

Welcome Address by Mr. Nelson Sabogal, the Secretariat of the Basel Convention representative (SBC)

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, I wish to welcome all of you to this workshop on the implementation of Stockholm Convention and synergies with the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions and the Montreal Protocol co-organized by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Arab States for Training and Technology Transfer located in Cairo (BCRC-Egypt) and UNEP-Chemicals with the financial support of the Government of Switzerland.

This workshop is taking place at the same time of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) that is being held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 21 to 25 February and where discussions on cooperation between the Montreal Protocol, the Basel Convention, Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention will take place.

The workshop will allow us to identify and discuss common issues of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the Montreal Protocol. Our aim is to strengthen the co-operation among the national Focal Points and other stakeholders involved in the process of implementation and enforcement of these Multilateral Environmental Agreements, to identify the difficulties and obstacles in their implementation, linkages, areas of synergy and coordinated implementation of Conventions, tools and institutional arrangements needed to support the implementation of these four global Agreements.

The Secretariat recognizes the efforts of the Basel Convention Regional Centre in Egypt and the host country in order to make this workshop a success.

We also recognize the participation of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Switzerland.

We are convinced that the sharing of information and experience among the countries present, the majority of which are served by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Arab States, will facilitate the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the Montreal Protocol. Synergies will bring economy of scale and the sharing of know-how that is critical for an efficient and effective implementation of chemicals and waste related instruments.

This workshop in general will support the aims of the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Basel Convention adopted at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Geneva in December 2002. The Strategic Plan builds on the achievements of the first decade of the Basel Convention, the Basel Declaration that asserts a vision that the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes is accessible to all Parties, emphasizing the minimization of such wastes and the strengthening of the capacity building.

It is our aim that at the end of the workshop, building on the discussions during the presentations and the Working Groups, we will have a plan on how the co-operation

among these four Multilateral Environmental Agreements could be operationalized into projects and activities in order to address issues such as inventories, guidance in drafting legislation that transposes Basel Convention provisions into national law, in terms of both waste management and shipment requirements, exchange concerning best practice in managing various types of hazardous wastes, POPs, other chemicals and substances that deplete the ozone layer, prevention, detection and monitoring of illegal traffic or in other areas that are of importance to your countries and a joint assessment by the countries of the region of how the Centre could be best organised to meet regional and sub-regional needs. The life-cycle approach, integrated waste management, waste minimization and regional approach are policy directions that Governments have identified as essential to progress.