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Statement of the Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

High level Segment of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

Friday, 6 November 2026, time (TBC)

Kigali, Rwanda

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and an honor to be here in Kigali, where, ten years ago, the international community took a historic step towards protecting our climate through the adoption of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

Together with Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, I congratulate Parties on the tenth anniversary of the Kigali Amendment and on the enduring success of the Montreal Protocol. This anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate a remarkable achievement of multilateral environmental cooperation.

But this anniversary is also an opportunity to reflect and look ahead.

As the phase-down and phase-out of controlled substances progress, the life cycle management of refrigerants, and related equipment, will become increasingly important.

Refrigerant banks contained in existing equipment, buildings and stockpiles will represent an increasingly significant source of potential emissions. Their effective management is therefore essential to safeguard the environmental gains achieved under the Montreal Protocol.

This also presents an important circular economy opportunity. Recovering, recycling and reclaiming refrigerants can help meet servicing needs, and reduce demand for virgin production. Where further use is not feasible, environmentally sound destruction is essential.

This is where the Basel Convention can make an important contribution.

Through its Prior Informed Consent procedure and environmentally sound management requirements, the Basel Convention helps ensure that used and unwanted controlled substances, and related equipment, can be safely managed and moved across borders under appropriate controls when reclamation or destruction capacity is not available domestically.

The Basel Convention also promotes the environmentally sound management of electronic wastes. Through its Partnership for Action on Challenges relating to Ewastes (PACEII) is currently developing guidance for the environmentally sound refurbishment, repair, recycling and disposal of used refrigerators, cooling and heating equipment. This work helps prevent the uncontrolled release of refrigerants and other hazardous substances into the environment while advancing circular economy solutions, through recycling of valuable materials contained in those equipment.

Close cooperation between the Basel Convention and Montreal Protocol communities is therefore essential to advance life-cycle management.

I am particularly pleased that cooperation between the treaties is already delivering concrete results.

At this meeting, we are launching a new *Practical Guide on transboundary movements of Montreal Protocol controlled substances and related equipment considered waste under the Basel Convention*, jointly developed by the Ozone Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and

Stockholm Conventions, OzonAction and the Multilateral Fund Secretariat.

The Guide will help countries understand and apply the relevant Basel Convention requirements, while encouraging closer cooperation between national ozone officers and Basel Convention competent authorities.

The Montreal Protocol has also demonstrated the value of robust measures to prevent illegal trade in controlled substances. Its experience offers useful insights for other multilateral environmental agreements, including the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

While the substances and markets differ, the Minamata Convention faces a related challenge: ongoing demand for mercury, particularly in artisanal and small-scale gold mining, can create incentives for illegal or unregulated trade.

In both cases, effective implementation depends not only on adopting control measures, but also on ensuring that monitoring, compliance and enforcement mechanisms are sufficiently robust to support them. As we

celebrate the achievements of the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment, this is also an opportunity to reflect on how lessons from their implementation could help strengthen efforts under the Minamata Convention and the BRS conventions.

The next chapter of the Montreal Protocol's success will require not only continued progress in phasing down and phasing out controlled substances, but also ensuring their environmentally sound management throughout their life cycle.

It will also require strong national implementation and enforcement systems, supported by closer cooperation across conventions and among the authorities responsible for their implementation.

The Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions stands ready to continue to strengthen this cooperation, building on the complementary mandates and expertise of our conventions to advance our shared environmental objectives. **Thank you.**