


Thematic Workshop on Governance, Civil Society Participation and Strengthening Partnership for Chemicals and Waste Management and SAICM Implementation. (20-22 June 2006)

Written contribution of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Republic of Azerbaijan, which has restored its state independence in 1991, continues its purposeful policy to eliminate current problems in environmental spheres that are one of the main components of  sustainable development strategy for obtaining poverty reduction and economic progress.

Thus presently, the legislation of Azerbaijan is brought in conformity with requirements of the European Union (EU), at the same time structural reforms are conducted in the state governing system. This process did not leave out the environment sphere. Ecological principles, inherited from the Soviet Union were improved. More preference was given to ecological awareness, education and enlightenment activities in a widely implemented new management system. Overall grounds for forming of ecological consciousness in the country were created.

At the same time management of chemicals is one of the priority issues in the country. In this context the Republic of Azerbaijan had ratified Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and at present come to the end national procedures on ratification of Rotterdam Convention.

During long time development of the chemical industry, as well as other branches of economy, excluded ecological factors owing to which Azerbaijan has faced serious environmental problems.

For example, in the territory only Sumgait Surface-active substances plant has collected more than 200 thousand tons of the dangerous waste products polluted with mercury.

In country the huge quantity of the pesticides, containing persistent organic pollutants, basically DDT was produced and used.

Now country makes extreme efforts for reduction of all these residual factors by an environment and health of the population. Measures on use of dangerous chemical substances are toughened, legislative and legal bases are advanced, «the State Strategy of management by dangerous waste products», the National Plan of Action on Persistent Organic Pollutants and a number of other legal acts are developed.

According to the President's decree No 898 as from 28 September 2004 on adoption of "Agreement on credits for Development" (Urgent Environmental Investments Project) signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and International Development Agency and the provisions of this agreement, "Construction of a

treatment and storage facility for mercury sludge and other hazardous wastes” is one of the environmental projects implemented by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

This project is aimed at construction of the landfill, rehabilitation of the contaminated by hazardous wastes lands, extraction of mercury from the site around “Surface-active substances” plant located in Sumgait and their transportation to the landfill.

The research activities were undertaken on decontamination of the site which belong to the “Surface-active substances” plant from mercury, purifying facility and concrete breaker were installed according to B1-2 package of the project. The activities on extracting mercury from site of the plant have already begun and transportation of hazardous wastes from the plant to the landfill and their disposal are anticipated since June, 2004.

According to the decree of the head of Executive Power of the Absheron region the area of 50 ha near the Pirekushkul village was put into operation aimed to implement the activities on “Construction of the landfill and the road to this landfill as well rebuilding the bridges over the Samur-Absheron channel that cross the road” under B3-4 package of the project. In the mentioned area research activities were taken, the landfill that meets international standards was constructed, the road was paved with asphalt and road metal and the bridge was rebuild.

“Hazardous wastes” Limited Liability Society was established by approbation of the World Bank and registered by the Ministry of Justice in order to supervise new landfill (“Hazardous wastes” Center) that meet international standards.

The main characteristics of the “Hazardous wastes” Center are the following:

- “Hazardous wastes” Center serves as a capacity for long-term storage of hazardous wastes and meets international standards;
- In the Center the capacity of hazardous wastes storage pit is 250.000,0 m³;
- The depth of the pit is 10,0 m, thickness of the walls and bottom isolated with consolidated clay layer of 10,0 m and covered by highly compressed geomembrane of 2,0 mm and geotextiles of 5,0 mm;
- There is a clay layer of no less than 20,0 m at the bottom of the pit and no groundwater under the pit;
- At the bottom of the pit the drainage lines of highly compressed polyethylene pipes were laid out and by connecting with underwater pump resistant to corrosion form recirculating system;
- Drainage lines are covered with macadam of 0,5 m thick;
- A new road of 6,0 km with drainage lines of 9,0 km length along it has been paved with asphalt and connects Baku-Guba highway with the landfill;
- A new bridge was built over Samur-Absheron channel and designed for 50,0 ton of freight;

- Newly-paved road to landfill crosses the north branch of Baku-Novorosiysky oil pipe line;
- Within the compound area there is a check-point, 3 engineering offices, a laboratory, a first-aid post, a canteen and a storehouse to manage the landfill;
- Water-closets for men and women, a shower room, a disinfection unit, an underground tank for waste water, a pool for process water and a car-washing facility;
- “Hazardous wastes” Center is provided with computers, laboratory equipment and medical services

At the same time we would like to state manufacture, trade and application of chemical substances extend, and progress in the field of regulation of chemical substances does not provide improvement of ecological conditions and it demands improvement of this direction, in particular in less developed countries.

Only for last 6 years the volume of release chemical productions in Azerbaijan has increased in 2,5 times. But lack of institutional potential and financial assets prevent the complex decision of all problems connected to it.

In this connection we attach great importance to implementation Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and we shall promote rational regulation of chemical substances and dangerous waste products according to the Agenda XXI and Johannesburg Plan.

Therefore we agree that one of problems from which many countries face, consists in reception of access to the significant financial and other resources necessary for maintenance of rational regulation of chemical substances. Implementation of tasks in view by less developed countries alone cannot give appreciable results. And promotions forward are necessary for the successful decision of problems support of the international community and cooperation at all levels. It is confident, that granting of support on the part of the international organizations and donors considerably will reduce the period of achievement of the purposes, that in turn will affect in steady development of a society as a whole.