

Regional Workshop on Chemical Hazard Communication and GHS Implementation for Arab Countries

Alexandria, Egypt
30 October – 2 November 2006

Final Report



The GHS workshop for Arab countries was the fifth in a series of regional and sub-regional GHS workshops which are co-ordinated and supported through the *UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme*, subject to availability of extra-budgetary resources. The event was also a contribution to the *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS* which was initiated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

Special thanks are extended to the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) and the Government of Switzerland for their financial contributions to the workshop. The first regional workshop was held for the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region in September 2003, the second for the countries of Mercosur and the Andean Community in November 2004, the third for the ASEAN region in October 2005, and the fourth for Central and Eastern Europe in October 2006. Countries and organizations interested in supporting GHS workshops in other regions are encouraged to contact UNITAR at the address below.

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Executive Summary

The Regional Workshop on Chemical Hazard Communication and GHS Implementation for Arab Countries took place 30 October – 2 November 2006 in Alexandria, Egypt. The workshop brought together 58 representatives from 19 countries of the Arab region, as well as representatives of international organizations, business and industry, public interest groups and labour unions.¹ The event represents the fifth in a series of regional and sub-regional GHS workshops that are coordinated and supported through the UNITAR/ILO *Global GHS Capacity Building Programme*.² It also contributed to the *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS*, which was initiated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The workshop was organized through the collaboration of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, UNITAR and ILO, with financial support from the Government of Switzerland.

Dr. Burkhard Wagner of UNITAR, Dr. Fatma El Malah of the League of Arab States, Dr. Salah Soliman of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, HE Adel Labib, Governor of Alexandria gave welcoming remarks for the workshop. The event was then opened by HE Maged George Elias Ghattas, Egyptian Minister of State for Environmental Affairs. Dr. Ismail Seragelden, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina also gave an opening presentation on sustainability which provided a global context for the event. During the four days, participants exchanged country experiences, examined existing regional structures relevant to GHS implementation, discussed challenges and opportunities regarding GHS implementation at the regional and national levels, and developed practical recommendations for GHS implementation for the three main groups affected by the GHS (government, business and industry, and public interest and labour organizations) and the four main sectors affected by the GHS (industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport, and consumer product chemicals).

Challenges and Opportunities of GHS Implementation in Arab Countries

While noting that existing awareness and capacities for GHS implementation is low in many countries in the region, participants at the workshop identified relevant existing legal and administrative infrastructure in most countries. In planning for GHS implementation in the Arab region, participants recommended the establishment of a regional working group, if possible in coordination with the League of Arab States. Participants recommended that any existing systems within the sectors in each country be adapted to conform to the GHS and stressed the need to ensure consistency across the region.

Workshop participants also supported implementation of the GHS at the national level in Arab countries. Participants recognised the importance of involving a range of government ministries, as well as other interested groups and stakeholders, in planning and executing national implementation of the GHS. They identified reduced risks to public health and environment, and the need for the harmonization of existing systems as key drivers for implementation of the system. In terms of benefits, participants anticipated that the GHS

¹ Countries represented were: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Union des Comoros and Yemen.

² The first UNITAR/ILO Subregional GHS workshop was held for countries of SADC (Southern African Development Community) in September 2003 and the second for countries of Mercosur and the Andean Community in November-December 2004, the third for ASEAN countries in October 2005 and the fourth for countries of Central and Eastern Europe in October 2006.

would serve to reduce costs, increase access to accurate information, and improve market access and the competitiveness of companies. At the regional level, participants specifically highlighted simplified customs procedures and improved control of illegal traffic as potential benefits of GHS implementation. Multiple languages, a lack of information, weak or conflicting institutional frameworks and low technical capacity were identified as obstacles to implementation at both the national and regional levels.

Participants concluded that the workshop provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on experiences, discuss key issues and suggest concrete next steps in the area of chemical hazard communication and GHS implementation. Workshop participants agreed that a mechanism should be established to follow-up with the workshop recommendations.

1. Introduction

An important aspect of protecting human health and the environment from potentially toxic chemicals is the development of national systems that ensure that chemicals are properly classified and labelled and that safety data sheets are made available, in particular in the workplace. These communication tools provide workers, consumers and the public with important information about the hazards of chemicals (hazard communication) and thus help to trigger precautionary protective behaviour. For this to be effective, messages must be comprehensible and accompanied by appropriate supporting measures. The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) is an internationally-agreed tool for chemical classification and hazard communication.

As part of the UNITAR/ILO series of regional and subregional GHS workshops, representatives from Arab countries met in Alexandria, Egypt, 30 October – 2 November 2006, to discuss their experiences with chemical hazard communication and consider concrete measures related to GHS implementation in the region.

The workshop was executed by the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and UNITAR in the context of the *UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme* with financial support from the Government of Switzerland.

1.1 The GHS: An Important Tool for Protecting Human Health and the Environment

The GHS provides a comprehensive and universal tool for chemical classification and hazard communication, and countries around the world are taking an interest in developing national strategies for implementing the GHS and building capacities for effective chemical hazard communication. Responsibility for the maintenance, updating and promotion of the system, adopted in 2002, rests with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS (SCEGHS).³

Countries can draw upon the GHS to develop national chemical hazard communication systems where those infrastructures are weak or lacking, and will need to align existing regulations and procedures with the provisions of GHS. Additionally, implementation of the GHS may require strengthening, updating or establishing appropriate national legislation. The GHS is also compatible with other international instruments such as the ILO Chemicals Convention 170, Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm Conventions, as well as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). Global implementation of the non-binding GHS will be undertaken through a strategic yet flexible approach in Member States, through collaboration between

³ The UNSCEGHS website can be found at: http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/ghs_welcome_e.html.

government and other interested and affected parties such as business and industry and non-profit civil society, including labour, consumer and public interest groups across the agricultural, industrial production, transport and consumer sectors.⁴ The GHS therefore represents an important step in harmonizing national chemical hazard communication systems worldwide and has a great potential to improve chemical safety across all relevant sectors.

