

**Speech of Prof. Amr Elsammak**  
**Member of North Africa constituency**  
**The 5<sup>th</sup> assembly of the GEF**

Your Excellencies  
Members of GEF constituency  
Representatives of MEAs  
Representatives of GEF implementing agencies  
Ladies and gentlemen

On Behalf of the North Africa Constituency members, it is our pleasure to participate in this important event of the GEF, hosted by the Mexican government.

We are all witnessing the dramatic events taking place due to the adverse impact of climate change, loss of biodiversity, severe land degradation. Our human activities have exceeded our planet ability to provide ecosystem services for our future challenges, From that perspective , the GEF as a financial mechanism for Multilateral environmental Agreements turns to be indispensable every day and vital to resolve the current and future challenges

As North Africa is a region with various development challenges, we view the assembly at this time crucial to discuss and agree on tangible mechanism to implement the common but differentiated responsibilities agreed upon through the various sustainable development processes.

We would like to highlight the main following important issues for our constituency:

But let me first thank donors for their commitment under the GEF6 replenishment. Despite of the fact that this replenishment exceeds slightly the previous one, we consider that additional funding is still needed in order to meet the big challenges of global environment.

Funding for the global environment is certainly our all concern both developed and developing countries, however, the burden sharing must respond to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, recognized once again at Rio +20 Summit.

The GEF is requested to continue playing its leadership role as a catalyst for global environment action, while adapting to the new requirements of recipient countries.

We welcome the progress achieved, in particular regarding the governance, the adoption of the programmatic approach and in the resources allocation with the adoption of STAR. This has enabled greater visibility and national ownership. Nevertheless, we believe that further improvements are needed to further reduce the project cycle through, inter alia, the harmonization of the approval process with the implementing agencies, promoting the programmatic approach including at the national level, and to accelerate the approval procedure while ensuring the quality of project proposals.

we would like to draw your attention that the decision of raising the co-finance especially ratio 1:6 - that has evolved during the GEF-6 replenishment negotiations - will be a challenge for all of us to meet such a co-finance ratio especially if we take into account socio-economic circumstances of African countries. However, we will exert all necessary endeavors to build the GEF proposed projects with the national programs to maximize impact and benefits.

We consider also that the global challenges of achieving a balance between political, economic, social and environmental reforms facing the development process, requires concentrated efforts in a very

challenging environment. Therefore, we stress the need to highlight the importance of having **governmental ownership coupled with others multi-stakeholders** within the countries to support, develop and improve the environmental portfolio through the establishment of a national scientific and technological committee represented by all line ministers and different types of experts "CC-BD-LD-IW-POPs" to offer advisory support decision makers in all countries. Within that context, it is worth to mention that Egypt & Morocco took the lead in establishing such a committee "GEF National Steering Committee" and specialized GEF units within the office of GEF OFP, in order to ensure country drivenness and efficient use of the GEF resources. As a result, the project approval process became more systematic and transparent, yet the regular support of the GEF secretariat is highly appreciated for continues improvement and development.

It is worth mentioning that any restructuring of the chemicals financing with in the GEF to encompass mercury in future projects, should take into consideration other financial needs for the member countries and should not cut the financial support which is currently offered under POP's unit.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Finally, within the assembly of the two days we wish to reach tangible and concrete results for our meeting. Last but not least We would like to express our special thanks to the Government of Mexico for hosting this important event, also our special thanks and appreciation to the GEF Ceo "Dr.Ishii" and the GEF Secretariat for their continuous support and efforts, wishing you all the best.