



BASEL COP-7 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2004

The high-level segment of COP-7 began on Thursday with opening addresses, followed by an introduction to the theme of COP-7, partnerships for meeting the global waste challenge. Delegates then heard presentations on hazardous waste minimization and the life-cycle approach, and on integrated waste management and the regional approach, and engaged in interactive discussions on these issues. The Working Groups on financial matters and on ships dismantling continued their deliberations.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

OPENING ADDRESSES: On behalf of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director General of the UN Office in Geneva, urged Parties to: minimize hazardous waste generation at source; adopt the life-cycle approach; provide resources for capacity building; strengthen the Basel Convention Regional Centers (BCRCs); and enhance cooperation at all levels. President Saul Irueta, Uruguay's Minister of the Environment, called for strengthening BCRCs, coordinating implementation of the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions at all levels, increasing available resources, and minimizing hazardous waste generation at source.

Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, said the Basel Convention faces important challenges, in particular the need to: reduce generation of waste at source; decouple economic development and waste generation; and change consumption and production patterns from a "waste" to a "recycling" culture. He called for increased cooperation among countries, and with non-governmental organizations, industry and international and multilateral organizations, as well as coordination with the Strategic Approach for International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process.

Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary, urged delegates to work with existing and new partners, including the Secretariats of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

Arcado Ntagazwa, Tanzania's Minister of State, was appointed Chair of the high-level segment. He urged delegates to develop a plan of action for resource mobilization and to establish meaningful partnerships.

Drawing attention to high economic growth in Asia, Takashi Kosugi (Japan) stressed the need to promote application of the "3Rs" (reduce, reuse, recycle) in order to minimize waste generation. He expressed support for a strategy to mobilize technical and financial resources from private and non-governmental sectors.

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR MEETING THE GLOBAL WASTE CHALLENGE: Hazardous waste minimization and

life-cycle approach: Peter Hinchcliffe (UK) highlighted the link between hazardous waste minimization and the life-cycle approach to chemicals and wastes management. He identified an upward trend in global hazardous waste production linked to economic growth, and stressed that the decoupling of waste production from economic growth is feasible. He highlighted the need for partnerships for technology transfer, resource mobilization, and economic and social development.

Delegates then engaged in an interactive discussion on hazardous waste minimization and the life-cycle approach. Emphasizing the success of the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative, the Netherlands, for the EU, said the sound management of biomedical wastes should be prioritized.

BURUNDI called for a financial mechanism to assist developing countries in implementing waste management projects. SOUTH AFRICA and KENYA stressed the need for sustainable financing, and urged the Secretariat to initiate consultations with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on this issue. ALBANIA stressed the need for resources to facilitate the growth in domestic administrative capacity to manage hazardous wastes. MEXICO called for increased capacity building for developing countries.

PAKISTAN, with BANGLADESH and MAURITIUS, stressed the need to address the problem of waste generation at source in developed countries. MAURITIUS called on developed countries to lead by example on this issue, through the adoption of legally binding targets. BELARUS called for minimization of waste generation, both through reducing the total waste volume generated and by increasing its reuse, and called for the transfer of low-waste and clean technologies to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. SWEDEN stressed industry's responsibility to minimize both waste generation and the hazardous substances content in the products they manufacture, and called for environmentally sound ship dismantling, including mandatory reporting.

BURKINA FASO, UGANDA, SWEDEN, and EGYPT called for strengthening BCRCs. SWITZERLAND suggested using BCRCs in the implementation of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

EL SALVADOR emphasized the need to decouple economic growth from waste generation, and highlighted the role of governments as facilitators of partnerships. SWITZERLAND called for more public-private partnerships, such as the Mobile Phones Partnership Initiative, and BANGALDESH called for partnerships on ship dismantling. UGANDA and EGYPT called for responsibility, transparency, and accountability in partnerships. EGYPT said partnerships should entail technology transfer and capacity building. INDIA stressed that partnerships should be based on differentiated responsibilities.



PAKISTAN called for entry into force of the Ban Amendment. JAPAN said governments should create incentives for industry to manage wastes in an environmentally sound manner. BURKINA FASO called for solutions to stockpiles of obsolete chemicals in Africa.

Integrated waste management and regional approach: Ashok Khosla (India) presented on experiences and lessons learned in implementing the chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). He urged focusing on cleaner production and consumption patterns, and noted the importance of implementation at the local level. Tom Conway, Resources Future International, presented the Basel Convention Resource Mobilization Strategy's objectives and components, namely capacity building, synergies with other MEAs, and cooperation with major funding agencies.

Steve Gorman, World Bank, urged countries seeking funding for implementation of Basel Convention activities to integrate them into national development assistance strategies. He expressed support for SAICM, noting the value of developing synergies between chemicals-related MEAs.