Specifically, the System is expected to:

- enhance the protection of people and the environment;
- provide a recognised framework for those countries without an existing system;
- reduce the need for duplicative testing and evaluation of chemicals; and
- facilitate international trade in chemicals whose hazards have been properly assessed and identified on an international basis.

International Aspects

According to the report of the IFCS Forum III meeting held in October 2000 in Brazil, the GHS will become a practical and coherent global standard for chemical hazard communication in the workplace, for those involved in work-related activities, for the transportation system, and for consumers. Forum III specifically recommended that “all countries, subject to their capacities and capabilities, should take account of the development of the GHS in any proposed changes to existing systems for classification and labelling, and in the implementation and enforcement of their chemicals legislation”. The IFCS also recommended that guidance and other tools necessary for the implementation of the GHS be made available by 2003 and that all countries should implement the GHS as soon as possible with a view to have the system fully operational by 2008, a target endorsed at the 2002 WSSD held in Johannesburg, South Africa (WSSD Plan of Implementation, paragraph 23(c), A/CONF.199/20).

IFCS Forum IV in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2003, adopted a GHS Action Plan – based on the workplan of the UNITAR/ILO/OECD *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS* – that encouraged, *inter alia*, “at least two regional GHS workshops held and implementation strategies prepared by the end of 2005, taking into consideration regional economic integration arrangements”.

Additionally, the importance of implementing the GHS is recognised in the Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) of SAICM – GHS implementation is identified under the overall objective of “knowledge and information”: (h) To promote implementation of the common

⁴ Use of the terms “multistakeholder” and “multisectoral” in subsequent sections of this report denote inclusion of the above mentioned stakeholders and sectors.

definitions and criteria contained in the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

GHS is also included as a SAICM work area in the Global Plan of Action, including 8 distinct activities. In particular, SAICM GPA activity #250 states “Make available sufficient financial and technical resources to support national and regional GHS capacity-building projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.” Participants at ICCM stressed importance of training and capacity building for implementing the GHS as part of SAICM, indicating further international recognition of the importance of countries and regions moving forward to include the GHS capacity building and implementation into overall chemicals management strategies and national SAICM implementation programmes.

The GHS is an important tool that can contribute to achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and facilitates the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Challenges for Capacity Building in Developing Countries

One of the key factors that will ultimately determine the success of the GHS worldwide is the extent to which countries both recognise the potential benefits of chemical hazard communication and develop capacities to establish the necessary infrastructures to implement and operate the system. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition face particular challenges with regard to trying to limit and reduce the negative effects of chemical use in various sectors through appropriate hazard communication. Frequent mis-labelling of chemicals, a lack of understanding of labels on chemicals in use, and infrequent training in chemical safety are only some of the challenges specifically faced by countries with limited or non-existent national hazard communication infrastructures.

Widespread adoption of the GHS and effective chemical hazard communication is therefore only likely to occur if countries demonstrate a strong commitment to its implementation and if adequate support and technical assistance is made available to countries needing to build appropriate legal and technical infrastructures. Suitable training and education will be required to ensure the proper use of GHS tools in different national contexts. This will be of particular importance to those developing countries and countries with economies in transition that did not directly take part in the technical work of harmonization. Moreover, lessons learned from ongoing GHS pilot projects indicate the practical value of GHS capacity building activities for chemical safety at all levels. To date, 83 countries have already indicated to UNITAR their interest in participating in a GHS capacity development project.

1.2 Workshop Objectives

The main goal of the workshop was to bring together key representatives from government, business and industry, and public interest and labour to discuss GHS implementation and capacity needs in the four GHS-relevant sectors of industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products.

Based on recent surveys conducted by UNITAR/ILO and OECD, there is strong interest in the Arab region for support for GHS capacity building to assist with implementation. At least ten countries within the region have requested support from UNITAR/ILO and a number of these countries have also indicated that implementation of other international chemicals agreements would be facilitated by the implementation of the GHS, such as the Stockholm, Rotterdam, Basel and ILO 170 Conventions. As such, the workshop focused on national GHS implementation among Arab countries, the elements of a possible regional GHS implementation strategy and GHS implementation in the context of other international chemicals management efforts.

Specific objectives of the workshop included, *inter alia*, to:

- take stock of the status of GHS implementation among Arab countries;
- initiate development of national GHS implementation strategies;
- examine existing regional institutions and initiatives relevant for GHS implementation;
- initiate development of a regional GHS capacity assessment and implementation strategy; and
- identify the role and initiate development of action plans for business and industry, and public interest and labour organisations to contribute to regional GHS implementation.

1.3 Opening Statements

Mr. Burkhard Wagner, Senior Special Fellow of UNITAR, made opening remarks on behalf of Dr. Marcel Boisard, Executive Director of UNITAR and Mr. Achim Halpaap, UNITAR Principle Coordinator. He reviewed for the participants that UNITAR and ILO were designated the focal point for capacity building for implementation of GHS within the UN Subcommittee of Experts on GHS. He stressed that the GHS represents both a “success story” of Agenda 21 and a “win-win” scenario that, if properly implemented, will improve the protection of human health and the environment and will facilitate trade in chemicals. He reiterated that effective implementation of the GHS requires actions on the part of government, business and industry, and public interest and labour organizations in the sectors of industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products. He stressed that a key outcome of this workshop would be the development of

recommendations and suggestions for concrete follow-up activities towards a harmonized regional implementation of the GHS by 2008. In conclusion, he thanked the Government of Switzerland for the support of this workshop and the Egyptian partners for their hard work in preparing for this event, in particular the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA).

Dr. Salah Soliman, Professor of Pesticide Chemistry and Toxicology, and Special Advisor of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Bibliotheca. He noted the importance of chemicals management in the Arab region and stated that the GHS can help protect the environment of the region.

Dr. Fatmah El Malah, Director of the Department of Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development of the Arab League, conveyed the greetings of Mr. Amr Mussa, the Secretary-General of the Arab League. She reminded the audience of the Arab Summit where it was agreed to cooperate on environmental matters. She said that the Arab League is interested to initiate work on GHS and thereby follow up its activities on international co-operation concerning the international conventions (Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm). The Arab Council of Ministers has two Committees dealing with the sound management of chemicals and will have a planning workshop soon.

