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**STATEMENT OF SUGGESTED POLICIES AND MEASURES IN THE ARAB
REGION REGARDING THE THEMATIC CLUSTERS OF THE
NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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I. TRANSPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB REGION

In order to promote the role of the transport sector in the sustainable socio-economic development, Arab countries should establish and implement policies and measures aimed at achieving sustainable transport. These should be country-specific, and can comprise the following:

A. POLICIES

The countries of the region are working towards the formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at:

- Integrating strategies, plans, and objectives related to sustainable transport in the national development policies, strategies, and plans, as well as transport policies in the comprehensive national sectoral policies.
- Reviewing, evaluating, and updating current national and regional strategies related to transport in the countries of the region for the purpose of achieving sustainable transport.
- Drafting the relevant policies for developing the transport infrastructure, notably roads and railways, and renovating fleets, in order to support sustainable transport.
- Giving priority to strengthening and developing public transport, railways, and metros.
- Formulating policies and legislations that promote sustainable transport, and particularly improve traffic management and fuel specifications (gasoline and diesel oil), regulate the management and operation of transport fleets, and encourage the use of modern cars.
- Supporting safe transport and reducing road accidents.
- Supporting and developing transport services in rural and remote areas, as they contribute to poverty eradication and socio-economic development.
- Promoting and supporting regional and international cooperation in sustainable transport, within the general framework of sustainable development.
- Transferring, locally deploying, and nationally adopting state-of-the-art technology such as the less polluting transport systems.
- Adopting a long-term policy on urban planning to achieve sustainable transport.
- Adopting a fuel pricing policy and rationalizing fuel subsidies in order to decrease fuel consumption and reduce vehicle emissions.

B. MEASURES

The countries of the region aim to support the implementation of the following measures:

- To undertake public transport projects, and shift from private cars to public transportation (trains, metro, tramways, and busses).

- To undertake programmes in order to upgrade vehicle maintenance, regular engine inspections, and emissions control, in order to improve fuel efficiency, reduce emissions, extend the vehicle lifespan, increase the vehicle resale value, and reduce operational costs.
- To develop oil refining techniques in the Arab countries through the transformation and treatment of oil and its derivatives, with a particular focus on transforming heavy oil distillates into cleaner light distillates, and using fuel additives for cleaner and less polluting fuel production.
- To implement measures to improve traffic management, notably traffic signs and driving guidelines, traffic control, car parking, traffic lines in urban streets, and pedestrian crosswalks; a special focus can also be made on introducing minor changes to the traffic system such as adjusting driving directions in order to facilitate the traffic movement.
- To use new information and communication systems in transport to provide immediate traffic information that can be used to achieve optimum transport efficiency, both for traveling or shipping. The use of such systems is expected to: (a) give priority to busses and trams in traffic signs, thereby increasing the speed of public transport vehicles; (b) control the movement of busses, trams and trains, thereby allowing for the control of services and provision of immediate information; (c) provide realtime information on roads, timetables, and stations either through call centers or directly via Internet; (d) support the management and operation of transport systems.
- To substitute old vehicles with new ones, given that wear and tear makes vehicles more polluting and less valid for driving as time elapses. Moreover, old vehicles are more vulnerable to breakdown on roads, thereby causing traffic jams, and they pose a threat to the other road users. It is worth mentioning that substituting old vehicles with new ones will impose a heavy economic burden on the countries of the region, and will be hindered by major difficulties. Consequently, incentives are recommended to encourage the owners of old vehicles to replace them with new ones.
- To shift to the transport of goods via railways instead of trucks, as this will largely reduce fuel consumption in transport sector, and therefore reduce emissions.
- To implement projects promoting the use of natural gas powered cars, and adopting this technology at the national level, notably in the countries having gas lines infrastructure; encouraging the use of ion separator filters for exhausts to treat the output of car exhausts, whether powered by natural gas or other kinds of fuel; and making use of the experience of other countries in this field.
- To launch national and regional awareness-raising campaigns in support of sustainable transport, notably in terms of improving energy efficiency, reducing emissions, and ensuring traffic safety at all levels.
- To conduct systemic urban planning and developing road networks, thereby reducing the daily trips of vehicles and therefore reducing emissions.
- To allocate budget funds to encourage investment in the implementation of measures related to sustainable transport.
- To rehabilitate roads after disasters or emergencies.
- To prepare the necessary studies on traffic peak hours, and seeking adequate solutions.

