

Closing Statement on behalf of the CEE Region

Madame/Mr Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Representatives of the Secretariat, Estimated Colleagues,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the countries of the Central and Eastern European region at the closing of the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group for the Global Framework on Chemicals.

We would like to begin by sincerely thanking the host country, the Republic of Uruguay, for its warm hospitality, and express our appreciation to the Co-Chairs and the Secretariat for their efforts in guiding us through this important meeting.

The CEE Region welcomes the establishment of the GFC Fund and looking forward to benefit from these funds particularly the CEE countries with economies in transition that are mainly relying on international support to build their capacities towards implementation of the strategic objectives agreed in Bonn 2023 and contribute to the sound management of chemicals and its waste in the Region and globally.

With respect to the GFC Fund, we appreciate the efforts made so far. However, we would like to express our expectation for greater clarity, transparency, and regional balance in the next stages of the Fund's operation. We believe it is important to ensure that the Fund supports the needs of all regions in a fair and inclusive manner.

The CEE region welcomes the progress made across various elements of the Framework, and in particular, we are encouraged by the broad support to continue work on all of the existing emerging policy issues. These issues remain highly relevant for our region, and we look forward to continued engagement on them. In addition, this inclusive forum advanced key resolutions, including implementation programmes the GFC Fund, measurability and indicators, capacity building, and integrated cross-sectoral discussions covering environment, health, labor, agriculture and finance laying essential groundwork ahead of the First International Conference in late 2026.

At the same time, we would like to emphasize that the current level of available resources is far from adequate to support the implementation of the GFC at the scale and pace required. We strongly encourage all relevant actors to work toward mobilizing significantly greater financial and technical resources to ensure meaningful and sustained progress.

Finally, we wish to highlight that we are at a pivotal moment in the development of the Framework, as we prepare for the first International Conference. We therefore call on all governments and stakeholders to give increased attention and political priority to the GFC process, and to work together to build a solid foundation for implementation.

Thank you, Mr/Madame Co - Chair.