Episode Title: Toxics and Human Rights — A Conversation with Baskut Tuncak, Director of TURI

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Lynn L. Bergeson (LLB): Hello, and welcome to All Things Chemical, a podcast produced by Bergeson & Campbell, P.C. (B&C®), a Washington, D.C., law firm focusing on chemical law, business, and litigation matters. I'm Lynn Bergeson.

This week, I had the distinct pleasure of sitting down with Baskut Tuncak, newly named Director, Toxics Use Reduction Institute [TURI] at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Baskut is a friend, a lawyer, and a former research chemist with a truly distinguished and fascinating career in a diverse range of public- and private-sector roles in toxics issues. Most recently, Baskut served as a United Nations [UN] Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights. In our conversation, Baskut explains the role of the Rapporteur to the UN and outlines for us his goals as director of TURI, one of three agencies implementing the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act [TURA]. Now here is my conversation with Baskut Tuncak.

Well hello, Baskut. I can't tell you how thrilled I am to be chatting with you today. It's been a while, and as you are now, at least presently, residing in Istanbul, I am especially grateful that you are able to chat with us this morning.

Baskut Tuncak (BT): Hi, Lynn. Thanks for the opportunity.

LLB: Let's jump right in. As the new Director of the Toxics Use Reduction Institute, otherwise known as TURI, at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, perhaps you can give us a little background on yourself. I've known you for years, but maybe our listeners would appreciate hearing some of your very distinguished background.

BT: Sure. Thanks, Lynn. I guess I could start at the beginning. My parents are Turkish. Some people wonder where my name originates from, but it's Turkish, and I was born and raised in the United States, just outside Seattle. I think growing up in Seattle, mostly during the so-called Dot-Com era, really influenced me greatly. It gave me an appreciation of both the nature of the Northwest, the Pacific Northwest, and all its beauty, and also the role of

technology, both its potential to improve lives, but then also the risks. As I was growing up, we would often come to Turkey to visit my family here, and that also gave me an appreciation of the circumstances and situations that many lower income countries face when it comes to things like environmental protection. In college, I studied chemistry and biochemistry and physics, was pretty into the sciences then, and spent about the first part of my career working mostly in pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries as a research chemist, where I worked on things like DNA synthesis, RNA synthesis, and other applications. Then I decided to go to law school, for reasons that are mostly irrelevant now.

LLB: They're never irrelevant, Baskut.

BT: But after I graduated, I found myself working for a small nonprofit on environmental issues, mostly at the international level. I became fascinated with the issue of toxic chemicals, in terms of its policy and so basically stuck in that thread, or that line of work, for most of my post-law school professional career. I've worked in various capacities with various organizations, including NGOs [non-governmental organizations], international organizations, trade unions, and law firms. And then from 2014 until 2020, I had the opportunity to serve as the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Toxics.

LLB: Let's talk a little bit about your UN position because I'm not sure many of our listeners are aware of the fact that a number of years ago, at least by my research back in 2006, the United Nations created the Human Rights Council, and it created at that time a Special Rapporteurship on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous waste. And I suspect this was largely in response to what was then -- and probably as you may share with us -- continues to be a growing problem of dumping hazardous waste in developing countries. So you were appointed a Special Rapporteur in 2014, as you said, while you were then affiliated with the Council for International Environmental Law. Can you tell our listeners what that UN role encompasses and the types of issues that you addressed while you served as UN Special Rapporteur? It's a little unclear to me if the focus of that position has changed over the years, or does it largely remain dedicated to issues relating to the management and disposal of hazardous wastes?

BT: Thanks, Lynn. I'm glad to have the opportunity to explain the role of the Special Rapporteur and the Mandate on Toxics [Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Toxic Waste] in a little bit more detail. The Mandate did have its origins around the concerns of the global south, with the dumping of toxic waste, those predominantly coming from [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] OECD countries. The Mandate was actually created by the predecessor of the UN Human Rights Council, going back a few years before 2006, when the Council was established. And then the Mandate was created largely in response to the Basel Convention -- ironically, somewhat -- where a group of countries led predominantly by the African group raised their concerns with the inadequacy of the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes in the former UN Commission on Human Rights as being an issue of human rights. And then the Mandate was created. At that point, it was called a Mandate specifically on toxic wastes, but then in 2011 -- so this is well after the Human Rights Council was created -- the Mandate ended, and quite significantly to become a Mandate on the implications of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and waste.

