

## **Eleventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

The ministerial segment of the eleventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held in Brazzaville on 25 and 26 May 2006. It was attended by ministers from AMCEN member States and representatives of African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, secretariats of various environmental conventions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

In the Brazzaville Declaration on the Environment for Development, African Ministers of Environment welcomed the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 6 February 2006, and the subsequent endorsement of the Strategic Approach by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in its decision SS.IX/1 of 9 February 2006. They also encouraged the sustainable use of chemicals and committed themselves to the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, in order to realize the goals of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

In addition, the eleventh session of AMCEN adopted the following decision on SAICM, endorsing it and addressing its implementation\* :

### **Decision 5: Implementation of a strategic approach to international chemicals management and other chemical and hazardous waste management issues**

*We, African Ministers of Environment,*

*Having met* in Brazzaville, Congo, on 25 and 26 May 2006, at the eleventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Recalling* the initiation of the development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in its decision SS.VII/3 of 15 February 2002 and the endorsement of that decision by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in its decision 5 adopted at its tenth regular session on 30 June 2004,

*Recalling also* the commitment to the development of the Strategic Approach expressed by Heads of State and Government in the Plan of Implementation adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg on 4 September 2002 and in the 2005 World Summit Outcome adopted by the General Assembly at the high-level plenary meeting of its sixtieth session in New York on 16 September 2005,

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\* Extract provided by the SAIM Secretariat for information purpose only, not for official use

*Noting* the important contribution made to the development of the Strategic Approach by the holding of regional consultations, including those for the African region in Abuja, Nigeria, from 24 to 26 May 2004 and in Saly, Senegal, from 15 to 18 March 2005,

*Welcoming* the completion and adoption of the Strategic Approach by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 6 February 2006 and the subsequent endorsement of the approach by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in its decision SS.IX/1 of 9 February 2006,

*Applauding* the establishment of a “Quick Start” Programme to support initial enabling capacity-building and implementation activities for the Strategic Approach in developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and countries with economies in transition,

*Noting* with appreciation the contributions of the Government of South Africa and other donors to the Quick Start Programme trust fund,

*Recalling* decision 23/9, adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on 25 February 2005, at its twenty-third session, held in Nairobi, Kenya, which requested the Executive Director, as a matter of high priority, to make appropriate provision for fulfilment of the organization’s responsibilities under the Strategic Approach and to make provision for activities to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing the Strategic Approach, taking into account the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,

*Acknowledging* the initial work done to develop an African regional action plan for the implementation of the Strategic Approach,

*Decide:*

(a) To endorse the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management as a policy framework to support achievement of the goal set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that, by 2020, chemicals must be used and produced in ways that minimize significant adverse effects on human health and the environment;

(b) To urge Governments to nominate national Strategic Approach focal points and establish inter-ministerial or inter-institutional arrangements to oversee implementation of the Strategic Approach at the national level;

(c) To emphasize the need for the Strategic Approach to be implemented on an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral basis, engaging representatives of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector drawn from all relevant sectors, including agriculture, environment, health, industry and labour;

(d) To urge Governments to commence planning for national action plans for implementation of the Strategic Approach, building on work already undertaken in the context of multilateral environment agreements such as the

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as well as regional environmental agreements such as the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes Within Africa;

(e) To encourage recognition of the cross-cutting nature of chemical safety and hazardous waste as a sustainable development issue and the inclusion of sound chemicals and hazardous waste management considerations in national planning strategies and programmes, where appropriate;

(f) To encourage the exploration of possible regional approaches to the implementation of the Strategic Approach, where synergies can be identified, including through the holding of regional and subregional consultations and the further development of a regional action plan for Africa;

(g) To request the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and subregional organizations such as the Arab Maghreb Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the Basel Convention regional centres and others to participate actively in the implementation of the Strategic Approach as an integral part of efforts by African Governments to achieve the goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication;

(h) To urge the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank to give priority to the needs of African countries when developing activities to support implementation of the Strategic Approach within the work programmes and mandates of those organizations;

(i) To support plans for the holding of a symposium on illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals by the United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with the Governments of the Czech Republic and Germany, which should address the issue of hazardous waste consistent with chapter 19 of Agenda 21, as adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992;

(j) To request international and regional partners to support efforts to strengthen the ability of the Basel Convention regional centres to undertake capacity-building for chemicals and hazardous waste management in related multilateral environmental agreements in Africa, in line with the objectives of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.