chairs of the intersessional process, delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to Bucharest!

The Government of Romania thanks the SAICM Secretariat, UNEP, and the co-chairs of this intersessional process for accepting our offer to host this fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

Despite the uncertain times we still face, we must continue the work on the global Sustainable Development Goals.

The global chemical sector is a major economic factor and a key enabler for achieving sustainable development. Chemicals and waste management is a specific target under SDG 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns and is about ensuring healthy lives and a healthy planet well into the future.

Given that chemicals and waste affect all aspects of development, the sound management of chemicals and waste is relevant and supports the implementation of many other, if not all SDGs. Despite these ambitious goals, progress in waste and chemicals management is quite slow. I believe that greater mobilization and allocation of resources are needed to accelerate this process.

To reduce the impact of chemicals on the environment, we need to see to what extent the presence of hazardous substances in waste products can be managed or recovered in a compliant and sustainable manner.

We know that one major goal of this meeting is the subject of targets that need to be considered in a reiterative process and together with the indicators, to capture and develop a comprehensive indicator framework for the instrument including considerations of resources and capacities for monitoring implementation. Also setting up recommendations about national implementation, international, regional, and sectoral cooperation and coordination together with an enhanced sectoral and stakeholder engagement we consider to be the desired outcome of this meeting this week.

Taking this into consideration I would like to underline that the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests, as the central authority for the environment believes that a joint commitment to protect human health and the environment by further developing recommendations for a global framework for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 is the best way forward and encourage all participants in this meeting to reach an agreement in supporting this.

Solutions must also be identified to restrict the export of chemicals and hazardous waste to states that cannot manage them properly.

A major concern and focus are the reduction of negative impacts of urban activities and of chemicals that are hazardous to human health and the environment, including through the environmentally sound management and safe use of chemicals, the reduction and recycling of waste, and more efficient use of water and energy. And we will work to minimize the impact of cities on the global climate system.

Unfortunately, we cannot ignore the complicated situation on the eastern border of Europe. Let me express the Romanian solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Romania condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustified act of aggression against Ukraine, which grossly violates international law and the UN Charter, and undermines international security and stability.

Romania demands that Russia immediately cease its military actions, withdraw all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders and abide by UN General Assembly. Romania resolutely supports Ukraine's inherent right to self-defense and the Ukrainian armed forces' efforts to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and population by Article 51 of the UN Charter.

At all times Russia must respect its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, concerning the protection of civilians, women, and children. Russia also needs to stop its disinformation campaign and cyber-attacks.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by wishing you successful discussions during this week and a pleasant stay in Bucharest.