



## PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

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### Third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury



25 – 29 November 2019  
Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG)  
Geneva, Switzerland

Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury  
Office address: International Environment House  
Chemin des Anémones 11-13, 1219 Châtelaine, Switzerland  
Postal address: Avenue de la Paix 8-14, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
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## 1. VENUE OF THE MEETING

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The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP3) will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from Monday, 25 November, to Friday, 29 November 2019. Regional consultations and other preparatory meetings will take place in the afternoon of Sunday, 24 November 2019.

The meeting will be held at:  
Geneva International Conference Centre - Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG) Rue de Varembe 17  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  
Tel.: + 41 (0) 22 791 91 11, Fax: + 41 (0) 22 791 90 64  
Internet: [www.cicg.ch](http://www.cicg.ch)

## 2. PRE-REGISTRATION

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Pre-registration should be completed **no later than 19 August 2019** using the online pre-registration platform available at <http://reg.unog.ch/e/mc-cop-3>.

Invitation letters (in English, French and Spanish), dated 23 May 2019, have been sent out to all Governments and are also extended to non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

Pre-registration dossiers for Government representatives should include an official nomination letter from the national focal point for the Minamata Convention on Mercury in the case of Parties, the UN Environment official contact point, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva or to the UN Environment. In addition, for sponsored participants, the official nomination letter should indicate that the individual concerned is the delegate designated to receive financial assistance. A copy of the national passport identification page should also be attached.

Organizations that wish to attend COP3 should pre-register and submit to the Secretariat at least one month prior to the opening of the meeting, an application for admission as an observer at meetings of the Conference of the Parties, including information demonstrating their qualification in matters covered by the Convention<sup>1</sup>. Organizations approved to participate in the first and second meetings of the Conference of the Parties do not need to resubmit such application. The list of these organizations may be found at [http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP1/English/1\\_INF16\\_observers.pdf](http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP1/English/1_INF16_observers.pdf)

[http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP2/english/2\\_INF19\\_observers.pdf](http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP2/english/2_INF19_observers.pdf)

Further information with regards to the participation of observers in meetings of the Conference of the Parties may be found at: <http://mercuryconvention.org/Meetings/Observers/tabid/4231/language/enUS/Default.aspx>.

Questions regarding registration should be directed to: [MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org).

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<sup>1</sup> This process does not apply to the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not a Party to the Convention and any entity operating the mechanism referred to in paragraph 5 of Article 13 of the Convention.



### 3. ON-SITE REGISTRATION

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Participants are requested to pre-register online in advance of the meeting as indicated in the section above and obtain their meeting badges upon presentation of a valid picture identification document, at the registration counter located on the ground floor of the Geneva International Conference Centre. Only the names of duly registered participants will be included in the list of participants of the meeting.

The registration counter will have the following opening hours:

- **Saturday, 23 November:** 12:00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
- **Sunday, 24 November:** 9:00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
- **Monday, 25 to Friday, 29 November:** 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

### 4. SECURITY IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTATION AND BADGES FOR MEETING PARTICIPANTS

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Security identification badges are issued to participants upon arrival at the meetings and upon completion of the relevant registration procedure. Meeting participants may collect their security identification badges at the registration desks upon presentation of one of the following identification documents issued by a government recognized by the United Nations:

- Valid national passport;
- Valid picture identification card, in Latin alphabets;

Access to the meeting venue is subject to the presentation of a valid conference badge. For security reasons, the display of conference badges is mandatory at all times to gain access to the meeting venue and meeting rooms. Any loss of a conference badge should be reported immediately to the registration counter.

### 5. CREDENTIALS FOR PARTIES TO THE MINAMATA CONVENTION

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In order to take part in the decision-making process at the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Parties to the Minamata Convention are kindly requested that their head of delegation, alternate representatives and advisers each be accredited in a credential issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or, in the case of a regional economic integration organization, by the competent authority of that organization. Information regarding any change in the composition of the delegation should be submitted using the same procedure.

Samples of credentials are available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish on the website at: <http://mercuryconvention.org/?tabid=8019>.

Originals of the credentials shall be submitted to the Secretariat no later than twenty-four hours after the opening of the meeting. Governments are invited to submit an advance copy of their credentials, preferably by 1 November 2019, in order to facilitate the clearance process, to:

The Executive Secretary  
Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury  
United Nations Environment Programme  
Avenue de la Paix 8-14, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
E-mail: [MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org)



## 6. VISAS

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Participants are responsible for obtaining any necessary visa for entering Switzerland as well as any transit visa. Visas must be obtained prior to arrival. Please note that a Schengen visa is required even for transiting through Schengen zone European countries. As time required for the processing of visa requests may vary, it is strongly recommended that visa applications be made sufficiently in advance. More information is available on the website of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs at:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/entry-switzerland-residence.html>

[https://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt\\_einreise.html](https://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt_einreise.html)

## 7. PROCEDURES FOR MEDIA ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION

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Media participation at COP3 is subject to accreditation by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Journalists should pre-register by 5 November 2019 with the Secretariat using the online pre-registration platform available at <http://reg.unog.ch/e/mc-cop-3>, including submission of accreditation form and necessary information. See Annex A – International media accreditation process. For more information, please contact the Secretariat by E-mail at: [MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org).