The Governor of Alexandria, H.E. Mr. Adel Labib, also welcomed the participants to his city and reminded the audience that Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in the year 322 BC. Alexandria has an important harbour and hosts 40 percent of national industries and 60 percent of the petrochemical industry in Egypt. He indicated his interest to see the GHS being implemented in this highly industrial area.

HE Maged George Elias Ghattas, Egyptian Minister of State for Environmental Affairs, opened the workshop by welcoming the participants of the Arab countries and expressed his gratitude to UNITAR/ILO and the Government of Switzerland for funding this workshop. He referred to the mandate of the GHS that dates back to Agenda 21 Chapter 19 in 1992. Chemicals are widely used but at present information on their hazards is lacking. Global chemical production is increasing, but chemicals are not limited to national boundaries but move in international trade. Therefore, cooperation is needed internationally for their safe use and to prevent illegal traffic. Environmentally sound management of chemicals contributes to sustainability. The WSSD recommended having the GHS implemented by the year 2008. This goal can be achieved if all sectors of society, governments, industry and the civil society, work together in implementing the GHS. This workshop should explore Arab expertise, stimulate the partnership of the ministries concerned, develop national strategies, explore regional activities, identify the roles of workers, industry and NGOs and agree on concrete measures.

Finally, Dr. Ismail Serageldin of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina provided an overview of sustainability and environmental issues around the world. He covered issues regarding sustainable development spanning from water and sanitation to women in education. The presentation provided participants with a “big picture” of the importance of their work in relation to overall global health and environmental management.

2. International Initiatives and Programmes for GHS Development, Implementation and Capacity Building

This section of the report provides more detail on the GHS and its role in national chemicals management, as well as UNITAR activities and methodologies to facilitate development of National GHS Implementation Strategies.⁵

2.1 Overview of the GHS

Dr. Burkhard Wagner (UNITAR) presented the GHS to workshop participants, beginning with its history, scope, and application. He described the structure of related international bodies dealing with the GHS. He reviewed the principles and benefits of harmonization and highlighted classification criteria and hazard communication, including labelling and safety data sheets. Classification criteria include physical, health and environmental hazards. He introduced GHS terminology and its structure, presented the life cycle concept, and explored the responsibilities of the different actors in the supply chain. He introduced the “building block” approach, which allows countries to implement the GHS according to their particular needs in the different sectors, particularly transport, agriculture, emergency response, and workers’ and consumers’ protection. He also provided information on the international target date of the year 2008 for national implementation of the GHS as recommended by the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

2.2 Overview of the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme

Ms. Cheryl Chang (UNITAR) provided an overview of the GHS in the context of international chemicals management, including the relation and relevance of the GHS to international chemicals agreements such as Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions, and the recently agreed Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). She provided information on the *UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme*, including its context in the UN system and an overview of the global activities of the programme, information on past regional activities, such as regional workshops and outcomes thus far, and necessary considerations in developing a regional approach to GHS implementation. She described country level activities including GHS awareness raising workshops, national situation/gap analyses, and development of national GHS implementation strategies, and outlined the stages of the GHS pilot projects, noting that they are designed to assist countries in developing and implementing chemical hazard communication systems that contribute to the legal and institutional measures needed to implement the GHS. She highlighted the ongoing development of awareness raising, guidance and training materials, as

⁵ Statements and presentations made during the week can be accessed on the workshop website at <http://www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs/ghs10-2.html>.

well as supporting activities and services. Ms. Chang also described the *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS*, initiated by UNITAR, ILO and OECD in 2002. The goal of the Partnership is to mobilize support and catalyze partnerships for concrete activities at the global, regional and national levels to strengthen capacities in developing countries and countries in transition towards effective implementation of the GHS for industrial chemicals, agricultural chemicals, chemicals in transport and consumer product chemicals.⁶

⁶ More information about the Partnership can be found at <www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs_partnership/index.htm>

3. Challenges and Opportunities of GHS Implementation in Arab Countries

3.1 Status of National GHS Implementation in Arab Countries

Participants from each participating Arab country were given the opportunity to present and discuss the status of GHS implementation at the national level, including achievements made to date, challenges encountered, and identified needs for capacity building and technical support.

Status of GHS Implementation in Egypt

Egypt is actively engaged in efforts toward the sound management of chemicals, including efforts to reduce POPs and ozone depleting substances, as well as a number of activities related to climate change. This includes legislation and a coordination mechanism between the ministries concerned. Egypt has developed a National Implementation Plan (NIP) to strengthen national capacity and enhance knowledge and understanding amongst decision makers, managers, the industry, agriculture and the public at large on POPs so that Egypt will be prepared and able to meet its obligations under the Stockholm Convention. Also, the EEAA has established a National Hazardous Substances Information and Management System that provides basic guidelines and information to ensure safe handling of hazardous substances and includes all hazardous substances imported and locally produced. It enables coordination within the competent ministries and authorities in implementing the management system for hazardous substances via a database and a unified permitting form. This system includes databases containing 1,817 chemicals, an information network connected with six line ministries, a unified permitting form to eliminate the duplication of some hazardous substances in different lists, awareness raising for the staff and ministries' representatives, a hazardous substances website to raise public awareness for all the stakeholders, a CD-ROM containing a chemical database, and a classification service for hazardous substances. GHS implementation is being discussed in the context of a possible national chemicals management strategy.

Experiences of Other Countries

Algeria has legislation for imports and classification and labelling of chemicals. In cases where chemicals are imported, they must be licensed and approved by the government. Additionally, there are currently very strict laws for storage of chemicals.

Bahrain is preparing a list of chemicals that are banned and allowed in the country. There is currently a chemical labelling standard that outlines the information to be collected on products including composition, use, company address and environmental management

issues. Bahrain is part of a Gulf States harmonized customs system.

