

## **Cartagena Declaration on the Prevention, Minimization and Recovery of Hazardous Wastes and Other Wastes**

**Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Cartagena, Colombia, 17-21 October 2011**

We, the Parties to the Basel Convention,

Having met in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 17 October to 21 October 2011, on the occasion of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal;

Reaffirming the fundamental aims of the Basel Convention, namely, the reduction of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes, the prevention and minimization of their generation and the need to promote the transfer of technology for the sound management of such wastes;

Recalling the third preambular paragraph to the Basel Convention, which affirms that the most effective way of protecting human health and the environment from the dangers posed by such wastes is the reduction of their generation to a minimum in terms of quantity and/or hazard potential;

Recalling Article 4(2)(a) of the Convention that requires each Party to take the appropriate measures to ensure that the generation of hazardous and other wastes within it is reduced to a minimum, taking into account social, technological and economic aspects;

Recalling further Decision III/1 on the Ban Amendment, Decision VII/2 on Hazardous Waste Minimization, and Decision VIII/23 on implementing Decision VII/2;

Recognizing that despite efforts taken and the progress achieved in the first 20 years of the Basel Convention, the volume of hazardous and other wastes continues to increase on a global level, and that the transboundary movement of hazardous and other wastes has not diminished;

Taking into consideration that the challenge we face regarding hazardous wastes and other wastes is a threat to human health and the environment, and is best addressed through the avoidance of the use of hazardous substances in products and processes as well as through production methods that prevent and minimize waste generation;

Noting that Decision III/1 to amend the Basel Convention provides incentives to minimize waste generation at source as one way of meeting that challenge;

Noting further that prevention and minimization of hazardous waste and other wastes at source are a critical stage of the waste management hierarchy;

Aware that the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes has the potential to internalize costs, conserve valuable resources and reduce pollution;

Reaffirming the importance that national governments mainstream waste prevention, minimization and environmentally sound recovery into development strategies;

Recognising that countries generating the most hazardous and other wastes, have a special responsibility to take the lead in promoting and implementing waste prevention and avoidance policies and methods at source;

Further recognising that adequate and sustainable funding, capacity building, expertise and technology transfer is required, in order for developing countries to be able to achieve this critical stage of the environmentally sound management of waste;

Welcoming the work undertaken in the Consultative Process on Financing Options for Chemicals and Waste and looking forward to the Executive Director of UNEP's report to be present to the UNEP Governing Council Special Session in February 2012 following the consultations.

Declare that:

1. We commit to enhancing the active promotion and implementation of more efficient strategies to achieve prevention and minimization of the generation of hazardous waste and other wastes and their disposal;

2. We emphasize measures should be undertaken to achieve prevention and minimization of hazardous wastes and other wastes generated at source, to enable the decoupling of economic growth and the environmental impacts associated with waste generation;

3. We reaffirm that the Basel Convention is the primary global legal instrument for guiding the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes and their disposal, including efforts to prevent and minimize their generation, and efficiently and safely manage that cannot be avoided;

4. We encourage efforts undertaken at national level to measure and record progress in waste reduction, and to report such progress to the Basel Convention Secretariat;

5. We also encourage Parties, signatories and others to develop synergistic national and regional pilot projects for waste prevention for specific waste streams of concern, where appropriate in collaboration with inter alia the UNEP and UNIDO Cleaner Production programs, GEF, and the Basel Convention Regional Centers, and partnerships, including public-private partnerships;

6. We reaffirm that the safe and environmentally sound recovery of hazardous and other wastes that cannot as yet be avoided, represents an opportunity for the generation of employment, economic growth and the reduction of poverty insofar as it is done in accordance with the Basel Convention requirements, guidelines and decisions and will not create a disincentive for their prevention and minimization;

7. We encourage more systematic and comprehensive global and regional efforts to improve access to cleaner production methods as well as to information on less hazardous substitutes for hazardous chemicals and materials, in partnership with relevant initiatives;

8. We recognize the need to make the most of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centers, which also need to be strengthened to disseminate information and practices on waste prevention and minimization as well as assist in developing pilot projects for environmentally sound management of specific waste streams of concern;

9. We also recognize that the ongoing synergy process in the Chemical and Waste Regime has delivered concrete and positive results, and that it can strongly contribute to improving waste prevention, minimization and recovery;

10. We acknowledge the significant contribution of the Basel public private partnerships especially the MPPI and PACE to improve waste prevention, minimization and recovery;

11. We welcome enhanced engagement with other bodies, NGOs and the private sector to advance work on prevention, minimization, and recovery of hazardous and other wastes, and to develop and implement projects, waste prevention programmes and partnerships to that end;

12. We encourage Parties, signatories and others in a position to do so, to assist in capacity building and technology transfer for waste prevention and minimization in regions needing such assistance;

13. We acknowledge that prevention, minimization and recovery of wastes advance the three pillars of sustainable development, and that fulfilment of the Basel Convention's objectives is an important contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012.