



2 April, 2019

## **IPEN Intervention on Overall Orientation and Guidance**

Given by Olga Speranskaya, EcoAccord, Russia

Dear Madame Chair,

The Overall Orientation and Guidance is a useful document with many important elements. It focuses primarily on enhancing country capacities for sound chemicals management, and especially enhancing capacities associated with the six core activity areas. I would like to reflect on the first core activity which is to Enhance the responsibility of stakeholders: promoting and reinforcing commitment and multisectoral engagement.

In December 2017, UN Environment signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEN to work in partnership on gender and chemicals through a focus on women. The Partnership is primarily focused on raising awareness, promoting women's engagement and leadership in the decision-making processes as well as contributing to activities related to the SAICM issues of concern and relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Partnership already contributed to raising awareness of the impact of toxic chemicals on the health of women and children as vulnerable populations, including trainings and experience sharing and collecting relevant data, noting that knowledge of exposure routes and the true impacts of chemical exposures on women are difficult to determine because gender-disaggregated data is thin or absent.

In addition gender considerations have been incorporated into the activities of many nongovernmental organizations working on the implementation of SAICM emerging policy issues, including, for example, **Hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products**. The issue of women in electronics is an ongoing matter of concern due to the large use of chemicals and the high proportion of women workers.

I would also like to emphasize that it is important that countries and stakeholders utilize the enhanced capacities under the OOG to achieve concrete risk reduction objectives aimed at the actual minimization of adverse effects on human health and the environment associated with specific aspects of chemical production, use, and end-of-life disposal. A significant step forward will be if companies contribute significantly more into the identification and disclosure of harmful chemicals in their products and supply chains and make this information equally available in developing countries.

Lastly, I would like to note that inadequate resources are currently available to implement the Strategic Approach. It is a critical issue. There is a need to pursue additional initiatives and enhance industry involvement to mobilize resources on a sufficient scale to enable stakeholders to fully implement the six core activity areas listed in the OOG.

Thank you very much.