Djibouti has ratified the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions. The issue of chemicals transport is especially challenging as it has a high volume of chemical traffic relative to the size of the country, due to its active port and the demand from neighbouring countries. While it serves as a transit country for chemicals, it lacks human resources for monitoring and controlling the flow of chemicals. Djibouti intends to implement the GHS by developing a national law based on the GHS.

Jordan has an Information System for Chemicals that can be accessed by internet: <http://www.hsms.jo>. This internet site contains an archive of Material Safety Data Sheets of hazardous products in Jordan and information on banned and restricted chemicals. Legislation on chemicals is being planned in coordination with ministries concerned and in the context of Jordan's integrated national chemicals programme (www.jcsw.moenv.gov.jo) This legislation will integrate currently existing chemicals systems in the country, and will be developed in two phases, a preparatory phase and an implementation phase.

Kuwait implemented in 1987 a national monitoring system for chemicals. It has a national committee on pesticides and ozone depleting chemicals. This committee has been in service since 1990 and includes 16 concerned parties from ministries and NGOs, as well as a secretariat that is associated with the Ministry of Environment. Kuwait is planning executive legislation on chemicals management and has ratified all chemicals related agreements including the Basel, Montreal, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. Kuwait plans to implement a customs system for chemicals management which includes the cooperation of all relevant parties including importers. It is expected that the GHS will facilitate this effort. However challenges are foreseen as the number of chemicals transactions that can not be adequately controlled continues to increase. Also, unregulated storage of chemicals is seen as a problem. There also continues to be a general lack of awareness and resources in chemicals management.

In Lebanon a number of ministries are involved in chemicals management. The Ministry of Agriculture deals with activities related to agricultural pesticides. Currently, pesticides are labelled according to the FAO and WHO criteria. Further, the Ministry of Environment deals with hazardous and industrial chemicals, the Ministry of Public Health is responsible for pesticides destined for domestic use and the Ministry of Energy and Water is responsible for the import of petroleum derivatives. Legal procedures exist for the control of agricultural pesticides, industrial chemicals, domestic pesticides, and PCBs. While there are several legal texts that cover chemicals management in Lebanon, enforcement of available legal instruments remains very weak due to the lack of human, technical and financial resources. Many laboratories, belonging to ministries, research institutes, universities or

the private sector, can be considered for management of chemicals in Lebanon. There is further need for awareness raising and financial support for capacity building efforts.

In Libya, the Environment General Authority (EGA) is the only government body, as designated by the Libyan Law (Act No 15, 2005) that has the right to give permission for chemicals and pesticides and fertilizers to enter to the country. Further the EGA controls and manages chemical use in the country. Imports have to be approved by the Committee of the Environment and documentation and samples be presented. There remains some problems with illegal chemicals, for example, banned chemicals being found in the market place. However, there have been efforts to improve customs instructions and training.

In order to ensure ecologically rational management of the chemicals, Morocco has made great efforts for the reinforcement of national capacities in particular in the field of risk evaluation, the management of chemicals in storage, elimination and/or management of out-of-date chemicals, and the residues of pesticides in food. For this purpose, there are currently existing standards relating to classification, packaging and labelling for informing users and workers about chemical hazards. Also, a number of activities are carried out to sensitize users and the general public to chemicals management including seminars, workshops and trainings, as well as publications and research on chemicals. It should be noted that Morocco established a national profile on the management of the chemicals which took into account the guidelines of the GHS.

In Oman, the Department of Chemicals is the responsible authority for chemicals. This agency deals with the handling and management of chemicals, as well as chemical licensing and importation. The department is organised into two committees, one for policies and government issues, and one for technical co-operation. Oman has also developed a chemicals database. Oman participates in a number of treaties including the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

The Palestinian National Authority has a section for environment, natural disasters, storage and transport. There are serious problems with the importation of chemicals. Palestine monitors all international conventions, though there is a general lack of awareness among the public.

In Qatar, it is the role of the high commission to manage customs issues. This commission provides permits for imported cargo, even for transit. Qatar currently cooperates with other Gulf states in regards to a harmonised customs system, however there exist some problems with coordination. Customs officers are exposed to chemicals with unknown properties.

In Saudi Arabia there is currently a system in place to regulate import of chemicals and there are efforts to coordinate different chemicals conventions. Further, Saudi Arabia has a national program on chemical safety involving all related authorities. The rules and regulations are stipulated by general environmental regulations dealing with the waste of chemical substances. There are a number of industry measures to ensure chemical safety, in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Trade. This Ministry deals with regulating chemical imports. Recently, a comprehensive survey of chemicals in the country was completed, and currently Saudi Arabia is working to complete a database on chemicals, including identification and characteristics of the chemicals. There is a need to increase awareness on chemicals in cases of emergency.

Most chemicals imported into Sudan are pesticides and fertilizers. There is an existing law on chemicals, based on a lifecycle approach, and all activities related to chemicals are controlled by this law. There are some efforts currently being undertaken to raise awareness, in particular in relation to occupational health, and a number of NGOs are supporting this effort. Chemicals management in Sudan is managed by interministerial cooperation, including the involvement of ministries of health, labour, environment, industry, transport, interior affairs, energy and mining, animal resources and international affairs.

Syria is currently cooperating with a network of five government ministries to establish a database on chemicals, including banned and permitted chemicals. A decree by the prime minister was developed which states that illegal chemicals will be shipped immediately away from the harbour. Syria has concluded a number of workshops for awareness raising for chemicals. One of the biggest challenges for Syria is the storage of chemicals. There is a national coordination committee on chemicals management and a national committee on hazardous waste management. Syria has set up a national committee to follow the Rotterdam convention but still needs to develop a national system on risk assessment, management and emergency response for major chemical spills. The country has initiated the Syrian Hazardous Information Management System (HIMS).

