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Geneva, 11–15 May 2009

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Cooperation with intergovernmental organizations**

**Report of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on  
Chemical Safety<sup>1</sup>**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to circulate, for the information of the Conference, the executive summary of the report of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, which was held in Budapest from 25 to 29 September 2006. The full report is available at <http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum5/report/en/index.html>

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\* Reissued for technical reasons.

\*\* SAICM/ICCM.2/1.

1 The executive summary is reproduced in the form in which it was received and has not been formally edited.

## Annex



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*Chemical Safety for Sustainable Development*

**FORUM V**  
**Fifth Session**  
**of the**  
**Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety**

**Budapest, Hungary**  
**25 - 29 September 2006**

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**FINAL REPORT**  
**Executive Summary**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****Forum V agreed action items and recommendations****Introduction**

The Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (Forum V) was held 25-29 September 2006 in Budapest, Hungary, hosted by the Government of Hungary. Eighty-one governments participated in the meeting, together with representatives from twelve intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and sixty-four non-governmental organizations (NGO).

The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS or Forum) is an innovative participatory mechanism with the purpose of providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues. The Forum provides countries and other stakeholders the opportunity to place issues on the international agenda and emphasize their special needs and concerns with respect to improving chemicals management. It was established in 1994 in response to a recommendation adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – UNCED, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

At Forum V the IFCS took stock of the progress achieved on the commitments and recommendations made at previous sessions and charted the course for work in a number of new areas. In light of the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in February 2006, Forum V considered the future role of IFCS as a contribution to the implementation of SAICM.

The Forum V recommendations and agreed action items are presented below.

**Resolution on the Future of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS)****The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety,**

*Having met* in Budapest, at the invitation of the Government of Hungary, from 25 to 29 September 2006,

*Having regard* to the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemical Management (ICCM) on 6 February 2006,

*Having regard* to the invitation by the International Conference on Chemical Management to the Forum to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions,

*Appreciating* the unique multi-faceted role that IFCS has played as a flexible, open and transparent brainstorming and bridge-building forum for Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations including from the private sector which has facilitated consensus building,

*Recognizing* the desirability of continuing to have such a forum,

*Having regard* to the need to use human and financial resources efficiently and to avoid duplication of functions and work areas in order to enhance the implementation of SAICM and to allow the continuation of the important role played by the IFCS,

1. *Requests* the IFCS Secretariat to establish and maintain a close working relationship and co-operation with the SAICM secretariat,
2. *Invites* the SAICM secretariat to participate in IFCS organised meetings as appropriate,
3. *Decides* to establish a working group to prepare a draft decision, inter alia through teleconferences, email and other communication aids, on the future role and functions of the IFCS, including options for its institutional arrangement and consideration of a joint secretariat with SAICM, mindful of the need to avoid duplication, its possible relationship to the ICCM, and its contribution to the implementation of the SAICM, for consideration at Forum VI,
4. *Decides* that membership and participation in the working group shall be limited to the members of the Forum Standing Committee (or the designee of a member of the Forum Standing Committee), and that the five regional SAICM focal points (or the designee of a region through the SAICM focal point) shall also be invited to participate as members of the working group,
5. *Decides* that, based on the recommendations of the working group, and before the next ICCM, Forum VI shall, if it so decides, propose a draft decision for possible consideration by the ICCM,

6. *Urges* for reasons of synergies and cost-effectiveness that consideration be given to further IFCS Forum meeting being held back-to-back with other relevant international meetings such as ICCM,

7. *Invites* all Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide voluntary financial and in-kind resources in support of the secretariat in the fulfilment of its functions.

**Topics for the future Forum of IFCS**

1. **Nanoparticles, Nanomaterials, Nanotechnology: Opportunities and Challenges**<sup>1</sup>
  - Public dimension / dialogue with stakeholders (public, NGO, OECD and other IGOs, science, industry, trade unions, politics)
  - Support precautionary measures with respect to occupational health, consumer safety and the environment
  - Voluntary measures of industry (self-control principles, code of conduct, responsible care)
  - Promotion of national inventories on the usage of nanoparticles and development of exposure scenarios
  - Adaptation of the existing legislation, if necessary: threshold values
  - How to bridge the gap between industrial countries, developing countries and countries with economies in transitions.
2. **Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic Substances**<sup>1,2</sup>
  - Hazard assessment, risk evaluation and risk assessment
  - Risk management
3. **Heavy Metals**<sup>1</sup>
  - Arsenic
  - Chromium
  - Nickel
  - Mercury
  - Lead
  - Cadmium
  - Other toxic heavy metals
4. **Substitution/Alternatives**
  - Substitution as a principle<sup>1</sup>
  - Substitution of substances
  - Substitution of pesticides with links to poverty reduction
  - Substitution within product life-cycle (LCA)
  - Substitutions in the light of OPS Para 14 (d) (i)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While these topics were proposed, some participants expressed concern with the proposals marked with a reference to footnote <sup>1</sup>. Some concerns also applied to sub-bulleted lists.

