

IPEN Intervention on Lead in Paint- given by Manny Calonzo, IPEN Co-Chair / GAIA, Philippines

Thank you Mr. President.

IPEN and its Participating Organizations have been working on the issue of lead in paint since 2007. In 2008 IPEN and its Participating Organizations tested paints on the market in 10 developing countries and countries with economies in transition and we found that lead paint is still commonly manufactured, sold and used in many countries - especially oil-based (enamel) paints.

IPEN initiated the effort to have lead in paint identified as a SAICM emerging issue; our Participating Organizations have campaigns on this issue in approximately 20 countries, with the most advanced efforts in several Asian countries; and we are a very active participant in the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint. The harms caused by childhood lead exposure are very severe and better documented than the harms from virtually any other environmental contaminant. Substitutes are readily available that provide comparable performance and comparable costs.

Therefore, we see efforts to eliminate lead paints as good and practical case examples in national sound chemicals management.

IPEN is pleased with our dialogue, so far, with the international trade association representing the paint manufacturing industry and we hope to further develop it. Most of the recent testing and data collection on lead paints on the market has been done by IPEN and its Participating Organizations. We are thankful to UNEP, WHO and the US Government for the leadership roles they have been playing in the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint, but we are disappointed that more governments have not been active. We are also disappointed that resources for the Alliance have been inadequate, and that the pace of work has been too slow.

The EU, through its development cooperation with Asia, has recently approved a significant IPEN-initiated lead paint elimination project with partner NGOs in several Asian countries. We are very thankful for this and take it as a hopeful sign that interest and support for this issue are picking up.

Finally, IPEN considers the lack of market data on lead paints to be a major barrier in developing a strategic global effort to eliminate lead paints. We have tested paints in approximately 25 countries and have found this relatively easy to do, and much less costly than most other testing and sampling programs. We believe it would be very helpful to carry out testing in at least 50 additional countries between now and ICCM3 to provide a good baseline for the decisions the ICCM might take.

IPEN would look forward to cooperating with UNEP and potential donors to develop a plan to carry out such a testing program.

Thank you.