## 8. REGIONAL MEETINGS

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Facilities will be available for regional meetings from 25 to 29 November 2019. Regional meetings may be held prior to the opening of COP3 on Sunday, 24 November from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please contact your regional coordinator or regional Bureau member(s) for further information.

## 9. OFFICIAL OPENING

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The official opening of COP3 will take **place on Monday, 25 November 2019, at 10.00 a.m.** The formal sessions of the meeting are planned to be held daily from **10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** and from **3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.** For more information, please refer to the annotated provisional agenda, which will be made available at: <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/cop-3>

## 10. SIDE EVENTS

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COP3 will provide an opportunity for parties and stakeholders to exchange information relevant to the implementation of the Convention and learn from each other. Guidelines and requesting form for organizing an event are available on the Convention website at [http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP3/Event\\_Exhibition\\_Guidance\\_COP3.docx](http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP3/Event_Exhibition_Guidance_COP3.docx).



## 11. EXHIBITION

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A limited number of exhibition booths will be available throughout the COP period for governments and other stakeholders to disseminate knowledge, technology and other information relevant to the implementation of the Convention. Guidelines and requesting form for organizing an exhibition are available on the Convention website at

[http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP3/Event\\_Exhibition\\_Guidance\\_COP3.docx](http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP3/Event_Exhibition_Guidance_COP3.docx) .

## 12. DOCUMENTS

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This meeting will be a paper smart meeting. Please note that attendees are encouraged to download in advance the meeting documents, which will be published as they become available at:

<http://www.mercuryconvention.org/cop-3>

## 13. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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A list of participants that attend COP3 will be prepared by the Secretariat and made available on the Minamata Convention website after the closing of the meeting. Delegates are reminded that the list of participants is based on the information provided by them at the time of registration and that inclusion in the list of participants is conditional upon official registration. All delegations are to clearly indicate the name of the Head of the Delegation and the alternate.

## 14. SERVICES TO PARTICIPANTS

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### **First Aid**

Emergency first aid will be available throughout the duration of the meeting.

### **Internet access**

Free wireless internet access is available in all conference and meeting rooms and in the public areas of the Geneva International Conference Centre.

### **Restaurants / Catering services**

Catering services for lunch will be available at the Geneva International Conference Centre, at the bar and restaurant located on the ground and first-floor levels. Coffee cards (10 coffees or teas) are offered at the restaurants with a small price reduction. Other cafes, restaurants and shops are within walking distance of the meeting venue.

### **Banking facilities**

Banking services are available at the nearby area, the closest one being UBS Switzerland AG Vermont-Nations located at chemin Louis-Dunant 17bis, 1202 Geneva.



## **15. PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PREPARATION AND CONDUCT OF THE MEETING**

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The Secretariat has put in place practical measures to promote sustainability in the preparation and conduct of its meetings. This has included participation in the United Nations Climate Neutral Strategy and the achievement of climate neutrality since 2013. Under this framework, the Secretariat has taken steps to make the 2019 COP climate neutral by offsetting any unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions, in particular from the travel of sponsored participants. Delegates who organize their own travel to and from the Conference in Geneva are encouraged to offset their travel emissions online.

In addition, with the aim of reducing plastic waste at the meeting of the conference of the Parties, arrangements have been made with the venue and catering service to minimize the use of plastic in take-out containers, sandwich bags, cutlery and cups. Delegates are invited to bring reusable drinking containers (mugs, bottles) and use them at the cafeteria and water fountains located throughout the venue.

## **16. PAPERLESS MEETING**

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The meeting will be paperless and printed documents will not be available at the meeting. Pre-session documents will be made available on the meeting's website and in-session documents (such as conference room papers) will be available electronically via wireless intranet or memory stick only.

Making a meeting paperless considerably reduces the cost and carbon footprint of the meeting. A paperless meeting also makes it easier for participants to locate documents and allows for faster preparation and distribution of conference room papers.

To facilitate the paperless nature of the meetings, participants are requested to ensure the following:

1. Each participant should bring a laptop computer containing basic applications, including Microsoft Office Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat Reader and updated antivirus software.
2. Laptops should be pre-checked for viruses and confirmed as virus-free prior to arrival at the meetings. Virus free laptops are crucial to the success of a paperless meeting.
3. Participants should bring a memory stick that has been pre-checked for viruses for the purpose of transferring documents.
4. Laptops should be configured for a standard wireless (Wi-Fi) connection. If in doubt, please check with your local information technology expert.
5. Participants should bring an appropriate adaptor to enable laptops to be connected to Swiss power sockets.
6. When completing the registration form of the meetings, participants should include a current e-mail address, so that they can be sent correspondence relating to the meeting.

