



IPEN Intervention on Exemptions
Given by Jitka Strakova

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Thank you, Mr. Chair

I speak on behalf of IPEN, a network of civil society organizations in over 100 countries. Allow us to share with you results of our monitorings demonstrating unfortunate implications of various exemptions to global elimination of new POPs from their use.

IPEN, together with its Participating Organizations, undertook extensive research into consumer products made from recycled plastics which are on sale in all UN regions. The results indicate that children's toys, beauty and decorative products for young women, even food contact items are contaminated with representatives of commercial penta- and octaBDE mixtures. These POPs chemicals are listed into Annex A of the Stockholm Convention for global elimination on the environmental and health grounds. Our findings confirmed the warnings of POPs Review Committee that predicted the recycling exemptions for PBDEs would result in contamination of recycled consumer products. This is the reality in all countries where IPEN sampled products including those which registered for the recycling exemptions.

The POPRC noted: failure to swiftly eliminate brominated diphenyl ethers from the recycling streams will inevitably result in wider human and environmental contamination and the dispersal of brominated diphenyl ethers into matrices from which recovery is not technically or economically feasible and in the loss of the long-term credibility of recycling. They were right! Currently, we are experiencing the predicted adverse impacts of those exemptions. IPEN encourages the 7 Parties registered for the PBDE recycling exemptions to withdraw them as soon as possible to prevent further contamination of consumer products made of recycled materials.

Similarly to PBDEs, large loopholes allowing continued production and use of SCCPs and PFOS accompanied listing of those POPs chemicals in Annex A and B, respectively. POPRC at its meetings developed recommendations for ending many of those loopholes including ending loopholes for 11 PFOS uses or converting 2 time-unlimited exemptions for PFOS to time-limited exemption. The recommendations are based on analysis of available technically feasible alternatives.

IPEN appreciates scientific basis for evaluation of exemptions by the POPRC and encourages Parties to the Convention to not repeat the same mistakes that POPRC warned against and that led to further dispersal of POPs into the working environment, consumer products, and food chain after their banning by the Stockholm Convention.

If exemptions to the annexed POPs are granted, they should be for specific products and the listing should require labelling new products that contain POPs so that Parties can fulfil requirements under Article 6 as done previously for HBCD.

Thank you, Mr. President.