II. CHEMICALS

In spite of the active support provided by Arab countries for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), in line with their efforts to achieve the goal of Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), which aims to minimize the adverse effects of the production and use of chemicals on the environment and human health by 2020, Arab countries should deal with the issue of chemicals by implementing the following policies and measures:

A. POLICIES

The countries of the region are working towards the formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at:

- Establishing a strategy for the integrated management of chemicals and hazardous waste.
- Preparing a general guide on the risks of chemicals and related waste, with the classification of risk level.
- Applying and updating laws and regulations in compliance with relevant multilateral international agreements.
- Establishing suitable mechanisms to conduct risk analysis and address environmental degradation resulting from the unsafe use of chemicals.
- Exchanging expertise in the transfer of modern technologies and development of safe alternatives.
- Strengthening partnerships among stakeholders and increasing their participation in the implementation of (SAICM).
- Adopting a globally sustainable financial mechanism that is dynamic, clear, and adapted to the capacity of the Arab countries to implement the (SAICM).
- Facilitating the information flow from other countries, providing the necessary expertise to upgrade the chemicals management, and at the same time identifying flexible terms for the transfer and local deployment of modern techniques used as cleaner alternatives in Arab countries.
- Promoting cooperation in research and transfer of technology.
- Raising public awareness about the adverse effects of chemicals and related waste on health and the environment.

B. MEASURES

The countries of the region aim to support the implementation of the following measures:

- To establish standards to assess the cost of environmental degradation resulting from the unsafe use of chemicals.

- To conduct studies on soil and water pollution caused by chemicals leakage, and find suitable solutions.
- To apply the risk assessment and analysis methodology.
- To evaluate the situation of the available specialized laboratories and establish relevant accreditation and control mechanisms.
- To provide intensive training on the globally coordinated system for the classification and labeling of chemicals.
- To establish and facilitate the use of databases on chemicals throughout their lifecycle.
- To introduce all issues related to chemicals management and implementation of relevant multilateral agreements, in addition to currently discussed issues on mercury, cadmium, lead, and heavy minerals in the frame of the (SAICM), into the national strategic approaches, and at the same time keep the mechanisms used to deal with such issues, away from any change and interference, to support the mutual cooperation with the (SAICM).
- To establish a guide on locally allowed limits to the content of hazardous chemicals in water, air, and soil.
- To organize local and regional workshops to raise the awareness of partners (public and private sectors, civil society, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)) about the importance of developing chemicals management programmes, the expected benefits of such practice, and the potential risks of chemicals.
- To highlight emerging issues as well as the conferences and meetings related to the (SAICM), at the local and regional levels, through the mass media in order to raise the awareness of the public and beneficiaries, and increase financial support.
- To develop and establish national and regional specialized research institutes, and provide them with the necessary financial resources.
- To apply the “Polluter Pays” principle, and disseminate the concept of responsibility and legal accountability.
- To establish and upgrade mechanisms dealing with the socio-economic effects of chemicals on human health, society, and environment, including assuming the legal responsibility, paying indemnities, and restoring rights to their owners.
- To establish plans and mechanisms to clean and repair polluted zones, particularly in occupation and conflict areas.
- To develop techniques for the treatment of organic chemical waste with the relevant decomposing bacteria.
- To encourage the use of nuclear analysers such as the neutron activation analysis, atomic absorption, and flash X-rays measurement to estimate the quantity of chemicals, and determine their risk level and how to handle them.

III. WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE ARAB REGION

The sustained increase in the consumption of crude materials and natural resources generates increasing sizes and types of waste. The waste management inefficiency is far from just being a sanitary and public health problem, but rather a

serious economic and environmental problem that primarily affects children, youth, and women, undermines poverty reduction efforts, and therefore hinders the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Unless an integrated waste management strategy is adopted to address this problem on a comprehensive basis, the already scarce resources are expected to continue their downward trend. Addressing this urgent issue requires the implementation of the following policies and measures:

A. POLICIES

The countries of the region are, to various extents, working towards the formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at:

- Adopting the integrated waste management strategy as a comprehensive framework which involve all segments of society in dealing with the waste problem, which constitutes an obstacle to development and economic sustainability.
- Establishing the needed infrastructure to provide updated, accurate, and timely data in order to develop waste management strategies.
- Devising strategies for the integrated management of hazardous and medical care waste.
- Implementing the agricultural waste management measures included in the Strategy for Sustainable Arab Agricultural Development for 2005-2025, which was set by the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development.
- Promoting the “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle” policy.
- Updating legislative frameworks in support of activities and systems aimed at promoting the integrated waste management strategy.
- Building waste management capacities and enforcing related measures.
- Involving the industrial sectors and consumers in achieving the sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns.