We did broad international consensus on the need to take a life-cycle approach in handling and minimizing the adverse impacts of toxic wastes around the world. So the Mandate, as I defined it and as I carried out my responsibilities, I believe, was true to that expansion back

in 2011. But for a number of reasons, from 2011 until 2004, it really hadn't been able to explore the full range of issues that fell within its scope. And so within my responsibilities, which included preparation of reports, presentations to the Human Rights Council (and then later to the General Assembly), writing communications to States and to businesses and the like, and holding consultations investigating cases, I tried my best to address the full range of issues that are captured within that scope. So some of those issues related to emissions; tailing dam collapses as well; industrial manufacturing concerns, pollution most notably, but then also workers who are handling industrial chemicals, pesticides, or other hazardous substances. They came across a lot of cases involving oil and gas contamination, legacy pollution issues from many decades ago, nuclear waste issues, chemicals in consumer products, transportation-related concerns, and then also, of course, the issue of waste disposal. And so, in a departure to some, because of the former focus being on toxic waste, it was actually quite true to what the Council had requested in 2011.

LLB: Well, that makes an awful lot of sense because, in reading a little bit about your background and your mission with the UN, while you were originally appointed in 2014, you were reappointed in 2017, and it seems like over the span of your mission, you were engaged in an incredibly broad and diverse range of issues, some of which you've noted: radiation levels at Fukushima, Japan; refugee camps built on lead-contaminated sites in Kosovo. You noted your interest and focus on pesticides, calling for the phase-out of certain pesticides believed to be highly hazardous. With regard to investigations that you were tasked with pursuing or that you selected -- and I want to get back to that, Baskut, if these were designated areas that the mission was asked to investigate or did you choose in your -- was it within your discretion to choose the topics on which you worked and the areas of investigation which you pursued? But putting that issue aside, over the term of your tenure, what in your view, is the most consequential investigation that you were engaged in with regard to the skills that you acquired as Special Rapporteur? What will assist you most in your new role as Director of the [TURI]? So there are really three questions there.

BT: Right. Well, thanks, Lynn. I'll try my best. For good reason, the Human Rights Council is not particularly prescriptive about which cases or issues I take up within my thematic mandate. For example, the terrible dam collapses in Brazil in 2015 and then again in 2019 were things that never could have been predicted by the Human Rights Council. So they give necessary flexibility to us to investigate cases in real time and to provide current recommendations for prevention purposes. And I think that's very important. So in answer to your question, it is essentially at the discretion of the Rapporteur what cases they wish to take up. But time -- it's also in response to what we're hearing from stakeholders, stakeholders within the UN family, from civil society, from businesses, and governments as well. So I undertake many -- I undertook many consultations to try to define my priorities because there -- by necessity -- has to be some criteria for which priorities are set and cases are being either in or out.

I guess one other thing I could mention is that my efforts on the Mandate have never been mine alone. So in terms of looking at what I may think of as being most consequential, I think it's worth highlighting, first and foremost, that it's always a collective effort. And as a wise man once told me, it's a bit like adding salt to the broth or to the soup. A little bit makes a huge difference, but there's a lot more that goes into it. And so my efforts are simply to try to find, in some cases, a way towards effective redress or towards a viable means of prevention, in the case of violations or abuses that have happened in the past.

The most, I guess, consequential investigation that I would have to mention is not really one, but rather, a visit. As part of my Mandate, I would undertake country visits to

countries, and my visit to the Republic of Korea, or South Korea, really stands out as the one where I felt like the human rights dimension of hazardous substances and wastes throughout a whole range of activities and cases really came to the fore in my mind. There was one case in particular that I investigated there involving over 150 workers at a major electronics company that had -- either they themselves developed a range of illnesses, including leukemia and other cancers, or their children had developed adverse health outcomes as a result of their exposures. And not only did hearing their testimonies hit home, but it also provided incredible motivation for myself and my efforts to try to find a path forward to ensure that these sorts of cases didn't happen again. The victims and their representatives would sit in front of the corporate headquarters every day for over a year. Rain or shine or snow, they were there, all day, every day; at least some were there. And it was their commitment and persistence that really stood out in my mind during my tenure. I was glad to make a little bit of a contribution towards what eventually became an agreement to provide compensation and an apology to the victims and their families.