AUSTRALIA and THAILAND emphasized the importance of managing e-wastes, with THAILAND proposing that BCRCs organize training programmes on this issue. BENIN requested information on managing e-wastes, and CAMBODIA outlined domestic actions on the environmentally sound management (ESM) of e-wastes. INDONESIA said work on ESM should seek to promote economic and social development.

SYRIA called for technical support for an assessment of hazardous chemicals and the development of an overall strategy for their disposal.

BHUTAN called for the development of synergies between chemicals-related MEAs and, with MALI, urged the prioritization of capacity building in developing countries. MOZAMBIQUE stressed the need for a financial mechanism to support capacity building efforts. MALAWI stressed the need to consider the effects of HIV/AIDS on capacity building for the Basel Convention. MOROCCO stressed the need for funding capacity building efforts to prevent illegal traffic to developing countries, specifically training of customs officials and industrialists. The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY outlined efforts to prevent the illegal transboundary transfer of hazardous wastes.

BULGARIA supported the development of regional and global partnerships to manage hazardous wastes. ECUADOR and POLAND urged the active participation of industry in waste management. The MALDIVES called for the diffusion of cleaner technologies, and MALAYSIA urged the development of partnerships to assist small and medium enterprises in developing countries in gaining access to affordable environmentally sound technologies.

GUATEMALA highlighted the problem of waste synthetic clothing and packaging imported from developing countries. SRI LANKA urged countries to ratify the Ban Amendment.

NIGERIA said the Convention's success depends on the development of a viable and sustainable financial mechanism, and presented an African Group proposal on a financial mechanism. CHINA called on developed countries to increase their contributions to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund (TCTF). SENEGAL supported approaching GEF as a source of funding.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for the development of models for integrated chemicals management. ALGERIA highlighted the potential for developing synergies in national strategies for implementation of the three chemicals-related MEAs. ARGENTINA called for waste minimization at source. BOTSWANA urged the application of the polluter pays principle and the life-cycle approach, and called on countries to fulfil their obligations under the Basel Convention.

The EU said the adoption of a regional approach to hazardous waste management may result in an increase in transboundary

movements, which should entail the implementation of prior informed consent (PIC) obligations.

WORKING GROUPS

FINANCIAL MATTERS: The Working Group on financial matters, chaired by Jean-Louis Wallace (Canada), met throughout the day on Thursday to continue deliberations on the revised draft 2005-6 budget for the Basel Convention Trust Fund (BCTF) and the TCTF. On the personnel component, JAPAN, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, suggested transferring the existing technological and training post from the BCTF to the TCTF. COLOMBIA, the European Commission (EC), ROMANIA and INDIA disagreed, expressing concern that this would make UNEP liable for compensation in case the post was terminated, since TCTF is not secured funding.

Brazil, for the LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP (GRULAC), supported by JAPAN, the EC and ROMANIA, suggested funding the proposed P5 post on partnership through the TCTF, reconsidering it at COP-8, and adding a consultancy line in the budget for resource mobilization and partnership work. Delegates agreed to add a consultancy line for partnerships and resources mobilization in the BCTF, but could not reach agreement on the creation of the proposed new P5 post.

On the component on travel and daily subsistence allowance costs of participants, the EC, JAPAN, ROMANIA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported moving the item to the TCTF, while GRULAC opposed this, stressing the importance of developing countries' participation in meetings. On the number of meetings of the Open-ended Working Group in the biennium, JAPAN, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ROMANIA and GRULAC supported reducing the number of meetings to two, while the EC opposed it.

Noting that, at this late stage in the budgetary process, many countries have already fixed their contributions, the EC, supported by ROMANIA, suggested moving the COP-8 costs to the 2006 budget of the BCTF. On the partnership work programme, delegates agreed to prioritize activities that have already commenced. The Working Group met Thursday evening to discuss the UN scale of assessments, and will reconvene on Friday to conclude its discussions.

DISMANTLING OF SHIPS: Participants of the Working Group on ship dismantling agreed on two draft decisions and addressed the issue of the abandonment of ships. Discussions focused on flag State responsibilities and the principles of PIC and ESM of hazardous wastes.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As the Working Group on financial matters entered into its third day of discussions, a few participants felt that the reason for the proposed rise in contributions had been misunderstood by many delegations. They indicated that although the total budget is anticipated to remain fairly stable, the increase in contributions is necessary as the reserve fund has been significantly depleted. Some noted that if there is no retreat by participants with the most entrenched positions on a "zero budget increase," Parties will have to bear an even bigger hit at COP-8. Some delegates found it ironic that, while the theme for the COP is partnerships and resource mobilization, most developed countries are reluctant to contribute any additional financial resources to the Basel Convention.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

SUMMARY REPORT FROM BASEL COP-7: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* report containing a comprehensive summary and analysis of COP-7 will be available online from Monday morning, 1 November, at: <http://www.iisd.ca/basel/cop7>.