## **17. TRAVEL AND DAILY SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

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Participants whose travel is sponsored by UN Environment Programme will be provided with a daily subsistence allowance (DSA) at prevailing United Nations rates. In order to facilitate the payment of subsistence allowance, sponsored participants will be requested to submit copies of their passport and



boarding passes to the Secretariat staff at the location and time indicated during the meeting. For any query related to travel and DSA, sponsored participants are invited to contact the Secretariat at: [MEAMinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEAMinamataMeetings@un.org).

## 18. HEALTH

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First-aid and emergency medical services are available at the Geneva International Conference Centre.

**Delegates with a chronic illness** should carry all necessary medication and medical items for the entire duration of the journey, in their original containers, clearly labelled.

**Delegates are advised to seek medical insurance** with appropriate cover abroad, i.e. accident, sickness, medical repatriation and death. The United Nations does not cover life or medical insurance for participants. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the participants or of their Governments to obtain adequate insurance prior to travel to Switzerland.

## 19. TRANSPORTATION AND SECURITY

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Once in Geneva, the conference centre is close by. The international airport (Geneva Cointrin) and the main railway station (Geneva Cornavin) are respectively 5 kilometres and 2 kilometres away from the conference centre and are linked by public transport (tramway and bus) and by taxi.

### **By public transport:**

*From the Geneva International Airport:*

- **Take BUS 5** Direction Thônex-Vallard
- Get off at the bus stop **Vermont**

*From the Cornavin railway station:*

- **Take BUS 5** Direction Aéroport
- Get off at the bus stop **Vermont**
  
- or **take BUS 8** Direction OMS
- Get off at the bus stop **UIT**
  
- or **take TRAM 15** Direction Nations
- Get off at the tram stop **Nations**

The Unireso ticket, offered by the Geneva airport authority, allows the free use of public transport in the city for a period of 80 minutes. Unireso tickets can be obtained from the machine in the luggage collection area on the arrivals level of the airport. Many hotels give their residents a Unireso pass to use during their stay. For more information about public transportation in Geneva, please visit <http://tpg.ch/en/web/site-international>.

### **By taxi**

Taxis are readily available for visitors travelling from the Geneva Cointrin Airport. They are easily available, but comparatively expensive. If you need a taxi, call 022 320 22 02 or 022 331 41 33.

Although Geneva is a comparatively safe place and violent crime is rare, the incidence of pickpocketing and theft has increased considerably over the last few years. Participants are advised to pay attention at





the airport, around the Cornavin railway station, in the Pâquis district of the city and on buses and taxis, and to not leave their bags and luggage unattended at any time.

Participants with mobility issues requiring special arrangements should contact, in advance of the meeting, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention at: [MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org).

## 20. HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

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Participants are responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements in advance of the meeting and for covering any associated incurred costs. The Secretariat encourages all Parties to make such arrangements at the earliest possible opportunity.

[An updated list of hotels](#) offering preferential rates to the United Nations is available.

## 21. CURRENCY AND RATE OF EXCHANGE

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Swiss Franc (CHF). Average exchange rates: 1 US dollar~ 0,99 CHF. 1 Euro ~ 1,11 CHF (rates as of 18 July 2019). Major credit cards are accepted in most hotels and restaurants in Switzerland.

## 22. ELECTRICITY

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Participants are kindly requested to bring their own power adaptors.

Voltage: 220 volts

Frequency: 50 Hz

Plug/socket: C (CEE 7/16), J



## 23. LANGUAGES

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Interpretation services and meeting documents for the session will be provided in the six official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Additional information documents may be available in English only.

## 24. TIME ZONE INFORMATION

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Switzerland is GMT + 01.00 hours.

## 25. DISCLAIMER

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UN Environment Programme disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended that participants secure prior to departure insurance for the period of participation.



## ANNEX A – INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation is strictly reserved for members of the press-print media, photo, radio, TV, film and news agencies who fully meet UN media accreditation requirements. Accreditation will be granted upon presentation of valid press credentials including each of the following:

1. Completed Accreditation Form available at <http://reg.unog.ch/e/mc-cop-3>;
2. Letter of assignment on official letterhead of a media organization signed by the publisher/assignment editor, editor-in-chief or bureau chief, specifying the name and functional title of the journalist. Unsigned letters or e-mails will not be accepted;
3. Photocopy of a valid press card/work pass; and
4. Photocopy of passport/national ID card.

To avoid delays upon arrival, please submit the Accreditation Form together with the documents listed above as soon as possible and by 5 November 2019 to:

Secretariat of the Minamata Convention of Mercury  
United Nations Environment Programme  
Avenue de la Paix 8-14  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
E-mail: [MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org](mailto:MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org)

It is also possible to register on-site.

Note that double accreditation is not allowed (e.g. as press and delegate, or as press and nongovernmental organization).

Press passes can be picked up at the registration counter upon presentation of two different forms of valid picture identification document (passport, official national press pass, driver's license, work ID, etc.) or of a photo press pass from the United Nations in New York, Paris, Geneva, Vienna, or Nairobi.

**Please note that journalists accredited to cover the meeting should make their own travel and hotel bookings.**