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**United Nations
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**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
First meeting**

Geneva, 24–29 September 2017

Item 6 (f) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters stipulated by the Convention for action by the
Conference of the Parties: the guidance referred to in
paragraphs 7 (a) and 7 (b) of article 9**

**Guidance in relation to releases of mercury (article 9),
particularly in regard to best available techniques and best
environmental practices (paragraph 7 (a)) and the methodology
for preparing inventories of releases (paragraph 7 (b))**

Note by the secretariat

1. Paragraph 7 of article 9 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury provides that the Conference of the Parties shall, as soon as practicable, adopt guidance on best available techniques and on best environmental practices, taking into account any differences between new and existing sources and the need to minimize cross-media effects, and guidance on the methodology for preparing inventories of releases.
2. Work to develop guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practices for adoption has not yet begun. The preparation of such guidance requires information on the relevant point source categories that each party is to identify, as per paragraph 3 of article 9, no later than three years after the date of entry into force of the Convention for that party. Work will therefore be able to begin following the determination of the relevant point sources, and it is expected to require input from technical experts.
3. In relation to the development of guidance on the methodology for preparing inventories of releases, at its sixth session, the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury considered the issue and noted that the work under way at the time by the group of technical experts established by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries to develop the guidance called for in article 8, on emissions, had relevance to the issues related to releases. It was further noted that the UNEP toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases assisted countries in assessing their releases, and would assist them in determining which sources of releases might be considered relevant and would require action under the Convention. The committee took note of the report providing initial information on sources of releases and the methodology for the development of inventories (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/15), saying that it looked forward to the outcome of the further work by the group of technical experts on the matter.

* UNEP/MC/COP.1/1.

4. At its seventh session, the intergovernmental negotiating committee adopted, on a provisional basis, pending formal adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, the guidance to parties on the methodology for preparing inventories of emissions pursuant to article 8. The guidance sets out a stepwise methodology that could be followed in developing an inventory, and makes reference to the UNEP inventory toolkit. The methodology is generic, although designed with the sources of emissions in mind, and it may therefore be feasible to apply it more broadly in relation to sources of releases.

5. It should be noted that countries preparing for implementation of the Convention, particularly those supported through the Minamata Initial Assessments funded by the Global Environment Facility, are undertaking inventories of all emissions and releases of mercury at the national level. The inventories assist countries in identifying their mercury issues and provide information for the legal review process and decisions on effective controls relating to mercury. Many countries are undertaking a level one assessment using the UNEP inventory toolkit, which allows the identification of sources without quantification, but some countries are conducting a more detailed level two assessment, which involves more detailed assessment and consideration of actual (rather than estimated) releases.

Suggested action by the Conference of the Parties

6. The Conference of the Parties may wish to encourage parties and countries to identify relevant point sources at the national level pursuant to paragraph 3 of article 9 as soon as possible – that is, in advance of the deadline – and submit information to the secretariat on the identified sources and on the annual quantity of releases from such sources. The Conference of the Parties may wish to request the secretariat to compile and analyse submissions from parties and provide such information to the Conference at its second meeting.