<sup>2</sup> One participant noted that this might be better addressed through SAICM's Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) 14(d) objective regarding prioritization of such substances for assessment.

<sup>3</sup> "To ensure by 2020, that chemicals or chemical uses that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment<sup>8</sup> based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits as well as the availability of safer substitutes and their efficacy, are no longer produced or used for such uses;"

<sup>8</sup> "Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs); very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances; chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia the reproductive, endocrine, immune or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; those subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level."



5. **Follow-up of the existing active topics**
  - Precaution (case studies / pilot studies) <sup>1</sup>
  - Chemicals and poverty reduction (focus on pesticides proposed)
  - Widening gap
  - Toys and chemical safety
  - Occupational health and safety
6. **E-waste** <sup>1, 4</sup>
  - Dialogue on multi dimensional aspects
  - Items not included under Basel such as products near end of life
  - Sharing experiences and technology such as recycling
7. **Ecological sound and integrated pest and vector management (beyond alternatives)**
8. **Drinking water: Contamination with Chemicals** <sup>2</sup>
  - Universal drinking water standards
  - Monitoring Strategies
  - Management Strategies
  - Capacity building in developing countries to implement standards and monitoring programs
9. **Illegal Traffic in dangerous and toxic substances** <sup>5</sup>
10. **SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) and Global Plan of Action (GPA)** <sup>1, 2</sup>
  - “Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs): very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances; chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia the reproductive, endocrine, immune or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; those subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level.”
11. **SAICM Draft Global Plan of Action SAICM/ICCM.1/4 Table C items** <sup>1</sup>
  - Preparation of objective information report to support ICCM consideration of topics and items in table C of document SAICM/ICCM.1/4 <sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Some participants noted that this issue might be linked to the “Metals” topic.

<sup>5</sup> Outcome of the UNEP Symposium on illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals, Prague, Czech Republic (6-8 Nov. 2006) should be considered

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm>

### Applying Precaution in the Context of Chemical Safety

The Forum identified a series of potential next steps to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition that wish to utilize tools and approaches in applying precaution in domestic chemicals management activities. The Forum categorized the next steps into two general areas:

1. Provision of information to developing countries and countries with economies in transition on tools and approaches for making decisions in the face of uncertainty and/or applying precaution in the domestic context, including:
  - a. a portal (links to various tools rather than building an entire infrastructure) combining tools from various stakeholders to enable easy access by stakeholders;
  - b. tool-kits that outline a suite of tools and approaches for applying precaution that can be used by developing countries, countries with economies in transition, and other stakeholders and that describes how and why they may be applied depending on the context of their use;
  - c. practical case examples, both positive and negative, of the tools and approaches used by countries and other stakeholders; and
  - d. a list of contact points within countries and other stakeholders for further information on tools and approaches.
2. Capacity building/skill sharing initiatives to support application of tools and approaches for making decisions in the face of uncertainty and/or applying precaution in the domestic context, including:
  - a. joint capacity building workshops with a wide participation of stakeholders;
  - b. on-going dialogue across countries and stakeholders for sharing lessons and tools/approaches; and
  - c. pilot projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on applying tools/approaches for implementing precaution in chemicals safety in which all stakeholders can participate.

Recognizing the importance of mechanisms for:

- sharing information and lessons learned from case examples, both positive and negative;
- enhancing multi-sectoral dialogue; and
- capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the application of tools and approaches for making decisions in the face of uncertainty and/or applying precaution in the domestic context,

the Forum requests that actions be undertaken between now and Forum VI to implement the identified next steps with the intention of contributing to the implementation of the SAICM. Implementation of these steps should consider:

- 1) the scope of approaches and tools to be included in information sharing and skill-sharing mechanisms;
- 2) the varying domestic regulatory, policy and application contexts;
- 3) current initiatives conducted by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and governments to minimize duplication of efforts and enhance collaboration;
- 4) ways to make existing tools more accessible to governments and other stakeholders in developing countries;

- 5) possible areas for national pilot projects; and
- 6) possible sources of voluntary financial support for implementing the identified actions.

The Forum invites and encourages IFCS participants to make available such information, assistance, and tools and approaches as described above.

