

Jessika Roswall, Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a
Competitive Circular Economy
European Commission
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1049 Brussels
Belgium

Dear Commissioner Jessika Roswall,

Congratulations on your designation and approval as Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy. We look much forward to the cooperation.

As you embark on this important task, we would like to stress the need to end export of hazardous chemicals that are banned in the European Union.

In 2020, experts from the UN Human Rights Council termed it “in violation of their extraterritorial obligations under international human rights law” when EU Member States export chemicals that are banned locally to countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Former UN Special Rapporteur on toxics, Baskut Tuncak, stressed that the receiving countries are often “lacking capacity to control the risks” and that there most often is “no legitimate public interest justification”, causing such exports to negatively impact the most vulnerable.

We recall the importance of the Council conclusions “Sustainable Chemicals Strategy of the Union: Time to Deliver” from 15 March, 2021 “expressly welcom[ing] the initiatives of the Chemicals Strategy to undertake international leadership championing a sound management of chemicals and waste, in order to protect human health and the environment worldwide, including in relation to imported substances that are banned or heavily regulated, thus ensuring a level playing field, and addressing the production for export of harmful chemicals not allowed in the European Union”.

The assurance from your answers to the European Parliament that work to end export of hazardous chemicals banned in the EU is ongoing is appreciated. Still, the Commission has yet to publish the result of its public consultation, the publication of which was planned for Q4 of 2023, and has yet to put forth a proposal. Thus, we kindly recall the Council conclusions on The 8th Environment Action Programme Mid-term review from 17 June, 2024 “stress[ing] that the Commission has not fully delivered on the Chemicals Strategy” including on “prohibiting the production for export of harmful chemicals not allowed in the EU”, “urg[ing] the Commission to keep a high level of ambition in the implementation of the strategy”.

Thank you for taking this into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Magnus Heunicke, Minister for Environment, Denmark

Leonore Gewessler, Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy,
Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria

Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Minister for Ecological Transition, Energy, Climate and
Risk Prevention, France

Serge Wilmes, Minister of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity,
Luxembourg

C.A. Jansen, Minister for the Environment and Public Transport, the Netherlands

Tore Onshuus Sandvik, Minister of Climate and Environment, Norway

Romina Pourmokhtari, Minister for Climate and the Environment, Sweden