

**Fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, Geneva, Switzerland, 28 September-2 October 2015**

***Interventions by Rolph Payet on Progress and challenges towards the achievement of the 2020 goal for the sound chemicals management: sound Management of chemicals and waste in the context of the sustainable development goals (Agenda item 4(c))***

Distinguished Participants,

Chemicals and wastes are reflected in a number goals and targets, including health, water, cities and human settlements, oceans, and sustainable consumption and production. This acknowledges the fact that the sound management of chemicals and wastes represents a truly key cross-cutting issue which can provide practical solutions to global and local challenges.

However, if we do not devote enough time to strategise how such a cross-cutting issue will work in the implementation of the SDGs – 15 years will go by and we will still be talking about it rather than being pro-active and engaging in this very important global process. The biggest challenge before us is therefore implementation.

The issue of hazardous chemicals and wastes also demonstrates the complexity, including the existing mandates of various actors and global and regional commitments (including those made through MEAs), that needs to be addressed for the implementation of the SDGs. Managing all these aspects will require a highly integrated approach to policy-making and connections with other issues, such as gender equality, economic growth, and employment.

Many delegations that took the floor during the SDG summit in New York, stressed the need for enhanced implementation of the goals through better engagement with national actors to ensure country ownership, and the engagement of civil society, in particular the youth, and a number of commitments were also made, including pledges through ODA and setting of specific funds to address poverty, climate change, biodiversity and water. What was certainly lacking was adequate reference to chemicals and wastes and its relationship to the SDGs. We, there, need, to improve communications and awareness on chemicals and wastes issues.

Effective implementation of the existent global commitments, including those contained in the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, is part of the solution for implementing the SDGs. It needs to be supported, however, by sufficient means of implementation, taking into account the sometimes limited capacity in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to manage the consequences of adverse impacts of chemicals and wastes.

The Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions has been closely cooperating with the Chemicals and Waste Branch of UNEP, the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the SAICM Secretariat, FAO, WHO and others to ensure that the chemicals and wastes management issues are integrated into relevant SDGs and associated targets. We look forward to further cooperation on the development of indicators, since appropriate, measurable, and technically

sound indicators are crucial for assessing where we are, and what needs to be done, to achieve these targets.

In that line, I would like to propose that the ICCM recommends the development of a stakeholder strategy to implement sustainable chemicals and wastes within the SDG.

This was also echoed in today's Interactive Panel Discussion on SDGs: "Make it happen for chemicals and wastes" which highlighted the sound management of chemicals and wastes as an essential area for investment for SDG implementation.