**Heavy Metals: need for further global action?****The Budapest Statement on Mercury, Lead and Cadmium**

*Having met* in Budapest, at the invitation of the Government of Hungary at the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety from 25-29 September 2006,

*Recognizing* the environmental and health effects of mercury, lead and cadmium worldwide,

*Acknowledging* the current and planned international actions to promote risk reduction of mercury, lead and cadmium in other fora such as UNEP, WHO, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNECE, OECD and the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM),

*Mindful* for example, of ongoing work in the UNEP global mercury programme and noting that global assessments on cadmium and lead are to be reported to the UNEP Governing Council in 2007,

*Also mindful* of the concern of developing countries regarding the exports of restricted products to those nations,

*Further Recognizing* that the risks from mercury, lead and cadmium need to be addressed by further global, regional, national and local actions, as appropriate,

*Also recognizing* that current efforts to minimize use and reduce releases of mercury have not yet fully addressed the global risks and need to be expanded and adequately supported,

*Recognizing* the importance of public awareness, communication, information exchange, education at all levels and capacity building for the implementation of risk reduction measures on mercury, lead and cadmium,

*Reaffirming* our commitment to the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety and the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, and specifically to the key goals outlined in the Agenda 21, Chapter 19; the Forum III document *Priorities for Action beyond 2000*; the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation paragraph 23.g and the goals of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Overarching Policy Strategy, paragraph 14,

1. *Call* for IFCS participants to initiate actions that will address the health, including occupational health and the environmental impact of mercury, lead and cadmium;
2. *Invite* WHO and others to re-enforce, complement and widen actions towards this aim;
3. *Urge* IFCS participants to initiate, continue, and intensify actions, as appropriate, to address the excess supply of mercury on a global scale through a variety of possible measures, such as an export prohibition preventing excess mercury from re-entering the global market and a global phase out of primary production of mercury;
4. *Call upon* countries, regional economic integration organisations and stakeholder groups, in particular industry, to consider and, where appropriate use, a variety of activities, including environmentally sound use, storage, recycling and disposal of mercury, lead and cadmium and partnerships programmes and voluntary agreements, alongside more binding instruments, as appropriate, to promote management of problems related to mercury, lead and cadmium;

5. *Invite* the UNEP Governing Council to initiate and strengthen voluntary actions at the global level for mercury, lead and cadmium, as appropriate, including partnerships and other activities;
6. *Also invite* the UNEP Governing Council to give high priority to considering further measures to address risks to human health and the environment from mercury and, measures, as appropriate, on lead and cadmium, by assessing the need for further action and considering a range of options, including the possibility of establishing a legally binding instrument, as well as partnerships, and other activities, in addition to ongoing discussions on these topics;
7. *Invite* the UNEP Governing Council to consider establishing a global mercury use and/ or release reduction goal;
8. *Urge* IFCS participants to support and contribute to the further deliberations of the ICCM in the framework of SAICM for the reduction of risks from mercury, lead and cadmium with particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
9. *Further urge* IFCS participants to support and contribute to the Global Partnerships for Mercury Reductions;
10. *Urge* the ICCM in the framework of SAICM, taking into account possible decisions by the UNEP Governing Council, to consider actions at the local, national, regional and global levels for mercury, lead and cadmium, as appropriate, with particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
11. *Call upon* developed countries, and other countries that are in a position to do so, to support these activities.

Forum V participants thank the Government of Switzerland for its generosity and initiative in sponsoring a useful side event on heavy metals in Budapest, 23 September 2006.

### Toys and Chemical Safety

The Forum considered potential chemical risks from toys linked to chemical exposures, the question of prevalence of chemical related harms, the current approaches taken to assess potential chemical risk, and actions to protect children from chemical harms from toys.

The Forum recommended the following action items:

1. Given the potential enhanced exposures and/or vulnerabilities of children to chemicals, the known hazards from certain chemicals already detected in some toys, as well as the incomplete information about chemicals in toys and their impact on child health, the Forum encourages the use of a full range of tools and approaches including prevention and precaution to ensure that toys are safe. Such tools and approaches should be used by
  - designers and manufacturers of toys,
  - decisions makers in supply and sales of toys, and
  - governments and regulators working in the area of toy safety.
2. Given the information gaps that exist, the Forum encourages dialog among governments, toy manufacturers including those in the informal sector in developing countries and countries in transition, retailers, consumer groups, and other stakeholders to:
  - identify chemicals of concern used in toys, and potential substitution options,
  - develop strategies for sharing information on chemicals commonly used in toys and adverse effects from their use,
  - encourage countries and regions to develop and share the results of surveillance of chemical content of toys with other countries and all stakeholders,
  - promote research on impacts of chemicals on product safety and children's health in the context of toy use, and
  - support educational efforts to increase awareness of issues of chemical safety and toys among critical groups such as parents and children, health care professionals, small and medium scale manufacturers and the informal sector.
3. Given the increasing international trade in toys (including on the internet) and existing differences in toy safety standards globally, governments and industry are encouraged to work towards developing guidance for toy safety and harmonization of international standards. Important areas to address may include:
  - determination and documentation of the chemical content of toys,
  - actions towards elimination of use in toys of substances, such as lead and mercury, that are likely to result in adverse toxic effects,
  - actions to protect children from exposure to hazardous chemicals in toys,
  - safety labelling.