



**a toxics-free future**

2 April, 2019

**IPEN Opening Statement**

Given by Dr. Tadesse Amera, IPEN Co-Chair

Thank you, Madam President.

I am speaking on behalf of IPEN, which is a network of more than 500 civil society organisations from more than 100 countries. We have been part of the SAICM negotiations and implementation since the very beginning 16 years ago, and have as a network adopted a “Toxics-free Future” as our vision for accomplishing SAICM’s goals.

In adopting the SAICM 2020 goal, governments agreed that advancing chemical safety should be viewed as a necessary component of the sustainable development agenda. Actions related to chemical safety and toxic chemicals are either referenced or implied in many, if not all, of the SDGs.

Recognizing we are now in April 2019, 2020 is only 9 months away.

After this 16 year SAICM experience, as we look ahead to Beyond 2020, it is clear that while there is some progress, the 2020 goals adopted in 2002 at World Summit on Sustainable Development by heads of state are far from being met.

The global chemical industry is projected to double by 2030, with rapid growth in emerging economies. In our view, a new global agreement on chemical safety should therefore include both an upgrade to SAICM, a so-called SAICM 2.0, and an enabling framework to match the growing challenge of health, environmental, and economic injuries associated with the production, use, and disposal of toxic chemicals and wastes.

The vision of SAICM and the enabling framework should be timeless but with measurable, time-bound, milestones. It should include prevention and precaution as priorities, and act to protect human health and the environment. The scope of SAICM2.0 should include the entire lifecycle and all wastes to mirror what is already agreed to by the UN General Assembly in SDG 12.4, which states the importance of achieving “the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their lifecycle...”

The Beyond 2020 process is mandated to “develop recommendations regarding measurable objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda”. These recommendations should be concrete, and provide clear connections to minimizing harms associated with chemicals and wastes.

We hope to see ambitious recommendations that include:

- An enabling framework that acts as an umbrella for all chemicals-related agreements whose elements are endorsed by a ministerial declaration in 2020 that is subsequently adopted by the UN General Assembly to ensure high-level political ownership.
- National implementation plans with agreed-upon measurable actions that contribute to implementation of Agenda 2030.
- Open, inclusive and transparent participation by all stakeholders with a multi-sectoral approach.

Regarding financing, and the “how” to achieve the SDGs dependent on chemical safety, we also hope that during these three days we will have time to discuss financial mechanisms, including new and additional, adequate, sustainable and predictable finance mechanisms accessible to all relevant stakeholders to address chemicals and waste issues. We strongly believe that the key to securing sustainable funding for chemical safety is the internalization of costs within relevant producer industries.

Madame President, in closing I would like to assure you that IPEN, as a global network of civil society groups, is committed to continue to do everything possible to make the Beyond 2020 process a success.

Thank you, Madame President.