

**Speech at the Regional Workshop on Prevention of Illegal Transboundary  
Movement for Hazardous Waste in Asia**

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Respected guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good Morning!

Regional Workshop on Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement for Hazardous Waste in Asia is opened today. First of all, on behalf of State Environmental Protection Administration and in my own name, I would like to extend my congratulations to the opening of the meeting and warm welcome to foreign representatives and experts as well as the officials from government departments such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Commerce, General Administration of Customs and State Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision and Quarantine.

Prevention and cracking down on illegal trans-boundary movement of hazardous wastes is an important issue confronting many countries in the world. The solution to this issue requires concerted efforts and cooperation of all stakeholders of the countries that export, import and transport such waste. Therefore, it is very important to strengthen the communications, understanding and coordination among each country. The main aim of this meeting is to promote communications, understanding and cooperation of each Asian country in the prevention of illegal transboundary movement of hazardous wastes, beef up their capacity in implementing the Basel Convention, jointly crack down illegal transboundary movement of hazardous wastes in order to safeguard ecological and environmental safety of Asia.

In the mid and late 1980s, increasingly strict environmental laws and regulations of developed countries lead to soaring cost of the disposal of hazardous waste. This triggers the transfer of large amount of hazardous waste into developing countries, causing heavy environmental pollution and big ecological disaster in these developing countries, which attracts widespread concern of international communities. To control illegal transboundary movement of hazardous waste and prevent the transfer of pollution to developing countries, UNEP held a meeting in Basel, Switzerland in

March, 1989. The meeting has formulated and adopted the “Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal”, which clearly states that the disposal of hazardous waste shall be located to the extent possible within the country that generates the waste. At the same time, the Convention also stipulates that any country enjoys the sovereign right to prohibit foreign hazardous waste from entering or being disposed within its territory. The development and signing of the convention has identified code of conduct for transboundary movement of hazardous waste and provided a strong weapon for all countries in the world to fight against illegal transfer of hazardous waste.

However, there are still many illegal transboundary movement of waste especially hazardous waste to developing countries due to various reasons including out of economic interests of the enterprises or evading legal regulation of the exporting countries. There are frequent environmental accidents resulting from it. This indicates that we are still facing very grave situation.

Asia is the largest continent in the world with 60% world population, rich resources, long history, extensive and profound culture. However, the economy of most regions of Asia still lags behind compared with European countries and United States. And most Asian countries are still developing countries. Rapid economic growth of some Asian countries and their huge demand for resources over the past few years facilitates the movement of huge amount of wastes to Asia for recycle and reuse. It is a pity that there are some illegal transboundary movements of such waste, imposing great environmental risk for Asia. Therefore, it becomes necessary and urgent for Asian countries to strengthen inter-government cooperation and exchanges and jointly crack down illegal movement of wastes, especially hazardous wastes.

Like other developing countries in Asia, the Chinese Government attaches great importance to the management of the import and export of waste. As the government department responsible for the implementation of the Basel Convention (national

focal point), State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) has always strictly complied with relevant regulations and requirements of the Convention and controlled transboundary movement of hazardous wastes. In this respect, SEPA has not only developed strict laws and regulations, but also cracked down infringements like smuggling of wastes with the help of various tools and measures with certain achievements. The Chinese government is willing to exchange and share relevant information and experience with other countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Under concerted efforts, Asian countries have enhanced their awareness in regional cooperation in the spirit of tolerance, equity and gradual progress over the past few years. The cooperation situation with openness, health development and mutual benefits is taken shape. The Chinese Government is willing to work with other Asian countries to intensify our communication and cooperation in the field of environmental protection, especially the cooperation on the implementation of the Basel Convention and jointly safeguard eco environmental safety of Asian countries. At the same time, I hope that each representative take this opportunity to further understand each other with active communications, full exchange and learning from each other so as to effectively crack down illegal transboundary movement of hazardous waste to Asian countries.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the strong support of the Ministry of Environment of Japan, Japanese Embassy and EX Corporation to this meeting. My thanks also go to the working staff of the Basel Convention Coordinating Center for Asia and the Pacific who have worked hard for the smooth convening of this Meeting.

I wish a great success of the meeting and a pleasant stay in Beijing!  
Thank you!