



Press Release 20 May 2008
Helsinki Reach Center

Helsinki International Congress on Chemical Safety gathers 500 participants from all over the world to address REACH implementation

European Chemicals Agency stresses the importance of pre-registration starting on 1 June

Helsinki, 20 May – The first annual Helsinki International Congress on Chemical Safety (HICCS2008), organized by HELSINKI REACH CENTRE, takes place in the Helsinki Fair Centre on 20th – 22nd May 2008.

The Congress has gathered about 500 participants covering all stages of the supply chain from all over the world. On the eve of the pre-registration period under (1 June - 1 December 2008) many players affected by REACH still have many open questions. In HICCS2008, they will be able to receive the latest updates of information from the experts of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA).

In the conference, **Mr Hannu Vornamo**, the President of HELSINKI REACH CENTRE, stated: *“The practical processes of REACH will pose a challenge to all actors. Especially SMEs, non-EU manufacturers, and importers have a massive task ahead in relation to their limited*

resources. Awareness raising, advice, and training are needed. In this Congress, the HELSINKI REACH CENTRE is reaching out in particular for the non-EU actors. The wide range of countries present illustrates their needs: The Congress has delegates representing 36 different nationalities."

"Helsinki is clearly on its way to become the European Chemicals Capital, and a centre of expertise on chemical safety. We are ready to invest on this goal in the long run, and the activities of HELSINKI REACH CENTRE are one illustration of this. Furthermore, with the help of high level actors in Helsinki, the work has already been launched to prepare for a major event to take place in spring 2009", Mr Vornamo added.

Mr Geert Dancet, Executive Director of ECHA, said that *"ECHA will ensure that industry will be able to fulfill all its obligations upon the entry into operation of REACH on 1 June. Companies are encouraged to follow closely the Agency's website for the latest information on how to submit"*. In addition, he stressed the crucial importance of pre-registration. *"To stay in business under REACH, companies manufacturing in the EU or importing substances from non EU countries to the EU must pre-register by 1 December"*.

For more information about HICCS2008 and of HELSINKI REACH CENTRE, please visit www.helsinkireachcentre.eu.

For more information about REACH and ECHA, please visit ECHA's web pages at <http://echa.europa.eu>.

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