

Thank you Chair,

My name is Anabella Rosemberg, and I represent the International Trade Union Confederation. I would like to share with you a statement on the issue of chemicals and waste on behalf of the following major groups: WOMEN, NGOS, FARMERS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES and the group to whom I belong, TRADE UNIONS.

Chair, if all these groups came together with a united voice is because the situation we are facing is critical.

We are deeply concerned by the slow path of progress on chemicals and waste. The ever increasing number of chemical substances entering the market sharply contrasts with the little information we have on the risks they present for health and environment, as well as on the limited capacity that many countries have to regulate them, in particular in the developing world.

Achieving a sustainable management of chemicals requires strategies, policies and action at the local, national, subnational, regional and international levels.

The international community has a common objective: To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and minimise waste by 2020. Time is not on our side.

Efforts should be deployed at a much wider scale to ensure the development, implementation and enforcement of national legislation and policy frameworks. Chair, this must include policies aimed at responsabilising the industry for its actions, such as the internationalization of costs. Accountability mechanisms have to be part of the equation.

Chair

We see with concern the absence of references to the need for sustainable management of chemicals in ongoing negotiations on Sustainable Development Goals, for example the elimination of the most hazardous pesticides under the food security goal.

A stronger focus must be put on enforcing access to information and transparency. Women, indigenous peoples, children, workers, farmers, poor communities do not have enough information on impacts on health and the environment of the substances they use or consume and they are losing their lives and health as a consequence of it.

All our groups welcome also the proposal which would lead to considering as soon as possible what objectives and actions will be taken after 2020

Finance is of course essential. Decisions in UNEA must show support for securing adequate, sustainable and predictable finance for a long term approach on chemicals and waste. We call on governments to contribute financially to the different funds including the Quick Start Programme and the new Special Programme Trust Fund.

That said, Chair, and despite the recognition by both the Executive Director's Report and the draft resolution on the importance of multistakeholder approaches, we would like to express our concern on the absence of reference to civil society access to funding in the current draft ToR for the Special Program Trust Fund. We hope delegates will ensure this is modified this week.

Be assured of the support of all our groups during the week ahead to ensure a successful outcome of the chemicals and waste discussions,

Thank you.