The Government of Tunisia recognises the importance of chemicals management at all levels, and is concerned with the utmost degree of safety. The Ministry of Environment is responsible for the implementation of the Basel Convention and Montreal Protocol, among other chemicals agreements. Within the Ministry, the National Environmental Agency is responsible for environmental protection, including chemicals management, and provides technical supervision. The Ministry of Social Affairs provides the legal framework for chemicals management, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources manages and evaluates pesticides. Within the Ministry of Public Health, the Technical Committee on Chemical Products of the

National Agency for the Control of Health and Environmental Products evaluates the impact of chemical products on health and environment and makes recommendations on best practices and safe use of chemicals. Tunisia also has existing laws on the transport of hazardous goods. Tunisia is well placed to implement the GHS.

The United Arab Emirates includes chemicals among its environmental issues of concern, including hazardous chemicals management. It works with regional bodies in the development of standards and specifications, and on coordination of positions with regard to regional and international chemicals agreements, including the Montreal, Stockholm, UNFCCC and Basel conventions. The Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi also has a Chemical and Hazardous Materials Management System. This program regulates and controls the use and entry of Chemical and Hazardous Materials & Hazardous Wastes into the Emirate. This project aims to provide tools for building a cradle-to-grave sound management system for chemicals and hazardous materials used in the Emirate. The benefits of this system include public access to relevant federal and local laws and regulations, a retrieval system for MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet), information for select chemicals, lists of regulated materials (chemicals, pesticides, wastes), and a database of imported chemical / radioactive material to the Emirate.

Yemen is working to promote environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals and hazardous waste, in order to address concerns regarding human exposure to chemicals and associated health risks. There are a number of laws and regulations dealing with chemicals including the Environmental Protection Law No. 26 from 1995. Yemen only imports and uses, but does not produce chemicals. These chemicals are classified into sub-groups: fertilizers, pesticides, pharmaceutical components, raw industrial chemicals, metals and metal compound products, mineral fuel and petroleum, consumer use chemicals, chemicals for laboratories, chemical waste, and persistent organic pollutants. Yemen is also a signatory of a number of international chemicals conventions such as: Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam Conventions and the Montreal Protocol. Yemen is yet to embark on any plan or program to implement the GHS but is in the process of undertaking a situation and gap analysis to review the current chemical management system as a whole. Several challenges exist to both chemicals management and GHS implementation. The greatest challenges for Yemen in chemicals management include low levels of awareness, limited education, lack of capacity among Government institutions, lack of cooperation among laboratories and stakeholders, and lack of expertise and finances. Further challenges specific to GHS implementation include: present regulations are confined to pesticides; controls on other chemicals are based on institutional measures, where various agencies deal with chemicals, but need further coordination; the majority of industry is small and medium size enterprises which lack capacity; and labelling awareness among stakeholders and users is low.

There are opportunities for GHS implementation, but the first step is to review the overall chemical management system. Yemen is seeking technical assistance from UNITAR.

3.2 The Roles of Industry, Labour and Non-profit Civil Society Groups in GHS Implementation

Representatives from Industry, Labour and Non-profit Civil Society organizations were given the opportunity to present their views on the roles, perspectives and relevant activities of their respective groups to facilitate GHS implementation.

The representative from International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) presented on the implementation of the GHS from the industry perspective. He started by providing an overview of GHS implementation in selected countries around the world. For example, in the USA, GHS implementation is handled separately but with active coordination by government agencies covering the four sectors of industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products. In the EU, implementation of the GHS will be aligned with the new legislation on the Registration, Authorisation and Evaluation of Chemicals (REACH), with an expected transition period for full implementation. Industry has a number of responsibilities in managing hazardous chemicals including classification through testing, preparing Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for hazardous chemicals, labelling according to hazard classification, packaging and transport according to hazard classification and to train the workforce. Further, there are a number of initiatives from industry to support sound management of chemicals. For example through programs such as Responsible Care and Global Product Stewardship, industry works toward hazard classification for risk management to promote occupational health and safety; classification of waste to support pollution prevention; and the communication of hazards down the value chain in order to promote product stewardship. Industry also engages in a number of capacity building efforts to raise awareness at the enterprise level, support international initiatives, share best practices and data, and support UNITAR capacity building on the GHS.

A representative of Croplife International presented on the role of Croplife in chemicals management. Croplife International represents business and industries from agricultural chemicals and biotech products. Croplife recognises that the GHS provides new opportunities, but that the application of the system needs to be addressed by government, without undermining the existing system. He emphasised the importance of coordinating efforts at all levels, including between countries and industries, as well as among international organisations. He stressed the need for FAO to coordinate and adopt the GHS, but while continuing to use the safe-use pictograms to provide further information for users, especially farmers and other workers. He noted

that intellectual property rights also needed to be respected by the GHS, but that this would not be a problem because GHS stresses communicating the hazards of chemicals rather than composition.

The representative from the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) presented a statement on the role of public interest and labour organisations in supporting GHS implementation. He noted that NGOs play an especially important role in monitoring and awareness raising for the GHS. He informed participants that RAED has a legal status within Egypt and is actively involved in environmental affairs in the Arab region. The organisation was founded in order to support sustainable development and increase the quality of life of people in the region. It works to encourage understanding about environmental issues and sets partnerships and cooperations. RAED is comprised of 17 representative NGOs from Arab countries, and is recognised by the Arab League, UNEP and UN ECOSOC. RAED's scope of work currently includes chemicals management as it relates to climate change, desertification and water. Currently, there is a low level of awareness among members on the GHS, however one of the key roles of NGOs such as RAED is the education of the public through workshops and courses. He noted that GHS could also be included in the current scope of work of RAED, and that information on the GHS could be spread through publications.

The representative of Consumers Association Lebanon, informed the workshop that there is still a low level of understanding about chemicals among the public and that many consumers are afraid of chemicals. She noted that in the workplace, industrial workers and farmers must deal with chemicals regularly. While it is the consumers responsibility to inform themselves of chemical hazards, it is the responsibility of governments to mandate that adequate information is provided to the public. Therefore, public interest groups must work to pressure government to improve chemical hazard communication regulations, for example through the GHS. Also, consumer groups can support capacity building for chemicals management through awareness raising, and promotion of human health and the environment. Consumers are an important stakeholder in the GHS implementation process and should be educated about chemical hazard communication. They should also be consulted as part of the GHS implementation process. Networks should be established to coordinate and communicate important information.

