

Good morning

Sr. Jose Lorenzo Garcia-Baltasar, Coordinador General de Cooperación, Embajada de España en El Cairo, Dr. Heinz Leuenberger, Director of the Environmental Management Branch, Dr. Azza Morssy, Industrial Development officer on the UNIDO Cleaner Production, Hanan El Hadary, director of the Egypt National Cleaner Production Center, ladies and gentleman;

Thank you very much for being with us.

It's a pleasure **to welcome you to this presentation of GRECO INITIATIVE during these Global Forum** perfectly organized by UNIDO in collaboration with the Egyptian National Cleaner Production Centre and the CP/RAC, Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production.

Today is a great day for the CP/RAC as we have the opportunity to lunch in Egypt the **GRECO INITIATIVE**, a Green Competitiveness INITIATIVE. For us it's another step towards the diffusion and the implementation of green competitiveness in the Mediterranean region.

Allow me to briefly tell you about the Regional Activity Centre based in Barcelona where the GRECO INITIATIVE was born. **The Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production** is, since 1996, **one of the 6 Regional Activity Centres of the Mediterranean Action Plan located in Barcelona, Spain.**

The Mediterranean Action Plan, under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Program, has the mission to promote models of

sustainable consumption and production in the Mediterranean, focusing on Cleaner Production and the prevention of pollution. Since 2008 the CP/RAC is also responsible for the elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants to the environment and, for this reason, in April of the current year has been nominated as Centre for the Stockholm Convention.

Another important responsibility has come to us now, and that is **the promotion of the GRECO INITIATIVE along the Mediterranean Region to support the “Green Competitiveness” concept**. The green competitiveness is a revolutionary concept which objective is to implement measures to improve companies' profitability along with environment benefits.

The compliance of current environmental legislation in most countries in the Mediterranean could lead to an economic effort by the firms, but cleaner production solutions are the mechanism to accomplish the legal framework while companies make savings.

It is difficult to implement environmental friendly techniques in companies when they preconceive it just as a cost, but the main idea of GRECO INITIATIVE is to think of environment not as a cost but as a business opportunity.

To give some examples of these opportunities, we will also **introduce a report on 100 successful cases, where great savings and improvement in production processes were achieved with small investments or even no cost at all for the company**.

We all know that companies are moving around competitive markets and decisions have in most cases an economic argument.

It's also a pleasure to deliver today **the first GRECO AWARD**. For us it's very important to recognize the work of the companies who have implemented cleaner production practices. **The winner has been selected among 100 companies which have obtained important savings with small investments and with an important benefit for the environment.**

Let me thank you all once again for attending today to the launch of Greco Initiative.

Receive my gratitude and thank you very much.