LLB: Good. And change work practices, I assume.

BT: -- as well as changing the corporate policies in many respects and hopefully, I think, eventually leading to some governmental changes in legislation and policy as well. And there are a few other examples of legislative changes, both from Korea and from other missions that I could mention. But, I guess, to get to your last question in terms of what I would carry forward from those experiences is really the sense that any progress on these issues involving hazardous substances, including toxic chemicals, really does require collaboration across many, many different stakeholders, a deep sense of commitment to that collaboration. And I think TURI has built a foundation on that, TURI being the Toxics Use Reduction Institute, where I'm currently the Director. But the foundation can always be expanded and strengthened. And that's one of the things I would like to do moving forward.

LLB: I can think of no better person. I've known you for a while, Baskut, and I *think* we first met when we were together in Brussels, although I could be wrong. And you are a wonderful collaborator. You're such an excellent listener and problem solver, which I assume urged the Governing Board there at TURI to select you to be its new Director. So I know you're going to be hugely successful.

Maybe you -- this is a wonderful segue into my next question, which relates to fundamentally, what TURI is and how it collaborates with businesses, environmental organizations, community organizations, and government agencies, all intended to reduce the use of toxic chemicals. Perhaps you can help our listeners understand how exactly do you intend to do that, and how has TURI traditionally done that? And what are your goals for TURI in the new year, in 2022?

BT: Sure. First, thanks, Lynn. That's very kind of you to say, and I think it *was* in Brussels where we first met. Let me see. I guess in order to explain how TURI does what it does in working with businesses to help them transition to safer alternatives, I guess we have to go back to the Act that created TURI back in 1989, because it's that Act that created TURI, but it's also that Act that we help to implement. The Act is brilliant in a number of ways. But one of the ways that I think it has been particularly effective is that it actually doesn't ban any of the substances that are listed in the Act. All it really requires is that for certain companies that meet certain requirements, they have to report certain production levels or uses to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. And then based on that, they can develop toxic use reduction plans to systematically reduce those uses. And we've seen that quite successfully in various industries and for various substances. For example, for TCE or

trichloroethylene, we've seen dramatic reductions over several years, thanks in part to TURI's work, but also the commitment of businesses in Massachusetts to reducing the use of that toxic substance, among others. In essence, though, we -- TURI works in collaboration with many actors. So it works with our government partners, both at the Office of Technical Assistance [OTA] and the Massachusetts EPA. It works with businesses of all sizes across a wide range of industries. It works with civil society groups, local communities, trade unions, and others.

And we do a number of different areas, all of which is focused on helping companies make that transition to safer chemicals. So we conduct research on alternatives. We help to identify those alternatives. We hope to evaluate the safety and health properties of those alternatives. We have a laboratory that tests the performance of various alternatives to ensure that when we present a possible option to a company that it would meet strict performance criteria that the company would choose to maintain. We have -- we give grants, to small businesses in particular, as well as some community organizations, to help with the transition. Sometimes businesses need a little bit of financial assistance to buy a new piece of equipment or to make them otherwise make that transition, and we're sometimes able to help with that. And then we also have a policy arm, aside from our research and development team. So we work to keep the Massachusetts Act, [TURA], up to date to reflect the best science. And then complementing all of this [are] our efforts to train substitution experts [who] work with businesses to develop toxic use reduction plans every few years so that they can systematically reduce their use of toxic chemicals. And collectively, we're moving towards an objective of continual improvement.

LLB: Must you be a Massachusetts-based business to avail oneself of the services that TURI offers?

BT: You do not have to be. We have collaborated with many, many different agencies, government agencies in the [United States]. We have -- our staff have essentially provided their expertise and experiences to other jurisdictions, both nationally in the [United States] and internationally, so that others can improve their systems for transitioning toward safer chemicals, based on TURI's experiences. There are certain areas, though, that we cannot -- for example, provide grants to businesses outside Massachusetts.

LLB: Sure, that makes sense.

BT: And our use of Massachusetts funds is strictly to the extent of helping businesses in Massachusetts. But that hasn't necessarily impeded us from sometimes helping other jurisdictions with the transition.