B. MEASURES

The countries of the region aim to support the implementation of the following measures:

- To issue a standard Arab informative guide for the integrated management of medical waste, notably hazardous waste, and develop implementation mechanisms.
- To take measures in order to enforce legislations related to waste management.
- To establish systems to monitor the implementation of hazardous waste management strategies.
- To enact suitable legislations regulating hazardous waste and the safe waste disposal, and enforce relevant laws in accordance with Basel Convention.

- To establish national waste inventories as part of the sound management of hazardous waste.
- To develop the techniques to use agricultural waste for producing organic fertilizers.
- To sort organic materials from urban solid waste and treat them biogas, for extracting a sustainable energy source, while obtaining organic materials that could be used in fertilization.
- To make use of the experience of other countries and lessons learnt in waste disposal, recycling, and reuse; and adapt such lessons to countries of the region.
- To encourage the private sector to invest in the environmentally-sound disposal, recycling, and reuse of specific kinds of waste, by providing incentives, tax exemptions, and flexible lending schemes.
- To collect data and conduct relevant assessments regarding electronic waste management in order to launch pilot projects, and set a legal and regulatory framework to govern the treatment of this kind of waste.
- To increase national capacities by empowering relevant public institutions, and introducing national officials to the modern concepts of waste management.
- To raise public awareness about the vital role of sound waste management by integrating SCP waste management concepts in school curricula, and disseminate them via mass media in the workplace and civil society.
- To emphasize the individual and corporate responsibility in adhering to environmentally-sound practices and to the “Polluter Pays” principle.

IV. MINING

Despite the current low level of mining in Arab countries, exploiting mineral resources represents a large sector in the economies of some countries in the region. The potential financial and socio-economic benefits of this sector should encourage Arab countries to give enough attention to this sector by implementing the following policies and measures outlines in the following sections, while considering the environmental dimension appropriate to the conditions of each country:

A. POLICIES

The countries of the region are working towards the formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at:

- Establishing the necessary infrastructure and encouraging investment in Arab countries in the field of cleaner mining and related industries.
- Expediting the harmonization of laws and legislations related to mining and environment conservation, in order to achieve the strategic goals of the mining sector in Arab countries.
- Increasing the use of clean and renewable energy sources in the Arab region given its positive impact and the abundance of renewable energy sources in the countries of the region.
- Preparing detailed studies on the Arab industry needs of crude minerals, and establishing a strategy and mechanism to meet such needs.
- Building the capacities of national officials in modern techniques used in the exploitation of renewable energy sources, as a first step towards implementing such techniques in the Arab region.
- Encouraging investment in small and medium-sized mining enterprises in remote areas, as a means to reduce poverty.
- Conserving natural resources in mining zones.

B. MEASURES

The countries of the region aim to support the implementation of the following measures:

- To call upon the United Nations to consider the creation of an international organization concerned with mining, as part of its responsibilities and mandate, in order to encourage countries to achieve sustainable development.
- To call upon international financial institutions to support and finance mining enterprises in the Arab region.
- To call upon international financial institutions to support research and development (R&D) in various stages of the mining activities.

- To establish an international cleaner energy agency to support research that will help diversify and expand the use of renewable energy sources such as wind energy and solar energy.
- To coordinate among Arab institutions in remote-sensing, geological survey, mineral exploration, and studies of common interest; and exchange expertise, research, and technical capacities in mining.
- To encourage R&D cooperation among Arab and international institutions of geological survey and mineral exploration; and benefit from the scientific facilities provided by international institutions to develop Arab human resources.
- To consider the creation of mining associations and chambers in Arab countries, which will contribute to encouraging the private sector to invest in exploration and mining.
- To establish mechanisms to repair and rehabilitate mines during and after works in order to protect human health and reduce the adverse effects on natural resources (soil, water, and vegetation cover).

V. 10 YEAR FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMMES (10YFP) ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

The unsustainable consumption and production pattern is considered as one of the main factors of the ongoing degradation of global environment. In addition to the population growth and the increase of rural migration this consumption and production pattern exerts an increasing pressure on vital resources, notably on energy, water, waste management, and other sectors. As in other regions in the world, the Arab region is facing increasing pressures to address the current unsustainable consumption and production patterns while fulfilling needs, in addition to addressing the adverse environmental effects. Along with their participation in the global efforts towards SCP through the 10 Year Framework of Marrakech Process, Arab countries should address this issue by implementing the following policies and measures:

A. POLICIES

The countries of the region are working towards the formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at:

- Developing national strategies for a sustainable energy sector in Arab countries.
- Strengthening regional cooperation and integration in energy.
- Calling upon developed countries to adopt financial measures and programmes, and to allocate financial resources for the support of developing countries, including Arab countries, with a particular focus on R&D, capacity-building, exchange of expertise, and transfer of technology.
- Adopting an integrated water management strategy in light of the expected increase of water scarcity in the region as a result of climate change.
- Adopting an integrated solid waste management strategy.