3.3 Relevant Regional Institutions for GHS Implementation

The representative of the Arab League Secretariat informed the workshop of the Arab Council of Ministers' three units dealing with the environment: the Executive Office in Charge of Environmental Affairs, the Joint Committee for Environment and Development in the Arab Region, and the Permanent Arab Committee for Climate Change.

Further, there are two working groups related to the environment, one dealing with follow-up related to the execution of international environmental agreements (or treaties) on desertification and biodiversity, and the other in charge of international environmental agreements (or treaties) related to waste and hazardous waste. For the second working group, its main work has been primarily related to the Basel Convention and the transport and disposal of hazardous waste beyond the territorial boundaries, as well as activities in the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and Montreal Protocol. Since its inception, this working group has achieved an exchange of expertise and knowledge amongst Arab countries, an exchange of information related to the implementation by Arab States of their obligations under international environmental agreements, an analysis of many aspects related to these IEAs, and coordination of Arab positions during the COPs in order to safeguard Arab interests. The working group will prepare, in cooperation with internationally concerned parties and UNEP, a regional Arab meeting on the execution of the regional Arab action plan to implement SAICM. The meeting is expected to take place the first quarter of 2007. The Arab states are making an effort to respond positively to the GHS, but success will mainly depend on the efforts of developed countries and donors. Further, achieving GHS implementation will depend mainly on making available the necessary financial and technical resources for the region.

The representative from UNEP/ROWA presented the potential role of UNEP/ROWA in promoting GHS in Arab States through close cooperation with regional partners, including with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Secretariat-General of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). These organizations have specialized committees for Chemical Management, Customs and Trade in which ROWA is a partner and they are involved either directly or indirectly in chemical monitoring and control. Benefiting from this involvement, ROWA can include GHS in the mandate of these committees. Given ROWA's regular involvement with environmental authorities in the region, the importance of implementing GHS can be brought to the attention of high-level officers. ROWA can also provide the necessary policy and technical advisory services to assist countries in organizing national GHS workshops, as well as encourage them to include GHS in other related national and regional meetings and workshops. GHS can be further promoted by ROWA in its series of national meetings planned for 2007 under the Green Customs Initiative where they will gather all chemical management stakeholders. In addition to the above, ROWA has gained good experience by assisting some countries in implementing projects on chemical management and waste.

4. Workshop Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 General Conclusions

Participants agreed that there are a number of benefits to national implementation of the GHS. General benefits include:

- Protection of the environment and human health
- Promotion of information exchange on chemicals management
- Promotion of safe chemical use
- Facilitation of international trade of chemicals

Workshop participants agreed there are a number of incentives for countries to support and facilitate GHS implementation including:

- Compliance with international systems and standards
- Avoidance of confusion from different systems
- Increased efficiency of relevant agencies for chemicals management
- Increased public awareness of chemical hazards and risks
- Improved safety measures and working conditions
- Financial and profit gains

Participants noted the importance of the GHS in industrial workplaces in order to improve worker health and safety, create more efficient production and to protect human health and the environment from unintentional release of chemicals into the environment.

Participants agreed that the GHS is important in agriculture in order to improve the safety of agricultural workers and consumers. It could also lead to improvements in crop production and reduce costs to farmers.

Participants noted that the GHS is used in the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UNRTDG). The UNRTDG is a key component of transport safety as it facilitates the safe handling of chemicals that transit through communities and environments, as well as providing information to emergency responders.

It was agreed that the GHS can support safety in consumer products by providing users of household chemicals with information on the dangers, handling, use and emergency response procedures of a hazardous chemical.

Participants reiterated that GHS implementation at any level (national, regional, international) requires follow-up activities from government, public interest and labour organisations, and business and industry, from the relevant sectors of industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products.

In general, participants agreed to:

- Support the internationally agreed target date for implementing the GHS
- Acknowledge the need for coordinating regionally and internationally for GHS implementation
- Note the utility of GHS implementation in supporting other international chemicals agreements and conventions such as the Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention, Basel Convention, Montreal Protocol, etc
- Consider undertaking activities (and improve upon existing activities) to work toward GHS implementation
- Acknowledge that the development of GHS should include the involvement of government, public interest and labour organisations, and business and industry groups in the sectors of industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products
- Identify and contact a wide range of donors and relevant international organisations (e.g. UN SCEGHS, UNITAR, ILO, UNEP, FAO), cooperation agencies and industry technical support groups to support national, sectoral and regional GHS implementation. However, efforts to implement the GHS should continue regardless of donor funding.

4.2 Challenges and Obstacles to GHS Implementation

Participants noted the following overall challenges and obstacles to GHS implementation:

- Lack of awareness at various levels
- Inadequate infrastructure, including limited financial resources
- Inadequate priority setting
- Inadequate training and informational programs
- Shortage/absence of technical resources (including human resources, labs, databases, guidelines, etc.)
- Diversity of trade names, and challenges of Confidential Business Information
- Language of labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Specific to government, participants noted that challenges include:

- Lack of coordination of administrative procedures among relevant national and regional relevant agencies
- Lack of clear mandates for concerned Ministries
- Inadequate or no enforcement
- Absence of emergency response plans

Specific to public interest and labour, as well as business and industry, participants noted that challenges include:

- Limited number of active organizations (trade associations, labour unions, consumer groups)
- Little influence on decision making in government
- Lack of lobby for chemical safety
- Financial cost of training and awareness raising
- High level of illiteracy among users
- Highly decentralized populations of chemical users, including SMEs.