LLB: How does your organization, TURI, define what is less toxic? Is it based on stated criteria, or if you can manufacture something differently and generate less waste, or less toxic material, or if you need help in identifying a surrogate for a chemical that is a key component of a product that you're manufacturing, I mean, what enables an entity to state that it is now using a less toxic chemical? Is it a variety of independent factors? Or -- I guess I'm a little fuzzy on that.

BT: Very good question. We conduct a wide range of authoritative sources to identify potential hazards that may be present and in alternatives to ensure that we don't have a situation where someone is, say, substituting a carcinogen for a reprotoxin, or a known chemical of concern [inaudible]. Then they have little to no information about its potential health hazards, but we by and large rely on authoritative lists, databases that have been created by

other partners to identify the properties. And then we do an alternatives assessment, where we look at a multitude of factors, and say, "Okay, well, this substance is better in this respect, but there may be concerns here." And we present this to companies and work with them to try to figure out what may be the best alternative for their needs. The reality, though, is that there is usually no silver bullet, and it does require time and effort to find these alternative resources. And many of the companies that we work with are small and medium-size enterprises that don't have that, appreciate what we are able to bring, and the partners that we're able to bring into the discussion, for example, from academia.

And this is even for large businesses, like Siemens. We work with Siemens Health, for example, where we've been able to bring in professors in engineering to help devise an alternative to the use of certain toxic in certain products. So it's never a one-size-fits-all silver bullet, as one of my colleagues has written, but it's usually a balancing of various factors.

LLB: One of the reasons I was anxious to speak with you, Baskut, is because your organization is such an incredible support to businesses, whether large or small or just beginning to revisit chemical components in the manufacturing process to get to a better place and use less toxic chemicals. You offer extraordinary help to businesses by invoking a wide range of resources, including academic experts and the broad experience that your team offers. It's really wonderful.

I noticed in looking at your website, the governing body of TURA in Massachusetts, the Toxics Use Reduction Act, voted recently to add PFAS [per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances] under the Act. What does that mean, exactly? And to the extent I'm presuming that this now will become a focus for TURI, what can we expect TURI to do to help businesses transition from PFASs to alternative chemistries?

BT: Yes, thanks, Lynn. That's a very good question. I think the first thing I should mention is that the listing of PFAS under the Toxics Use Reduction Act, or TURA, does not mean that the class of "PFAS that's not otherwise listed," as it's technically known, is going to be banned from use. So as I mentioned before, TURA actually doesn't ban anything. But certain companies now must notify production and use of PFAS to the government, certain PFAS that are listed now within the Act, to the government starting in 2023. And as a result of this, companies can include PFAS reductions as part of their annual toxic use reduction plans and part of that planning process that they undertake as part of TURA, the Toxics Use Reduction Act.

What is TURI, the Institute, doing in terms of helping businesses with this listing? Well, TURI is working with our partner agencies to help companies to first and foremost understand when and where PFAS is implicated within their products or processes. So, for example, OTA, the Office of Technical Assistance, is working to help companies contact suppliers to determine when and where PFAS is used. TURI is working with companies as well more directly to identify where PFAS uses may be below the radar, so to speak, or hidden within their processes. And then once these are identified, then we expect that we'll work with companies to do what we do, which is to identify, to research, to help develop, and to support businesses in the adoption of safer alternatives. We expect to be collaborating with many different stakeholders, not just businesses, but also academic researchers, in developing and identifying possible alternatives to those PFAS substances that companies wish to substitute. I believe that we can do this quite well; we have a good track record with other substances, and with the concerted effort and the benefits of PFAS being listed under

TURA, I think we can help businesses a great deal make the transition away from PFAS as a group.

LLB: Excellent. I know from my own practice whether or not a particular chemical is banned as a matter of law, either under federal or state legislation, once a chemical has been identified as a chemical of concern, as is the case with PFAS collectively, as a class of chemistries, businesses are, of course, motivated to be looking at alternative chemistries, independent of that banning, right? There are many reputational drivers, or litigation drivers, or commitment to sustainable practices that continued utilization of a class of chemistries may not align with that commitment. So it seems to me your organization is going to be very busy, Baskut, given the growing number of chemistries that are believed to present challenges for either human health or environmental concerns when used or discharged into the environment at levels of concern.

