

## **BAMA KO CONVENTION**

### ***on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa (1991)***

The Bamako Convention is a treaty of African nations prohibiting the import into Africa of any hazardous (including radioactive) waste. The convention came into force in 1998.

#### **ORIGIN**

The Bamako convention is a response to Article 11 of the Basel convention which encourages parties to enter into bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements on Hazardous Waste to help achieve the objectives of the convention.

The impetus for the Bamako convention arose also from:

- The failure of the Basel Convention to prohibit trade of hazardous waste to less developed countries (LDCs);
- The realization that many developed nations were exporting toxic wastes to Africa (Koko case in Nigeria, Probo Koala case in Ivory Coast...).

#### **SPECIFICITY**

The Bamako convention uses a format and language similar to that of the Basel convention, but:

- Is much stronger in prohibiting all imports of hazardous waste.
- It does not make exceptions on certain hazardous wastes (like those for radioactive materials) made by the Basel convention.

#### **STATUS OF THE CONVENTION**

- Negotiated by 12 nations of the African Union (former Organization of African Unity) at Bamako, Mali in January, 1991.

- Came into force in 1998.
- To date: 29 Signatories, 25 Parties
- Held its first Conference of Parties in June 2013 at Bamako, Mali.

## **PURPOSE OF THE CONVENTION**

- Prohibit the import of all hazardous and radioactive wastes into the African continent for any reason;
- Minimize and control transboundary movements of hazardous wastes within the African continent.
- Prohibit all ocean and inland water dumping or incineration of hazardous wastes.
- Ensure that disposal of wastes is conducted in an "environmentally sound manner "
- Promote cleaner production over the pursuit of a permissible emissions approach based on assimilative capacity assumptions
- Establish the precautionary principle

## **SUBSTANCES OR CHEMICALS**

The Convention covers more wastes than covered by the Basel Convention as it not only includes radioactive wastes but also considers any waste with a listed hazardous characteristic or a listed constituent as a hazardous waste. The Convention also covers national definitions of hazardous waste. Finally, products that are banned severely restricted or have been the subject of prohibitions are also covered under the Convention as wastes.

## **GENERAL OBLIGATIONS**

Countries should ban the import of hazardous and radioactive wastes as well as all forms of ocean disposal. For intra-African waste trade, parties must minimize the transboundary movement of wastes and only conduct it with consent of the importing and transit states among other controls. They should minimize the production of hazardous wastes and cooperate to ensure that wastes are treated and disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.