

**TENTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE PARTIES TO THE
PROTOCOL ON POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTERS
(PRTRs), GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 27-28 NOVEMBER 2023**

STATEMENT BY DR. SAM ADU-KUMI, GHANA

Chair,
Distinguished Delegates and Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, permit me to express my profound gratitude for the invitation to attend this important meeting as an Observer as well as the privilege to deliver this short statement on behalf of Republic of Ghana.

My name Dr. Sam Adu-Kumi from Ghana. Currently I'm a National/Regional Expert on Chemicals and Waste, as well as the Interim Chair, African Group of Negotiators (AGN), for the on-going Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (**UNEA Resolution 5/14**).

I have worked at the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana for almost three decades as the National Focal Person/Programmes Coordinator for the Chemical and Waste Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Frameworks. I served as the 8th President of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

Distinguished participants, Ghana supports international efforts towards the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste and participated fully during the negotiations of all the existing chemical-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and frameworks. The conventions provide international legal frameworks and practical management perspectives for safeguarding and disposal of relevant hazardous chemicals of global concern with the aim to achieve the sound management of chemicals (including waste) throughout their life cycle. Relevant MEAs ratified and frameworks endorsed or adopted by Ghana include the following:

- The Minamata Convention on Mercury (2013);
- The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) (2006), and the newly adopted successor, the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) (2023);

- The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (2001);
- The Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure of certain Pesticides and Chemicals in International Trade (1998);
- The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989), including the Ban Amendment (1995);
- FAO International Code of Conduct for the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (Adopted as amended in 2003);
- The UN Convention on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Vienna Convention) (1985);
- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987);
- London Amendment of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1990);
- UN Chemicals Weapons Convention (1993);
- The provisions of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21 (1992).
- International Health Regulations (2005)

Ghana is currently taking an active role as the Chair of the African Group of Negotiators in the preparation of an intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

Chair, distinguished delegates and participants, the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) recognizes the need for cooperation with other international initiatives concerning pollutants and waste, including the 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, among other MEAs and Frameworks.

Sound management of chemicals and waste (SMCW) underpins the effective implementation and achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global and country levels. PRTRs on the other hand provide an important mechanism to increase corporate accountability, reduce pollution and promote sustainable development, as stated in the Lucca Declaration adopted at the first meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention. SMCW and PRTRs therefore play complementary roles towards the achievement of a common goal – protecting human health and the environment.

A 10-year Strategic Plan (2021-2030) on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste (SMCW) in Ghana has been prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency in collaboration with relevant national stakeholders and in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Special Programme Trust Fund. The overall objective of the strategic plan is to strengthen the national capacity to manage chemicals (including waste) throughout their lifecycle in a sound manner in order to meet relevant country commitments under the various chemicals and waste-related multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and policy frameworks and minimise the risks to human health and the environment. This is consistent with the EPA's collaborative and coordinating functions in facilitating the involvement of national key ministries and stakeholder institutions that provide complementary roles in chemicals and waste management across the entire lifecycle of chemicals (including waste).

The situation and gap analyses conducted as part of the preparation of the Strategic Plan provided national priorities for action and defined the specific objectives, targets, tasks and milestones of the strategy.

The overall objective is to strengthen the national capacity to manage chemicals and waste throughout their lifecycle in a sound manner in order to meet relevant country commitments and minimise the risks to human health and the environment. The specific objectives are:

- (1) Identify, implement and enforce measures to prevent, or where not feasible, minimise harm from chemicals throughout their life cycle including waste;
- (2) Generate relevant data and information and make data available and accessible to all stakeholders to enable informed decisions and actions;
- (3) Identify and prioritise emerging issues of national and international concern and address them through national, regional, and international actions;
- (4) Promote sustainable consumption and production through the use of safer alternatives and innovative solutions to prevent or minimise risk to human health and the environment;
- (5) Identify and mobilise adequate and sustainable financial and non-financial resources as essential elements to achieving sound management of chemicals and waste; and
- (6) Mainstream and integrate sound management of chemicals and waste into the national development agenda as an essential element for attaining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Clearly, specific objective 2 requires a national PRTR mechanism in place, particularly to deliver on Target 2.5, namely:

“By 2030, an integrated information and data management system on chemicals and waste developed and made available and accessible to all stakeholders to enable informed decision making in a clean, circular economy.”

Our ambitious strategic plan requires that we partner with relevant stakeholders and strategic partners on all fronts (national, regional and international).

Locally we have a regulatory framework in place for SMCW. The current national legislation, however, does not cover the entire life cycle management of chemicals (including waste). We are seeking the necessary support to identify, implement and enforce measures to prevent, or where not feasible, minimize harm from chemicals throughout their life cycle including waste.

In conclusion, Chair, distinguished delegates and participants, Ghana considers it timely to seek support and partnership with the PRTRs protocol and the Aarhus Convention by extension, for common solutions to fulfill its obligations under the afore-mentioned MEAs and future ones. Ghana is ready for further deliberations and collaboration.

Thanks for the kind attention.