4.3 National Recommendations (including roles of stakeholders)

For government, participants agreed that involvement should include all relevant authorities related to chemicals safety and management. The authorities involved depend on the particular circumstances within the country, but could include the following relevant authorities:

- Environment
- Industry
- Agriculture
- Customs
- Education
- Finance
- Consumer Affairs
- Foreign Affairs
- Health
- Local Government
- Manpower/Labour
- Trade
- Transportation
- Petroleum, Electricity, Mining, Natural resources
- Interior, Civil Defence, Police
- Habitation, Housing and Urban Development

Participants recommended the following activities for government to support national GHS implementation:

- Adopting the GHS through:
 - a) A national GHS implementation strategy;
 - b) A synergistic chemicals management strategy that includes the GHS; or
 - c) Incorporation of the GHS into existing chemicals management systems
- Establishment of a national committee and a national focal point to implement GHS
- Development of or updating a National Chemicals Profile
- Maintenance of synergies with global conventions on chemicals management
- Promotion of awareness raising, capacity building and training for the GHS

- Creation of partnerships with the public and private sector in decision making mechanisms for GHS implementation
- Mandate that training materials, labels and SDSs need to be provided in the local language
- Establishment of a national chemicals database and information networks, or make use of existing databases regionally or internationally
- Establishment of accredited laboratories, or update existing laboratories, and establishment of a system of cooperation among laboratories within the region and internationally recognized laboratories
- Development of emergency response systems for dealing with chemicals situations
- Provision of tax benefits, such as priority importation for GHS compliant products
- Specify of an incentive system for GHS implementation

In implementing the GHS, it was decided that governments should take into consideration:

- The use of the UN Recommendations for the Transport of Dangerous Goods for the transport sector
- The incorporation of the GHS into the WHO and FAO codes and standards related to pesticide use
- Necessary transition periods for GHS implementation, taking into consideration the needs of the sectors, as well as the situation among neighbouring countries and trading partners

Specific to legislation, participants recommended that governments should:

- Develop and enforce laws, regulations, and/or guidelines for GHS implementation
- Revise, update and enforce existing legislations to comply with GHS.
- Legally implement the GHS according to the national legal situation (one regulation covering all the sectors or many regulations covering separate sectors)
- Develop legislations through committees, councils, a coordination unit, etc., according to the national situation.

Participants recommended the following roles for public interest and labour organisations to support national GHS implementation:

- Engage in awareness-raising among relevant stakeholders, especially consumers and workers.
- Lobby to implement the GHS and related chemical management approaches.
- Improve working conditions and safety of workers by

advocating for GHS implementation.

Participants recommended the following roles for business and industry to support national GHS implementation:

- Train labour groups, workers and experts on the GHS
- Keep accurate records for GHS labels and SDSs (including trace-ability)
- Raise awareness among workers by providing clear information and instructions on GHS, for example by providing control guidelines, posters, etc.
- Provide financial support for all the activities mentioned above

Participants noted that each sector has particular needs for GHS implementation, and that while the activities and responsibilities of the stakeholders for the GHS may be broadly similar, the target audiences within each sector are different. Therefore, awareness raising, training, and information sharing, should keep in mind the needs of the various groups associated with each sector. For example, farmers in the agricultural sector will have different needs from consumers, transport or factory workers.

4.4 Regional Recommendations

Participants concluded that regional implementation of the GHS could benefit the region by:

- Saving time, effort and costs in the implementation of GHS in individual countries
- Increasing control of chemical substances
- Protecting human health and the environment
- Facilitating commerce and trade on a regional level
- Providing access to information on a regional level
- Supporting efforts to limit illegal trafficking of chemicals
- Benefit from existing accredited laboratories

For all sectors related to GHS implementation, regarding regional cooperation among governments, participants recommended the establishment of a Regional GHS Implementation Committee, including, establishment of working groups, by sector (industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products). Further, participants supported identification of government focal points from each country for the working groups. This Committee with relevant working groups would develop an overall GHS implementation strategy for the region, as well as specific workplans for each of the sectors with information on responsible bodies, timelines, financial designations, etc.

For technical support and awareness raising of the GHS at the regional level, participants suggested to:

- Hold workshops and training programs for the GHS on all levels, possibly as a basis for developing a GHS implementation strategy framework
- Establish technical support system and guidelines for the region
- Use networks, websites, publications and other communications media for promoting and raising awareness regarding the GHS
- Develop a harmonized database and network of chemicals information, through the use of existing databases, internationally and regionally, or harmonize or unify existing databases in the region

Participants also recommended whenever possible, coordination with existing regional institutes through the following recommendations:

- There should be support from the Arab League for a regional GHS implementation strategy
- The *Arab Group for Following International Environmental Agreements Related to Hazardous Waste and Substances* of the Arab League should be engaged in GHS implementation
- Possibly engage the Basel regional center and promote the inclusion of all countries within the region
- Possibly engage other regional bodies such as the Organisation of European-Mediterranean States

For a regional strategy for GHS implementation, it was suggested that public interest groups could establish a regional network for NGOs to share information and develop training and awareness raising materials.

For business and industry groups, participants recommended that regional industry associations integrate the GHS in their workplans.

Specific to agriculture, participants concluded that the regional offices of international organizations relevant to agriculture, such as the FAO or WHO should be engaged. Further, participants supported the active involvement of regional public interest and/or industry groups for GHS implementation such as Croplife.

For transport, participants supported the development of a network for information and data exchange, possibly using the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods which is the transport sector basis for the GHS.

For industrial workplaces, participants supported the development of a common policy for dealing with chemicals in industrial settings in the region. Also, it was recommended that regional research centres and laboratories be utilized for GHS capacity building.

While civil society involvement is important in all sectors related to GHS implementation, participants suggested that in the consumer products sector, public interest groups could create a network or partnership for developing guidelines and training on GHS label elements relevant to consumers, and to work to integrate GHS educational materials into school textbooks.

4.5 Other Recommendations

In addition to the conclusions and recommendations made by participants, throughout the workshop a number of additional issues and suggestions were raised. Particular to this workshop, a number of customs representatives identified links between the GHS and customs. They therefore encouraged that cooperation be enhanced between the UN SCEGHS and the World Customs Organisation to develop appropriate solutions addressing the issue of GHS and customs.

