



Item 16.3. Social determinants of health

A76/A/CONF./2

The impact of chemicals, waste and pollution on human health

Draft resolution proposed by Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, European Union and its Member States, Mexico, Monaco, Peru, Switzerland and Uruguay

Statement of Belgium

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Madam Chair,

Belgium aligns itself with the statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of the EU and its member states.

We thank Peru together with a group of countries for tabling the resolution on the Impact of Chemicals, Waste and Pollution on Human Health, and we align with the collective statement that Peru has delivered earlier on this matter.

Belgium supports the engagement of WHO and the health sector to better understand, prevent and address the detrimental effects of chemicals on health.

The health of the environment is a foundation for the health and well-being of humans, animals and plants. We must be determined to tackle the environmental causes of diseases and achieve the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

In Belgium, we have been and are still struggling to deal with longstanding air, water and soil pollution by chemicals. We are in particular alarmed by the important public health threats due to the exposure of our population to persistent organic pollutants, hazardous pesticides and other endocrine disruptors.

Belgium has recently adopted a national action plan on endocrine disruptors. This plan includes 3 strands: prevention, regulation and research. But the extensive number of chemicals with potential endocrine disrupting effects, their

omnipresence in our daily lives, and the undoubtful increase in use, consumption and production of chemicals are overwhelming. Moreover, evidence is lacking about the impact of the so-called “cocktail effect” caused by exposure to multiple chemicals.

In this regard, we look forward to the update of the report “State of the Science of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals” in close collaboration with the UNEP.

We would like to stress the importance of collaboration between WHO, UNEP and other relevant organizations (including the IARC) for evidence-based assessment and guidance in a One Health approach.

Member States need your leadership to develop and implement informed public health policies, using the precautionary approach, to address the harmful impact of chemicals. But we must also support win-win evidence-based policies that benefit both human health and the environment, such as healthy and sustainable food systems and active mobility.