

Gabala, 9 September 2011

THE GABALA DECLARATION
OF
11th International HCH and Pesticides Forum
Gabala, Republic of Azerbaijan
7 - 9 September 2011

PREAMBLE

The International HCH and Pesticides Forum is a bi-annual platform for discussion between stakeholders of all kind, working on awareness raising and implementation of projects related to POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical waste. It acts as a catalyst in the exchange and sharing of information for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention and other chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements, and the environmentally sound management of pesticides, pesticide waste and other chemicals, and has today developed into an important event for national as well as international decision-makers and stakeholders. On September 7 – 9th the 11th Forum on HCH and Obsolete Pesticides was held in Gabala, Republic of Azerbaijan. More than 120 experts from more than 40 countries of Europe, Asia and America participated.

The 11th Forum brought together governments, donors, UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs, academia and the private sector for further exchange of information and possible collaboration among countries, experts, institutions and donors. The Forum is initiated and enabled by the International HCH and Pesticides Association (IHPA) in order to follow up on the progress made since the 10th Forum in Brno, Czech Republic (2009).

The Forum was hosted by The International HCH & Pesticides Association (IHPA), the Ministry of Ecology & Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

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HOSTING COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

The Republic of Azerbaijan has ratified the Stockholm Convention on “Persistent Organic Pollutant’s (POP’s)” by Decree of the Republic of Azerbaijan N554-PQ dated 9th of December 2003.

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan has established the National Coordination Centre in order to exchange information following Article 9 of the Stockholm Convention on “Persistent Organic Pollutant’s” as according to Presidential Decree N329 dated 29th of July 2004.

By Presidential Decree N816 date 13th of May 2005 the authority was given to Mr. Huseyn Baghirov, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources to sign the Contract on *“Services with regard to accelerated practicability measures to ease the initial activity on implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP’s between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and United Nations Industry Development Organization (UNIDO)”* and the aforementioned Contract was signed on the 19th of May 2005. The Contract provided assistance to the preparation of a National Implementation Plan.

The preparation of the National Implementation Plan took place in 5 phases. The 5 phases have been implemented under management of a dedicated Implementation Committee. The Committee consists of high level representatives of relevant organizations. The office was located in the main building of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. The Committee and its working groups were supported by the financial resources from the project.

The participants in the Committee included representatives from the Ministries of Ecology and Natural Resources, Agriculture, Health, Economic Development, Industry and Energy, “Azerkimya”, “Azenergy”, State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), Committees of State Customs and Statistics, National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan (NASA) and NGO’s.

The legislation on Persistence Obsolete Pesticides (POPs) was assigned by competent representative of the Azerbaijani Parliament (Milli Mejlis).

As a result of discussions in the Committee, 4 working groups (Inventory of POP’s pesticides, Inventory of hexachlorobenzene and PCB’s, Inventory of involuntary formed POP’s and Monitoring) were established in order to implement the inventory of POP’s particular to various classes, to assess the National infrastructure and management potential. One of the results of the inventory process shows that only three (DDT PCB and Dioxin/Furans) out of the twelve

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substances listed in the Stockholm Convention exist in Azerbaijan. DDT was the only substance ever produced in the country and was removed from the production in 1982. The inventory process was finalized and the reports were submitted to UNIDO in February 2006. The potential of chemical analyses laboratories that exist in Azerbaijan were reflected in tables composed in accordance with the form in order to organize the monitoring work. The laboratories were selected for POP's analyses and the report was prepared and submitted to UNIDO.

Information leaflets about the *"Stockholm Convention on POP's, environment and human health"* were published according to Article 10 in order to inform the public and stakeholders. The leaflets include detailed information on the Stockholm Convention, impact of POP's to the environment and human health as well as information about the POP's problems in Azerbaijan. At the same time, several articles on POP's were published in different mass media.

The National Implementation Plan has been registered at the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on the 15th of January 2010. The implementation of the plan will be carried out in 3 phases. The first phase started in 2010 and concerns environmental elimination of DDT and PCB in accordance to the inventory results outlined above as well as the treatment/elimination of medical wastes.

Since the 10th Forum, the following work concerning the elimination of POPs was carried out:

The project on environmental elimination of inventoried PCBs is being implemented with support of GEF and UNIDO. The proposal of the project was given to relevant organizations and their references were considered and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for approval.

