

IPEN Opening Statement

By: Dr. Tadesse Amera, IPEN Co-Chair

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair

I am speaking on behalf of IPEN, which is a network of more than 500 civil society organizations from 121 countries. IPEN thanks the President for the leadership and guidance, the Intersessional Process Co-Chairs for preparing the paper that led the discussion at OEWG3 in Uruguay and which leads us at IP3 here in Bangkok; and we also thank the Kingdom of Thailand for hosting this important event in this beautiful city of Bangkok and for the warm hospitality of the people of Thailand.

We were here in the same building in November 2003 as part of SAICM negotiations and we have been engaged in grassroots implementation since the very beginning and have as a network adopted “Toxics-free Future” as our vision for accomplishing SAICM’s goals. In adopting SAICM, governments agreed that advancing chemical safety should be viewed as a necessary component of the sustainable development agenda. Actions related to chemical safety and toxic chemicals are either referenced or implied in many, if not all, of the SDGs.

The global chemical production is projected to double by 2030, with rapid growth in emerging economies. In our view, a new global agreement on chemical safety should therefore include both an upgrade to SAICM, SAICM 2.0, and an enabling framework to match the growing challenge of health, environmental, and economic injuries associated with the production, use, and disposal of toxic chemicals and wastes.

The vision of SAICM and the enabling framework should be timeless but with measurable, time-bound, targets, indicators and milestones. It should include prevention and precaution as priorities, and act to protect human health and the environment. The scope of SAICM2.0 should include the entire lifecycle and all wastes to mirror what is already agreed to by the UN General Assembly in SDG 12.4, which states the importance of achieving “the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their lifecycle...”

The Beyond 2020 process is mandated to “develop recommendations regarding measurable objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda”. These recommendations should be concrete, and provide clear connections to minimizing harms associated with chemicals and wastes.

We, therefore, hope to see ambitious recommendations that include

- An enabling framework that acts as an umbrella for all chemicals-related agreements whose elements are endorsed by a ministerial declaration in 2020 that is subsequently adopted by the UN General Assembly to ensure high -level political ownership
- Targets, indicators and milestones that mainly focus on harm minimization rather than being process oriented; and
- Financial mechanisms, including new and additional, adequate, sustainable and predictable that are accessible to all relevant stakeholders to address chemicals and waste issues.

Mr. Co-Chair, in closing I would like to assure you that IPEN, as a global network of civil society groups, is committed to continue to do everything possible to make the Beyond 2020 process a success.

THANK YOU, Mr. Co-Chair!!