Dubai Declaration on   
International Chemicals Management

We, the ministers, heads of delegation and representatives of civil society and the private sector, assembled at the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai from 4 to 6 February 2006, declare the following:

1. The sound management of chemicals is essential if we are to achieve sustainable development, including the eradication of poverty and disease, the improvement of human health and the environment and the elevation and maintenance of the standard of living in countries at all levels of development;
2. Significant, but insufficient, progress has been made in international chemicals management through the implementation of chapter 19 of Agenda 21[[1]](#footnote-1) and International Labour Organization Conventions No. 170 on Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work and No. 174 on the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, as well as in addressing particularly hazardous chemicals through the recent entry into force of 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 and the adoption of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;
3. The private sector has made considerable efforts to promote chemical safety through voluntary programmes and initiatives such as product stewardship and the chemicals industry’s Responsible Care programme;
4. Non-governmental public health and environmental organizations, trade unions and other civil society organizations have made important contributions to the promotion of chemical safety;
5. Progress in chemicals management has not, however, been sufficient globally and the environment worldwide continues to suffer from air, water and land contamination, impairing the health and welfare of millions;
6. The need to take concerted action is accentuated by a wide range of chemical safety concerns at the international level, including a lack of capacity for managing chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, dependency on pesticides in agriculture, exposure of workers to harmful chemicals and concern about the long-term effects of chemicals on both human health and the environment;
7. The global production, trade and use of chemicals are increasing, with growth patterns placing an increasing chemicals management burden on developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in particular the least developed among them and small island developing States, and presenting them with special difficulties in meeting this challenge. As a result, fundamental changes are needed in the way that societies manage chemicals;
8. We are determined to implement the applicable chemicals management agreements to which we are Party, strengthen the coherence and synergies that exist between them and work to address, as appropriate, existing gaps in the framework of international chemicals policy;
9. We commit ourselves in a spirit of solidarity and partnership to achieving chemical safety and thereby assisting in fighting poverty, protecting vulnerable groups and advancing public health and human security;
10. We commit ourselves to respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, understanding and respecting ecosystem integrity and addressing the gap between the current reality and our ambition to elevate global efforts to achieve the sound management of chemicals;
11. We are unwavering in our commitment to promoting the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes throughout their life-cycle, in accordance with Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[[2]](#footnote-2) in particular paragraph 23. We are convinced that the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management constitutes a significant contribution towards the internationally agreed development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. It builds upon previous international initiatives on chemical safety and promotes the development of a multi- and cross-sectoral and participatory strategic approach;
12. We therefore adopt the Overarching Policy Strategy, which, together with the present declaration, constitutes our firm commitment to the Strategic Approach and its implementation;
13. We recommend the use and further development of the Global Plan of Action, to address current and ever-changing societal needs, as a working tool and guidance document for meeting the commitments to chemicals management expressed in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[[3]](#footnote-3) Agenda 21, the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety,[[4]](#footnote-4) the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the 2005 World Summit Outcome[[5]](#footnote-5) and this Strategic Approach;
14. We are determined to realize the benefits of chemistry, including green chemistry, for improved standards of living, public health and protection of the environment, and are resolved to continue working together to promote the safe production and use of chemicals;
15. We are committed to strengthening the capacities of all concerned to achieve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes at all levels;
16. We will continue to mobilize national and international financing from public and private sources for the life-cycle management of chemicals;
17. We will work towards closing the gaps and addressing the discrepancies in the capacity to achieve sustainable chemicals management between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other by addressing the special needs of the latter and strengthening their capacities for the sound management of chemicals and the development of safer alternative products and processes, including non-chemical alternatives, through partnerships, technical support and financial assistance;
18. We will work towards effective and efficient governance of chemicals management by means of transparency, public participation and accountability involving all sectors of society, in particular striving for the equal participation of women in chemicals management;
19. We will engage actively in partnerships between Governments, the private sector and civil society, including strengthening participation in the implementation of the Strategic Approach by small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal sector;
20. We stress the responsibility of industry to make available to stakeholders such data and information on health and environmental effects of chemicals as are needed safely to use chemicals and the products made from them;
21. We will facilitate public access to appropriate information and knowledge on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including the risks that they pose to human health and the environment;
22. We will ensure that, when information is made available, confidential commercial and industrial information and knowledge are protected in accordance with national laws or regulations or, in the absence of such laws and regulations, are protected in accordance with international provisions. In making information available, information on chemicals relating to the health and safety of humans and the environment should not be regarded as confidential;
23. We recognize the need to make special efforts to protect those groups in society that are particularly vulnerable to risks from hazardous chemicals or are highly exposed to them;
24. We are determined to protect children and the unborn child from chemical exposures that impair their future lives;
25. We will endeavour to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous, banned and severely restricted chemicals and chemical products and wastes;
26. We will promote the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste as a priority in national, regional and international policy frameworks, including strategies for sustainable development, development assistance and poverty reduction;
27. We will strive to integrate the Strategic Approach into the work programmes of all relevant United Nations organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes consistent with their mandates as accorded by their respective governing bodies;
28. We acknowledge that as a new voluntary initiative in the field of international management of chemicals, the Strategic Approach is not a legally binding instrument;
29. We collectively share the view that implementation and taking stock of progress are critical to ensuring success and that, in this regard, a stable and long-term fully participatory and multi‑sectoral structure for guidance, review and operational support is essential;
30. We are determined to cooperate fully in an open, inclusive, participatory and transparent manner in the implementation of the Strategic Approach.

1. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3−14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August−4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3−14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, third session, Forum III final report (IFCS/Forum III/23w), annex 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)