

31 July 2008

Subject: First meeting of the Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group, Rome, Italy, 21 to 24 October 2008

«Salutation»,

I have the honour to refer to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), as adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 4 to 6 February 2006. The Conference agreed that the groundwork for the second session on the issue of rules of procedure would be carried out by an Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group, which would meet a few months prior to the second session of the Conference. Subsequent consultations with stakeholders have determined that it would be useful for the Working Group to consider a number of additional issues in preparation for the second session of the Conference.

The first meeting of the Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group will be held from Tuesday 21 to Friday 24 October 2008, in Rome, Italy, at the headquarters of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The working languages for the session will be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The session will be opened on Tuesday 21 October at 10 a.m. Registration will take place on Tuesday 21 October from 8 a.m. and will continue throughout the remainder of the week, according to a schedule to be made available. Provision will also be made for informal regional and other group meetings at 9 a.m. on Tuesday 21 October.

I have the honour to invite you to designate, using the attached nomination form, a representative of your Government to participate in the first meeting of the Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group. **A completed nomination form for each participant should be forwarded to the SAICM secretariat at the address below not later than 31 August 2008.**

SAICM secretariat
c/o Chemicals Branch, UNEP/DTIE
11-13 chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Fax (41 22) 797 34 60

*SAICM National Focal Point
(or Permanent Representative, Geneva, in cases where no National Focal Point has been established)*

A limited number of Governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition from each region may each nominate one person to receive financial support for travel and daily subsistence in order to participate in the meeting. As a first step, the identification of Governments from each region to receive the travel funding will be coordinated by SAICM regional focal points in consultation with national focal points. Once the eligible Governments have been identified, **the country's official SAICM national focal point or, in cases where a focal point has not been established, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, should nominate the individual to receive the travel funding.** Lists of SAICM regional and national focal points are available on the SAICM web site, www.saicm.org.

In order to prepare for discussions on financial matters and emerging issues at the meeting, stakeholders are invited to complete the attached questionnaires and return them to the secretariat at the above address by 31 August 2008. The questionnaires were previously posted on the SAICM web site and advertised by e-mail to national focal points in June 2008.

The meeting of the SAICM Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group will immediately precede the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which will be held in Rome at the same venue from 27 to 31 October 2008. In cases where a Government's official representative funded by the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention to attend the meeting of the Conference of the Parties is also the SAICM national focal point, the Government concerned will be expected to designate that person as its nominee for funded participation in the SAICM Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group.

For further information, please contact Mr. Muhammed Omotola of the SAICM secretariat on telephone (41 22) 917 83 34; fax (41 22) 797 34 60; or e-mail saicm@chemicals.unep.ch, or consult the web site www.saicm.org.

I look forward to your Government's participation in the meeting.

(Signed)

Per M. Bakken
Head
Chemicals Branch, DTIE
United Nations Environment Programme