I do think that is a point worth mentioning, that your organization doesn't ban anything. The law identifies chemicals for listing purposes for which some reporting obligations might arise, but more to the point, your organization provides an invaluable service for organizations of all sizes to try to think through a range of alternative chemistries that will perform functionally and provide the same efficacies and functionalities that chemicals of a higher toxicity require. So I think you're going to be very busy this year, next year, and for as long as you serve in the role that you are now serving.

BT: I think so. But either way, I think that's a good thing.

LLB: I do, too. I do, too. And often companies -- in our experiences as legal practitioners and regulatory counselors -- companies don't have the wherewithal internally necessarily to identify what might be a suitable alternative. They want to do that, right? But they often don't know how to get there. And so what you offer is really extraordinary and helpful.

BT: Thank you. I think it is, too, and I firmly believe it is. But it'll also be interesting to see what we learn about where PFAS is being used in Massachusetts. And many companies, I think, are not aware, and this creates many opportunities for further substitution.

LLB: It does indeed. And EPA's recent proposed rule to try to understand better where PFASs, as defined under the regulation, are used, is obviously a challenge to industry because, as you suggest, we often don't know where upstream suppliers are using PFASs for whatever reason. So the [Toxic Substances Control Act] (TSCA) reporting obligation that is expected to become law this year will be helpful in that regard.

Let's -- I was interested in another position that you occupied historically, Baskut, and that was as a Senior Advisor to the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF. In that capacity, you developed strategies to protect children from environmental harms and also either concurrently or previously advised the International Labor Organization on improved workplace practices. Now, both children and workers, as you know, are identified under the revisions to [TSCA] as potentially exposed or susceptible subpopulations. Does TURI help businesses understand and address sensitive subpopulations? Or is it strictly more the worker community that are directly exposed to chemicals in the workplace?

BT: Thank you for another very interesting question. First and foremost, I have to say I'm very happy to see that the reference to both workers and children is there in TSCA. Repeatedly, in the cases I addressed during my tenure as a mandate holder through the United Nations, children and workers were a recurrent issue of concern, and clearly are among the most

vulnerable. The way that TURI works, I think, is not simply limited to addressing toxic chemicals as a worker issue per se, but more aligned with working with communities to see the synergy, protecting occupational health and environmental health. And we have worked successfully with communities in Massachusetts, including both small businesses and others, to highlight this. For example, in Lawrence, Massachusetts, we worked with firefighters to replace toxic chemicals in body shops, where the firefighters helped with awareness raising about the benefits both to the community, the broader community, the risks incumbent in those toxic chemicals or hazardous substances, and the benefits to the workers at auto body shops as well.

We also worked with small businesses on issues specific to children and their unique vulnerabilities, their susceptibilities to toxic exposures. For example, we worked with small businesses that had foam cube pits, similar to those balls, that children often jump into, to raise awareness about the presence of toxic flame retardants in those foam cubes and to work with them to replace those foam cubes with alternatives that didn't have any of those toxic flame retardants in them. That was a very clear example, I think, of how TURI can help businesses.

LLB: Given your -- just by your disposition, Baskut, you are a born negotiator. You're such a good listener; you're such a good problem solver. You have this extraordinary perspective on how issues evolve, both culturally and historically, and see opportunities for improving and changing practices that need to be changed. Given your background and the many opportunities that you have pursued to make the world a better place, what in your view are the most successful strategies for trying to engage businesses in particular to transition to producing and using more environmentally sustainable chemical substances? What works?

BT: It's a little difficult to generalize, but maybe if I could break it down by the different types of businesses. One, if we were to look at, for example, chemical users, one of the things that I think helps to motivate businesses is to know that there is a way that they could do things better. Many of the businesses that we've worked with at TURI don't want to be putting their workers at unnecessary risk or creating unnecessary hazards or risks for their community. And so if they are one, made aware of the risks and the availability of alternatives, they by and large generally are quite open to discussing how they can make that transition to safer alternatives.

LLB: Sure. I would love to think, Baskut, that, given the choice, everyone would opt for less toxic chemicals, either using or distributing into the environment as a consequence of that use. So that's encouraging.

