



PRESS RELEASE
May 27th 2009

Chemical sector working for a greener world Helsinki Chemicals Forum is shaping the agenda for a better life

An international multi-stakeholder forum called the Helsinki Chemicals Forum is taking place in Helsinki from May 27th to 29th 2009. It will bring together influential actors in academic research, politics, non-governmental bodies, human interest groups and industry to discuss the future of the whole chemical sector. The growing needs of the environment and peoples' daily lives have to be solved with the help of new visions and open cooperation, in which the chemical sector and its stakeholder groups play an important role. New technology or regulation alone will not be enough – we need both to be successful in sustainable development.

The Forum's four theme sessions, moderated by internationally noted speakers and panellists, will be: Chemical Industry Regulation; Competitiveness and Innovation; Safety and Sustainability; Chemistry and Consumers.

The common objective of the HCF and its panel sessions is to set a Helsinki Agenda. The HCF will become a yearly milestone in shaping the agenda for safe and sustainable development, manufacturing and the use of chemicals, to create a better life worldwide. In the next few days we will see if the HCF and its participants are capable of bringing about a change.

"As an open Forum, HCF will encourage the cross functional conversation and exchange of ideas related to the chemical industry, environmental issues and scientific research. HCF brings together industry leaders and other decision-makers to shape the common agenda for a better life and environment," says Mr **Kyösti Sysiö**, Secretary General, Helsinki Chemicals Forum 2009. "That there is a need for this kind of global Forum is proven by the fact that the participants of HCF 2009 come from some 30 countries in Europe and overseas."

Mr **Hannu Vornamo**, Director General of the Finnish Chemical Industry Federation and Secretary General of the HCF 2010 comments: "The bio economy can provide a wide range of business opportunities, for example. It can provide innovative ways to convert different kinds of biomass into various fibres and chemical compounds, and can exploit biological processes in new ways. Biomass production can be increased sustainably, providing biofuels that can then be used to generate energy, thus reducing the need for fossil fuels."

"I welcome this important new initiative and fully support the Helsinki Chemicals Forum's ambition to provide a global platform to debate and discuss chemicals. Chemicals are found everywhere in the environment. We come into contact with them on a daily basis and we must increase our knowledge about them. The more knowledge we have, the closer we will come to our goal of living in a world in which chemicals are produced, used and managed safely", comments Mr **Stavros Dimas**, European Commissioner for the Environment.

The speakers at the opening ceremony are Mr **Stavros Dimas**, European Commissioner for the Environment; Mr **Geert Dancet**, Executive Director of the European Chemicals Agency; Mr **Mauri Pekkarinen**, Finland's Minister of Economic Affairs, and Mr **Jussi Pajunen**, Mayor of Helsinki. Between the theme sessions there will be keynote addresses from Mr **Achim Steiner**, Executive Director of UNEP; Ambassador **Minoru Shibuya**, Chairperson of the Conference of States Parties of the OPCW and at the Gala Dinner from Mr **Paavo Lipponen**, former Finnish Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament. Mr **Matti Vanhanen**, Prime minister of Finland, will give the closing comments at the closing luncheon.

More details about the programme and speakers will be available on the Helsinki Chemicals Forum web site www.helsinkicf.eu The first Helsinki Chemicals Forum will take place from May 27th to 29th 2009 at the Helsinki Exhibition and Convention Centre.

The Helsinki Chemicals Forum is being organised by the Chemicals Forum Association in cooperation with the EU Commission and its Chemical Agency ECHA, with partners that include the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the City of Helsinki, Greater Helsinki Promotion Ltd, the Chemical Industry Federation of Finland and the University of Helsinki.

More information: Kyösti Sysiö, Secretary General, HCF 2009, Tel. +358 50 385 2043, kyosti.sysio@helsinkicf.eu.