

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, and esteemed colleagues

On behalf of the Africa region, we would like to thank the government and people of Uruguay for their hospitality, and commend the GFC Secretariat for the good preparation of its first meeting of the Open ended working Group of the Global Framework on Chemicals-for a Planet free of harm from chemicals and waste.

The Africa region reiterates its commitment to constructively engage in the effective implementation of the decisions adopted at the Fifth Session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, including Decision 5/12. Recognizing the multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary nature of the Global Framework on Chemicals, our region expresses its strong support for activities aimed at enhancing communication and coordination particularly through the designation of focal points from all relevant sectors—and for strengthening collaboration with the newly established Science-Policy Panel in future undertakings.

The Africa region remains deeply concerned about the projected funding shortfalls for the Secretariat—namely, the anticipated gap of USD 1 million in 2025 and USD 9 million in 2026. These figures underscore earlier concerns raised by our region regarding the critical importance of adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing—a lesson drawn from the challenges faced under the SAICM framework. In this regard, the Africa region calls upon all partners to support efforts aimed at ensuring financial sustainability and stands ready to engage constructively in all related discussions.

Africa welcomes the inclusion of regional meetings, the development of national focal point guidelines, and the emphasis on capacity building and technical support as vital elements for advancing national implementation. Nonetheless, our region notes with concern that these initiatives remain contingent on voluntary contributions, which may jeopardize consistent and equitable participation, particularly across resource-constrained regions. We therefore urge the secretariat to explore funding opportunities beyond the regular donors, looking at co-financing strategies to align with global environmental and chemical safety priorities.

In this regard, we call upon the private sector to actively contribute and be part of the solution, recognizing that the challenges we are addressing originate from the industry. It is both logical and long overdue to have meaningful involvement of the industry itself—not at all industry associations that speak on its behalf – at times shield information to pass through. Industry must be accountable for the harms caused, just as society continues to rely on its products.

While Africa supports the overall strategic direction of the GFC work programme, it continues to express concern over funding limitations, access to project financing, and disparities in regional capacity. The African region therefore calls for timely and targeted corrective measures to address these issues and to ensure that no country or vulnerable population is left behind in the implementation of the Framework.

Thank you!