4.5 Conclusions

Participants concluded that the workshop provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on experiences, discuss key issues and suggest concrete next steps in the area of chemical hazard communication and GHS implementation. The participants of the workshop represented diverse national experiences from a number of sectors related to GHS implementation. As the GHS is a relatively new topic to the region, most countries are only in the initial stages of GHS capacity building and implementation. However support and interest in the system was very high. Given limited regional resources, participants encouraged the international community to support efforts for GHS implementation in the region, including through the provision of financial and technical resources. Participants also supported the further development of networks and cooperation between countries and within existing regional organisations and infrastructures. Workshop participants agreed that a mechanism should be established to follow-up with the workshop recommendations.



Annex A: Workshop Agenda

Monday, 30 October 2006

10:00 – 11:00 **Delegation Hall OR BACC**
Opening Session

Moderator: Dr. Tarek Eid Egypt

Welcome remarks by:

- UNITAR, Mr. Burkhard Wagner
- Arab League , Dr. Fatma El Malah
- Dr. Salah Soliman
- H.E. Adel Labib, Governor of Alexandria
- H.E. Maged George , Ministry of Environment Affairs
- Break 10 Min.
- DVD presentation about Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Past, Present & Future

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 - 13.00 **2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC**
Session 1: Introductory Presentations

Moderator: Dr. Tarek Eid Egypt

Session 1 provides a series of introductory presentations to familiarize participants with the GHS, its role in national chemicals management, and the methodology to facilitate development of National and Regional GHS Implementation Strategies.

- Introduction to Session
- The GHS: Overview Presentation
Mr. Burkhard Wagner, Senior Special Fellow, UNITAR
- Overview of UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme
Ms. Cheryl Chang, UNITAR
- Discussion
- Summary of Session

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30 **2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC**
Session 2: Status of GHS Implementation in Arab Countries

Moderator: Dr. Tarek Eid Egypt

Session 2 provides an opportunity for countries to present and discuss existing national chemical hazard classification and communication systems, and the status of GHS implementation at the national level, including achievements made to date, challenges encountered, and identified needs for capacity building and technical support.

- Introduction to Session
- Country statements/presentations (5-7 minutes per country)

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 18:00

- Discussion
- Summary of Session 2 and Close of Day1

Tuesday, 31 October 2006

09:00 – 11:00 **2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC**
Session 3: The Role of Business and Industry and Public Interest and Labour
Organisations in GHS Implementation

Moderator: Mr. Emad Nahal – Lebanon.

Session 3 provides an opportunity for representatives of business and industry, and public interest and labour organisations to present the role, perspectives and relevant activities of their respective groups to facilitate GHS implementation.

- Introduction to Session
- Perspective of Industry
- Perspective of Labour
- Perspective of Public Interest
- Discussion
- Summary of Session 3

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11.30 – 13:00
Session 4: Development of National GHS Implementation Strategies in Arab Countries
(Working Groups)

Moderator: Dr. Saad Hassan - Egypt

Session 4 provides an opportunity for government, business and industry and public interest and labour participants to discuss GHS implementation issues and challenges from their particular perspectives. This may include consideration of existing capacities, gaps, and necessary action to ensure an effective contribution of all actors to national GHS implementation.

Introduction to Session and Introduction to Working Groups

- Working Group (1) **2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC**
- Working Group (2) **3rd Floating Room , Main Building**

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30

Working Groups Presentations Plenary and Discussion

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee break

16:00: 18:00

Moderator: Mr. Hassan Mubarak - Bahrain

Plenary session

Summary of Session 4 and Close of Day 2

2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC

Wednesday, 1 November 2006

09:00 – 11:00

2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC

Session 5: Implementation of the GHS at the Regional Level

Moderator: Dr. Abdel Kareem Ibrahim - Jordan

Session 5 focuses on facilitating a discussion and developing concrete recommendations towards implementing the GHS at the regional level. Specific attention will be given to identifying specific actions needed within each sector and possible action through relevant bodies and networks of government, industry and non-profit civil society respectively.

- Introduction to Session

09:00 – 10:00

- Regional Institutions relevant to the GHS
Arab League Secretariat
UNEP

10:00 – 11:00

- Introduction to Working Groups
Session 5 Working Group general questions

- (A) Industrial Workplaces
- (B) Agriculture
- (C) Transport
- (D) Consumer Products

[Working Groups to take breaks as needed]

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00

2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC

Moderator: Eng. Ibtesam El Refai – Kuwait

- Presentation by Arab League Dr. Shahira Hassan Wahbi
- Working Group discussion (part 2) focusing on the roles of stockholders and development of a Regional strategy.

- (A) Industrial Workplaces
- (B) Agriculture
- (C) Transport
- (D) Consumer Products

13.00-14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00

2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC

- Presentation of Working Groups in Plenary
- Summary of Session 5 and Close of Day 3

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 18:00

Bibliotheca Alexandrina tour and visit to 2 museums.

Thursday, 2 November 2006

09:00 – 11:00

2nd Floor Meeting Hall , BACC

Session 6: Workshop Conclusions and Follow-up Activities

Moderator: Dr. Mohamed El Zarka, Dr. Saad Hassan & Dr. Mousa Ibrahim Mousa - Egypt

In Session 6 the Secretariat will table the main observations and draft conclusions for discussion, amendment and possible adoption by participants.

- Summary of Workshop Results

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 15:00

- Discussion of National Follow-up Activities and Next Steps
- Discussion of Regional Follow-up Activities and Next Steps
- Summary of Session and Close of the Workshop

Annex B: List of Participants**Regional Workshop on Chemical Hazard Communication & GHS
Implementation For Arab Countries**

Alexandria , Egypt – 30 October – 02 November 2006

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Annex C: List of Acronyms

COP	Conference of the Parties
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GHS	Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
ICCA	International Council of Chemical Associations
ICSC	international chemical safety card
IEA	International Environmental Agreement
IFCS	Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOMC	Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
IPCS	International Programme on Chemical Safety
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LAS	League of Arab States
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIP	National Implementation Plan
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PIC	Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SCEGHS	United Nations Sub-committee of Experts on the GHS
SCETDG	United Nations Sub-committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods
SDS	safety data sheet
SME	Small and medium sized enterprise
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-ROWA	United Nations Environment Programme- Regional Office for West Asia
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNRTDG	United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization



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