



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

828 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017 • TEL. (212) 953-9130 • FAX (212) 697-1970

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

STATEMENT

BY

**MRS. ABIOLA OLANIPEKUN
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**AT THE 18TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

THEMATIC DISCUSSION – CHEMICALS

NEW YORK, MAY 05 2010.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nigeria aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Yemen and Botswana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the African Group respectively

As chemicals management receives stronger international attention, Nigeria has also given due cognizance to the need for an increased responsibility to develop sustainable national programmes for the effective implementation of its obligations. These include those under the various chemicals Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other global policies and programmes such as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Globally Harmonized System for classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS). Key legal and administrative instruments of intervention have therefore been put in place by the Nigerian Government.

A key area of priority is the establishment of an enduring National Coordinating Mechanism and Strategies involving all stakeholder groups and actors involved in key aspects of the chemicals life-cycle to ensure an holistic and coherent approach in the challenge for sound management of chemicals from "cradle to grave". As part of these, there now exist a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between major sectors and stakeholders towards an integrated chemicals management in Nigeria.

Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria is fully committed to the objectives of SAICM in meeting the 2020 chemicals safety goal. We are concerned of the need to implement SAICM as a truly overarching global strategy that will ensure the production and use of chemicals in a responsible and precautionary manner. We recognise that the level of funding required for the achievement of this goal is quite enormous and beyond a narrow donor base, and in this realization

are committed to contributions to the SAICM Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund.

The Government is also committed to ensuring synergy and coherence in the implementation of the chemical's Conventions through the establishment of legislative and institutional framework while strengthening national capacities and capabilities within the public and private sectors for sound management of chemicals.

MAJOR CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

Nigeria like most developing countries face a number of challenges in the effort to attaining sound management of chemicals, including:

- i. very low awareness of major groups in particular, the vulnerable groups of the dangers associated with chemicals handling,
- ii. the inadequacy of chemicals hazard data generation and communication capacities and capabilities, including reliable data and information on toxicity;
- iii. the inadequate capacity for mainstreaming of chemicals management into national development and planning; as well as
- iv. the inadequate capacity for the effective use of national economic instruments for sound management of chemicals.

WAY FORWARD / NEXT STEPS

Nigeria recognizes that sound management of chemicals requires greater efforts by the global community as a complement to national and local efforts, particularly in developing countries. We are therefore committed to ensuring that comprehensive national and local policies on chemicals management covering the chemicals life cycle and all categories of chemicals are formulated and rigorously enforced. In this regard, priority needs to be given to an integrated chemicals management approach with a focus on synergies and coherence that will deliver on the economic,

environmental and social benefits to the populace, and guarantee local applicability.

Developing countries require the full compliment of development cooperation to be able to generate the needed resources to implement sound management of chemicals with improvement of donor coordination in implementation efforts. These include financing and expertise derived from north-south and south-south cooperation and partnerships and increased ODA from development partners that could scale up the capacity of the developing countries to meet set objectives and targets as well as sustained technical and scientific capacity-building initiatives to support national actions.

There is also the need for sustained awareness/sensitisation programme for;

- (i) policy/decision makers and legislators to prioritise chemicals management programmes/issues in budgetary allocations,
- (ii) chemical users and consumers to educate them on the hazards inherent in misuse/handling of chemicals,
- (iii) Customs
- (iv) rural communities, as well as
- v) all importers and users of chemicals

We also consider it vital to engage communities and NGOs and other partners in the development of public awareness campaigns and education on chemicals pollution prevention, misuse/handling of chemicals, risk management and chemicals hazards communication.

Other desirable priority actions include: the development of comprehensive risk management strategies aimed at pollution prevention and risk elimination, the establishment of environment and health surveillance programme, knowledge and information sharing among key

national sectors and actors, strengthening of national strategies for prevention, detection and control of illegal traffic in hazardous chemicals and wastes, increased synergies and partnerships among the relevant regulatory institutions and civil societies, substitution of toxic chemicals by less harmful alternatives and promotion of more environmentally-friendly practices by industries.

Similarly, institutions of higher education and technical & research institutions could play a significant role in adopting and replicating environmentally sound technologies on chemicals, integrating the precautionary, life-cycle, partnership, liability and accountability approaches in chemicals management, integration of sectoral stakeholders into the national decision making process at every stage of national chemicals project implementation to plug identified gaps in national chemicals management infrastructure and increased capacity for enforcement and compliance monitoring in chemicals management.

I thank you.