



Intervention delivered on behalf of IPEN in plenary, OEWG 2, 11th December 2023

Thank you, Madam Chair, for giving me the floor.

I am from CARPIN in Jamaica, my name is Sherika Whitelocke-Ballingsingh, speaking on behalf of IPEN, an international network of over 600 civil society organizations from 127 countries.

Access to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, including a safe and healthy working environment, is a universal human right, as are science-based policies to protect the human rights of individuals and communities exposed to hazardous substances.

We thank the secretariat for providing several useful documents for this OEWG and look forward to participating effectively in this week's discussions.

We have a few brief initial reflections, we would like to present for your consideration.

Firstly, we appreciate the provision on transparency of decision-making processes. This transparency will be vital also for the working processes laid out under institutional arrangements. We therefore ask you to consider explicitly mentioning this transparency also in the beginning of this section.

Secondly, we support the establishment of an Interdisciplinary Expert Committee. It would be helpful to include a note in this section that lack of full scientific certainty should not prevent the development of policies to protect human health and the environment, mirroring Article 8 under the Stockholm convention.

We welcome the elements related to broad stakeholder participation. Participation should be inclusive and interdisciplinary, to ensure a wide range of expert voices are heard.

Finally, it is vital for the credibility of the future Science policy panel and its subsidiary bodies that robust conflict of interest policies are in place throughout the different work processes, including for experts of the panel and also for partnerships and for relationships with stakeholders. Its work and decision-making processes must be transparent and impartial.

Thank you Madam Chair