- Developing legal and institutional policies and frameworks supporting an integrated water management strategy.
- Promoting the role of civil society and NGOs in improving resource management, achieving food and water security, and ensuring water quality and food safety.
- Providing effective support to the public and private sector investment in SCP.
- Disseminating sustainable agricultural practices, and conserving natural resources.
- Encouraging the construction of green buildings and adopting environment-friendly architecture.
- Supporting the implementation of internationally agreed objectives in education, including the MDGs, as they relate to SCP.
- Using environmental efficiency strategies to design products and services by consuming less resources and generating less waste.
- Promoting the role of Arab youth in adopting sustainable and environment-friendly life patterns.

B. MEASURES

The countries of the region aim to support the implementation of the following measures in the area of SCP:

- To increase the access to energy, particularly in rural and remote areas, and reconsider the current energy tariffs.
- To use cleaner fuel and cleaner production in energy, industry, and service sectors.
- To increase the efficiency of energy in production and consumption.
- To promote regional electrical and natural gas interconnection projects.
- To manage needs in the water sector by increasing water use efficiency in the different sectors through, among others, the use of modern irrigation methods, the rehabilitation of drinking water networks.
- To establish and enforce water quality standards to protect water resources from pollution, and adopt plans for safe drinking water.
- To expand the application of and develop the efficiency of water desalination technology.
- To recycle and reuse the treated wastewater, and expand the construction of wastewater, industrial and agricultural waste treatment facilities to improve water quality.
- To expand the microfinance services for rural development.
- To enhance access to education and health services in rural areas.
- To upgrade the rural infrastructure systems and access to drinking water and sanitation in rural areas.

- To enhance regional cooperation in the management of shared water resources to achieve water security for downstream countries.
- To study the climate change impact on water resources in the region and the expected effects on the other sectors such as agriculture, environment, food security, sustainable livelihoods, particularly in rural areas.
- To promote the adoption of eco-label standards which indicate the efficient use of fuel and energy in electrical appliances.
- To support green public procurement, as well as set and enforce consumer protection laws.
- To strengthen the capacities of Arab countries in relevant fields such as promoting cleaner production, using market-based tools in policy making, encouraging green procurement, assessing environmental risks, etc.
- To strengthen awareness-raising and informative programmes regarding SCP, particularly among youth and women.

VI. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The above-mentioned policies and measures related to the five thematic clusters of issues require, despite their different scope and nature, a set of conditions which, if achieved, may translate such decisions into executive plans. In addition to the basic conditions which include providing financial and technical support, and strengthening international and regional cooperation in favour of the countries of the region, the required set of conditions includes:

- Building national capacities in the five thematic clusters by encouraging R&D, using, transferring, and locally deploying cleaner technology, achieving the national ownership of state-of-the-art technology, sending national officials to attend training in developed countries, and supporting public institutions to enable them to play a more important role.
- Drawing lessons from global experiences, strengthening cooperation with developed countries, and promoting exchange programmes with academic institutions, notably in research and technology development.
- Reinforcing mutual cooperation among South countries (South-South cooperation), and sharing expertise, lessons, and experiences.
- Establishing the necessary legal frameworks to update, develop, and enforce laws, rules, and regulations, to bring them in line with the multilateral international agreements, and to support the implementation of agreed strategies and policies.
- Building updated and documented scientific databases for the benefit of all, which will be the foundation of new strategies and action plans, particularly in mining.
- Raising public awareness about SCP patterns and waste management methods in order to harness the potentials of NGOs (notably youth NGOs), civil society, and individuals; and encouraging the effective participation of all segments of society.
- Involving the private sector in investment projects, optimizing the benefit from financial resources in the Arab region, and encouraging effective public-private partnerships (PPPs), particularly in mining and waste management.
- Supporting bilateral and multilateral programmes and projects aimed at implementing the policies and measures related to the thematic clusters, and encouraging the implementation of joint programmes in this field.
- Intensifying consultation among Arab countries, the Arab League institutions, as well as regional and international organizations in order to optimize the benefit from financing sources, and mobilize the necessary funds to implement work programmes and projects related to the required clusters of issues.