With national funds and support from the Government of Azerbaijan the cells in Jangi obsolete pesticides landfill were rehabilitated. The territory was furthermore fenced and supplied with a security system and the landfill is now under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The project on environmental elimination of POP's pesticides was prepared with support of the World Bank and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO).

Azerbaijan has without any exceptions included the 9 new POP's substances adopted in the Annexes of Stockholm Convention, as well as other relevant work is conducted in connection with Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam Conventions. In particular for the Rotterdam Convention, internal procedures are presently been carried out in preparation for ratification.

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The preparations for the International HCH and Pesticide Forum held in September 2011 in Azerbaijan concerning pesticides management in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia have been carried out.

All the above mentioned activities are being carried out in accordance to the National Implementation Plan on management of POP's. The work concerning environmental elimination of DDT and PCBs is considered to be finalized 5 year earlier than indicated in Stockholm Convention which means till 2025.

Implementation Activities in the field of POPs management in the Republic of Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan aspires to be in the front line among Southern Caucasus and Central Asia in the field of environmental clean management of POPs in the coming 10-12 years.

In order to ensure the long term security in relation to POPs, the strategy of Azerbaijan will be environmental elimination of DDT and PCB, exchange of PCB equipments, inventory of Dioxin/Furans and 9 new POPs substances, preparation for registration of chemical substances and involve stakeholders as well as public, NGO, private sector and scientists.

Azerbaijan will increase the activity level in 2012-2015 in order to completely free itself from Obsolete POPs within the next 8-10 years.

Of high priority is the preparation of Annexes to NIP in order to improve the planned activities in the field of environmental safe management of the new POPs substances included in the Stockholm Convention.

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The participants of the 11th International HCH and Pesticides Forum representing governments, donors, IGOs, NGOs, the private sector, civil society and academia, meeting in Gabala on 7-9 September 2011, expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Ecology & Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan..

The participants....

Recognise that the elimination of obsolete pesticides is an issue of national interest threatening the environment, people and sustainability of agricultural export goods; and **stress** that the complexity of the associated problems require a multi-disciplinary approach supervised under the

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highest possible level of Government authority, involving and coordinating all institutions such as Ministries, universities and NGO's across the different sectors e.g. environment, agriculture, health, industry, defence and finance, and customs.

Recognise that the EECCA region makes important progresses in its actions, supported by international programmes, which have encouraging positive effects on (new) national initiatives and **recognise** the ongoing need for close cooperation between the EECCA countries in order to exchange information, coordinate project activities and explore possibilities for regional facilities and infrastructure, such as laboratories, treatment facilities etc.

Recognise the activities embedded in the GEF/FAO Capacity building project on Obsolete and POPs Pesticides in Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA) countries (2009-2012) as important for the further development of capacities and strengthening of the institutions dealing with obsolete pesticides in the countries involved.

Recognise the importance of the Global UNEP/WHO Programme "Demonstrating and Scaling-up of Sustainable Alternatives to DDT in Vector Management" (2009-2015) aiming at protecting human health and the environment through demonstrating and scaling-up of sustainable alternatives to DDT in disease vector management, and to reduce the emission of DDT into the global environment. Regional programmes cover, or will cover, 13 countries in Africa, eight countries in Asia, eight countries in the Middle East and North Africa, five countries in Southern Caucasus and Central Asia; and eight countries in Mexico and Central America and **recognise** the importance of the planned Global UNEP/UNIDO Programme "Demonstrating and Scaling Up of Lindane and HCH Waste ESM" (2012-2017) aiming at protecting human health and the environment through demonstrating and scaling up ESM of Lindane and HCH waste disposal to avoid the emission of HCH into the global environment. The programme aims at introducing and promoting sustainable alternative approaches to ESM of HCH waste disposal by innovative approaches in various regional projects.

Recognise the commitment of the European Parliamentarian Dan Jørgensen to urge the EU on the assistance to the obsolete pesticides problems in the EECCA-region and to push the European Commission to raise the level of financial support and **recommend** that the EECCA-countries show their commitment to solve the national pesticides problems, taking into account the conditions of the Basel Convention by advocating for the set up of regional treatment facilities.

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Recognise the commitment of the European Parliamentarians to make efforts that obsolete pesticides elimination becomes a priority issue and should remain on the EU agenda until a final solution has been obtained.