BT: We do find many companies that are very open and very willing to find an alternative so that they can better protect their workers and their communities. Of course, there are companies that are a little more difficult, but we find that there is room for optimism. My personal experience is that when the manufacturers of chemicals find that there are market opportunities, they will try to capitalize on those opportunities when they can and will meet production requirements or what have you to meet that demand. So I tend to focus more on the user side of the equation than the producer in terms of getting to a more environmentally, socially sustainable model of chemical production and use. I think some things that I have come across in speaking with governments and other stakeholders have been useful as well. One would be internalization of costs. This is a sensitive subject for some, but the experiences of several countries in terms of imposing certain fees or taxes or other disincentives for the ongoing use of hazardous substances has and can make a

difference, I think, in terms of getting over some of those barriers to entry for safer alternatives.

Second, I think technical and financial assistance, providing that to small businesses, is crucial. The experience of TURI really reaffirms that. We provide both technical assistance, in terms of finding and testing alternatives, and then also financial assistance, when and where we can, to businesses in Massachusetts.

And third, I guess I would have to say creating structures for cooperation, especially when it comes to businesses cooperating with, say, independent experts, especially those say, for example, from academia or elsewhere that may be able to help them come up with creative solutions to overcome challenges that they're facing. And finally, strong governance: I think without the existence of strong governance structures, many of those small businesses will not feel appropriately incentivized to reduce risks, even though there are those great examples of companies that just want to do the right thing. At the end of the day, we do need strong regulation and strong enforcement.

LLB: Backstopping. On your third factor, creating structures for cooperation, do you -- are the entities that seek your help -- is it usually kind of a one and done? Or do they continue to come back and rely upon your services for future challenges or new product lines? Or what is the nature of the relationship with your customers, as it were?

BT: Yes, that's a good question. In looking through the case studies and trying to get myself familiar with the work of TURI, what I've seen is less of the sort of repeat customer sort of model, and that might be something that we could look to improve upon, I think. There's really -- the universe of possible issues that we could help companies with is certainly expanding every day, it seems almost, so hopefully we can build on some of the past relationships we have. But by and large, companies have tended to turn to us when they are trying to meet a particular objective that they have. Hopefully, we have been successful, and we have in several instances, but I hope to continue.

LLB: You have many successes. I've heard such good things about TURI and all of the wonderful resources and people that you have devoted to assisting chemical users and others to do it better, do it with less toxic chemicals, and improve their business operations as a result.

BT: Thanks, Lynn.

LLB: I've really enjoyed chatting with you, Baskut. I'm so impressed with your extraordinary background and the diversity of the organizations that you've worked with. If our listeners wish to obtain more information about TURI or the UN Special Rapporteurship that you worked in or the UN Human Rights Council, where might you direct them?

BT: One is the main website for TURI, turi.org, and then we have a few smaller sites that we also maintain, websites that we maintain that might be of interest, for example, cleanersolutions.org or TURA, turadata.org, that might be of interest. Regarding the Mandate, I have a website for my own activities under the Mandate on Human Rights and Toxics, which is srtoxics.org. And the UN has a website for the current activities as well as past activities, so my predecessors' and my successors' activities as well. And that is a much longer web address, but it's at www.ohchr.org that you can find how you can be redirected to the appropriate page for the Mandate.

LLB: Excellent. Thank you. That's very helpful. I, for one, will be looking at each of those because I -- honestly, before knowing you, Baskut, was unaware of the whole Special Rapporteurship that the UN had created. And it strikes me with everything that's going on globally with climate change and the extraordinary challenges occasioned by the changes that we're experiencing, that that role has just endless possibility and endless opportunities for focus. And similarly, given all that is going on here in the United States with regard to the desire to pursue the use of less toxic chemicals, you are going to be one busy guy this year, and, as I said before, in as many years as you occupy the position that you're in, because we need you, and we need TURI.

BT: Well, thank you, Lynn. You're too kind. Yes, it's been a pleasure, first and foremost, speaking with you. But also it was a pleasure to serve for six years in that capacity with the UN, and now in my new role with TURI, I'm thrilled. And from where I stand, the more work, the better because the more progress that we can make. Thank you so much. I really appreciate it.

LLB: Thank you, Baskut.

BT: I enjoyed our conversation.

LLB: As did I. Thank you so much, and all my best, and good luck to you and your growing family. Take care now. Thank you. Thanks. Goodbye.

My thanks again to Baskut for speaking with me today about TURI, his goals as its new Director, and his many accomplishments as the former Rapporteur to the UN on Toxics and Human Rights.

All Things Chemical is produced by Jackson Bierfeldt of Bierfeldt Audio LLC.