

**ANNEX 13**

**Report of Latin American & Caribbean Regional Group Meetings**

## **Report of Latin American and Caribbean Regional Group Meetings 15-18 October 2000**

The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Group held several meetings during Forum III. The meetings were attended by representatives of Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela, representatives of other regions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The meetings were coordinated by Argentina and Brazil. Brazil also served as rapporteur at the working sessions of the regional group.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the agenda items of the Third Meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), with a view to agreeing on common positions to be put forward at the third session of the Forum, and to elect the regional Vice-President and the members of the Standing Committee and their alternates.

The regional group reaffirmed the Forum's status as a valuable mechanism for fostering cooperation to integrate national and international efforts on behalf of chemical safety. The Forum is not an international agency and its recommendations are not legally binding. Consequently, its documents should reflect this spirit of cooperation and not constitute texts for negotiation between delegations.

The region expressed its intention to make every possible effort to fulfil the Forum's goals and to attain the objectives identified based on the understanding that the Forum is a valuable tool for achieving chemical safety. The importance of sub-regional and regional coordination and cooperation were reiterated as being of strategic importance to balanced progress on all issues relating to chemical safety.

The regional group reviewed all the decision documents relating to priorities for action, emission inventories, illegal traffic, barriers to information exchange, exchange of information for decision-making, the harmonized classification and labelling system and training, and agreed on objective proposals for all the texts and their recommendations. The Group also actively participated in the discussions on the Bahía Declaration, the main policy document from this session of the Forum.

The Region also evaluated and approved the documents on the organization of work, the terms of reference of the Forum and Standing Committee, guidelines for national focal points and on the role and responsibilities of the Vice-Presidents. On the basis of these documents, and reiterating the need for the support of all countries to enable the representatives to perform their functions in a coordinated and effective manner, the Region adopted the following decision:

Vice-President – Ecuador

Standing Committee – Honduras (member) El Salvador (alternate)  
Trinidad and Tobago (member) Argentina (alternate)