Recognise the project preparation facility as part of the EC funded Programme for the 'Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Man-Made and Natural Disasters in the ENPI East Region (PPRD-East)', by which countries can seek assistance to manage mitigation of environmental disasters, such as the Kalush case presented at the 11th Forum.

Recognise the importance of the planned EU-funded FAO implemented project "Improving capacities to eliminate and prevent recurrence of obsolete pesticides as a model for tackling unused hazardous chemicals in the former Soviet Union", to help strengthening capacities to tackle obsolete pesticides in the 12 partner countries in the EECCA region, promoting exchange of experience and expertise as well as opportunities for synergies and cross-regional co-operations.

Recognise the importance that sustainable agricultural practices play in the prevention of recurrence of obsolete pesticide stocks and in food security and **recognise** the importance of the guidance for policy-makers on Sustainable Crop Production Intensification provided by the FAO in their book "Save and Grow".

Recognise that the pesticides restriction policy in the EU legislation is one of the main drivers in developing sustainable agriculture.

Recognise the cooperation between the OSCE and the national governments and NGOs in coordinating multidisciplinary projects and recommend that this cooperation is strengthened and further developed to include more countries.

Recognise that there is important evidence that integrating public participation from the very start of a project strongly contributes to successful programmes for elimination and prevention of obsolete pesticides with minimal risks and builds cooperation between the public, the regulators (the Government) and the NGOs. They therefore recommend building public participation into the design of policies, programmes and projects in order to achieve more effective and sustainable results.

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The participants in the 11th Forum, recognising the above achievements call upon further support and assistance for achieving the final goal.

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The participants specifically, in recognition of the important contributions to the elimination of POPs, obsolete pesticides and other hazardous chemical wastes,

Call upon the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States, the United Nation institutions, World Bank and other bilateral and multilateral donors to

1. **note** the important progress (see attached IHPA report) on national level and the increasing momentum and desire among governments and civil societies to eliminate and prevent POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical stockpiles,
2. continue dialogue on the scale and urgency of the problem and on developing possible solutions,
3. financially support and co-finance national and regional initiatives.

Specifically, the participants...

Call upon for enhanced

4. donor coordination and collaborations to support project activities in the EECCA countries in order to maximise the programme and project outputs.

Call upon the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to

5. accelerate the processing of project proposals in order to ensure that countries and regions can advance in their work without losing momentum and their built up capacities for the elimination of POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical wastes.

The participants furthermore...

Call upon all EECCA Governments to

6. ensure political focus and raise the awareness of obsolete pesticides, make removal of stocks a priority in their national environmental plans, and add destruction to the agenda of negotiations with donors, while making national funds available for co-funding,
7. build in public participation as early as possible, and into the design of policies, programmes and projects in order to reach more effective and sustainable results,
8. consider applying a multi-disciplinary approach supervised under highest possible level of Government, involving and coordinating all institutions such as Ministries, scientific institutions and NGO's across the different sectors e.g. environment, agriculture, health,

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- industry, defence and finance for solving the threat of obsolete pesticides in order to protect the environment and secure the quality of life of people,
9. take action on the urgent problems related to the so-called polygons and uncontrolled dump sites of POPs and other dangerous chemicals which are particularly prominent in the EECCA region,
 10. improve the assessment of existing industrial capacities and expertise in the countries to be considered as an option for obsolete pesticides and contaminated soil elimination,
 11. harmonise national legislation to international conventions, develop an adequate regulatory framework and implement international monitoring programmes according to the Stockholm Convention, human and ecological risk assessment systems and encourage FAO guidelines (EMTK's) for POPs in the environment,
 12. work with FAO and other international organisations to promote national and regional policies that support Sustainable Crop Production Intensification approaches in order to prevent further accumulation of obsolete pesticides and to improve food security.

Call upon the European Commission to

13. implement the planned EU-funded project "Improving capacities to eliminate and prevent recurrence of obsolete pesticides as a model for tackling unused hazardous chemicals in the former Soviet Union", defined to help strengthening capacities to tackle obsolete pesticides in the 12 partner countries in the EECCA region, promoting exchange of experience and expertise as well as opportunities for synergies and cross-regional co-operations,
14. include in this project an assessment of issues that might cause delay or even block the progress and share these issues with the national governments and the donors and coordinate between parties the solution and financing of these issues,
15. prepare the possibilities of additional funding in order to provide short term interventions to facilitate the best possible progress in the 12 countries concerned.

