

Common statement from NGOs and organizations working on gender and chemicals, such as CARPIN, CIEL, HEJSupport, IPEN, MSP Institute, WECF and others

Thank you, Madame Co-Chairs,

I am speaking on behalf of NGOs from all over the world united in the common vision of a gender equal world.

We want to start with a quote from the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment: - "Humanity must create a world that is gender equitable and ecologically sustainable. These imperatives are so deeply interwoven that neither can be achieved without the other." -

The linkage of gender and chemicals is not new. Already 28 years ago, in 1995 within the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, countries declared that: "Environmental risks in the home and workplace may have a disproportionate impact on women's health because of women's different susceptibilities to the toxic effects of various chemicals" and recognized the need to "develop gender-sensitive databases, information and monitoring systems" on toxic chemicals and hazardous waste.

In this week of discussions and 28 years later, we still learnt how difficult it is to address the gender dimensions of chemicals, and to mainstream it into the text of a SAICM Beyond 2020.

We have examples where more progress was made in regard to gender in other Rio Conventions: UNFCCC has the Lima Work Programme on Gender, and a few months ago in Montreal, the world agreed on the first-ever stand-alone gender target in the new biodiversity framework.

SAICM Beyond 2020 should not stay behind that.

That is why we call for gender equality and gender mainstreaming instruments in the new framework to align with the UNEA-4 Resolution (UNEA/EA.4/Res 17).

Even though various stakeholders mentioned gender in their opening statements at IP4.1, and even though we could integrate some text on gender in the negotiating document we need to make it concrete at ICCM5.

Gender should not be a new target; instead, specific gender considerations and a gender action plan are necessary to improve the implementation of all targets because the issues of gender equality and human rights are the core point of all SDGs.

As the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights tweeted today: "let's ensure human rights are integrated in all aspects of the new SAICM".

Thank you!