Call upon the European Parliament to

16. re-activate the working group on obsolete pesticides. This group should provide support for the EECCA countries, and increase the awareness of the problem in the EU-system,
17. arrange for an active follow-up by this working group of the progress in the project "Improving capacities to eliminate and prevent recurrence of obsolete pesticides as a model for tackling unused hazardous chemicals in the former Soviet Union" including the recommendations as presented under 13 till 15 above,

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18. request an amendment of the pesticides strategy within the Framework Directive (2009/128/EC) establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides with binding requirements to report obsolete pesticides stocks, and highlight obsolete pesticides in the coming new Neighborhood Strategy.

Call upon NGOs and the civil society to

19. follow-up on Government policies and assist in their implementation.

Call upon plant protection associations and the industry in line with their capabilities to

20. offer to advise and assist the countries in elimination of dangerous chemicals by providing technologies and facilities for securing a low risk final disposition for empty and properly rinsed containers at a regional level when feasible.

RECOGNITION

The participants recognised the efforts of the Director of IHPA for his dedications and continued support in keeping the issue of obsolete pesticides on the international agenda. The participants furthermore expressed appreciation of IHPA for the cooperation and assistance to the development of capacities and to the elimination of POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical wastes and to the prevention of future accumulation, and urged the continuation of this work.

The participants welcome and appreciate the invitation from the Republic of Slovenia to host the 12th International HCH and Pesticides Forum in 2013.

ABOUT IHPA

IHPA, the International HCH and Pesticides Association is a Foundation with a clear mission: To free the planet earth from obsolete pesticides.

IHPA therefore has committed itself to:

- ensure that the elimination of obsolete pesticides is on the global agenda
- assist in the inventory, elimination and prevention of obsolete pesticides

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- establish donor platforms in order to ensure the elimination of obsolete pesticides
- monitor the progress in and report on the elimination of obsolete pesticides.
- initiate bi-annual meetings for exchange of information and review of results

The issue of obsolete pesticides is not only an environmental problem, it also infringes the right to live in a safe environment. Obsolete pesticides and the damages and impacts they cause have a direct influence on the quality of life of people, especially the poor, the old, women and children living in rural areas. But the scale of the problem is wider: obsolete pesticides have long term effects on environmental quality, food production, human health and the ecosystem. High economic risks are created when food, contaminated by obsolete pesticides is exported (ref. Nitrofen scandal 2002). Scientific (medical) research shows more and more the threats of low concentrations of dangerous chemicals, including pesticides, on human health

The funding of the work of IHPA depends on third party financing: involvement in projects, donor contributions and donations. Important multipliers are created over the voluntary work of our Ambassadors, who are taking their missions in their countries, our cooperation with partners and other supporters.

More information can be found on the website www.iHPA.info

As a new contribution, IHPA has prepared a status rapport of the national achievements of the EECCA- countries, based on the inputs obtained at the Forum. The aim of the country status report is to make a transparent overview of the national efforts and achievements and to monitor the progress in projects related to POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical waste.

FORUM SPONSORS

The International HCH and Pesticides Forum in Gabala was sponsored by:

Ministry of Ecology & Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan
FAO - GEF funded project "Capacity building on Obsolete and POPs Pesticides in
Easter European, Caucasus and Central Asia Countries (EECCA) countries
GIZ Convention Project Chemical Safety
Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention
University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, School of Life Sciences

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FORUM ORGANIZERS

International HCH & Pesticides Association (IHPA), The Netherlands

Ministry of Ecology & Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ministry of Economical Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan

State Committee of Land and Cartography of the Republic of Azerbaijan

National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Baku State University, Azerbaijan Republic

ECORES Information-Analytic Environmental Agency

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
EC	European Commission
EECCA	Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
EMTK	Environmental Management Tool Kit
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
HCH	Hexachlorocyclohexane
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
IHPA	International HCH and Pesticides Association
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Implementation Plan
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyl
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PPRD-East	Prevention, Preparedness and Response to man-made and natural disasters in the ENPI East Region. EU funded project
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization