PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

Asia and the Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

5 – 6 September 2023
United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)
Bangkok, Thailand

Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
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NOTE: This document provides links to external and third-party websites, for the convenience of meeting participants, and for use at their discretion. The Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury cannot vouch for the accuracy or correctness of the information contained therein.

GENERAL

The Asia and the Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-5) is scheduled to be held at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok, Thailand, on 5 and 6 September 2023.

MEETING VENUE

The regional consultations will be held at:

United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)
United Nations Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok 10200 Thailand
Telephone: (66-2) 288-1181 and (66-2) 288-1182
Website: www.unescap.org/uncc

Please click here for location on Google Maps.

SCHEDULE

The regional consultations will be held from 09h00 to 17h00 on Tuesday, 5 September and Wednesday, 6 September 2023.

Lunch breaks are planned to be held between 12h30 and 13h30.

REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Participants are invited to do pre-registration through the Secretariat by 21 July 2023 in order to facilitate
security clearance and entrance to the premises. Participants are encouraged to submit their photo in advance, which will speed up the registration process.

Participants are requested to register on-site from 08h00 to 09h00 on the first day of the meeting, i.e., Tuesday, 5 September, at the registration counter, located on the ground floor, UNCC. Photo badges will be delivered to meeting participants upon presentation of a valid picture identification document. Participants who are not able to register during the time indicated above are requested to do so upon their arrival at UNCC and before going to the conference room. Only the names of duly registered participants will be included in the list of participants.

For identification and security reasons, all participants are REQUIRED to wear their meeting badges at all times while they are in the UN complex, which includes meetings and social functions. Loss of a meeting badge should be immediately communicated to the registration counter or the UN security, so that the incident can be recorded, and a new badge can be issued.

**LANGUAGE**

The regional preparatory meeting will be conducted in English.

**MEETING DOCUMENTS**

The provisional agenda for the meeting will be developed in cooperation with the COP-5 Bureau members for the region and will be posted on the COP-5 webpage in due course. It is expected that the agenda will include presentations of the documents for COP-5 (to be held from 30 October to 3 November 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland) followed by discussions among Governments and possible development of positions for the various issues to be addressed at COP-5.

**VISA REQUIREMENTS**

Participants are REQUIRED to obtain an appropriate entry visa from the Royal Thai Embassy or the Royal Thai Consulate-General before entering Thailand, EXCEPT for those nationals listed at List of Countries entitled for Visa Exemption and Visa on Arrival.

Please note that participants holding UN Laissez-Passer (UNLP) travelling on official business to Thailand are also REQUIRED to obtain an appropriate visa before entering.

To apply for an appropriate entry visa to Thailand, participants are required to contact their nearest Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate-General for the most updated information regarding visa application procedures and required documents. The list of Royal Thai Embassy/Consulate-General can be found at https://www.thaiembassy.org/.

Participants who wish to apply for a visa outside their country of residence or reside in a country where there is no Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate, should check with the Secretariat for the location where it is possible for them to apply for a Thai visa. Please note that certain nationalities, for security reasons, are not allowed to apply for a visa except at the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate-General which has jurisdiction over the concerned territory.

Participants who may need further assistance with their visa application should contact the Secretariat, well in advance, for necessary action.

Participants who wish to apply for a Visa on Arrival at Suvarnabhumi International Airport or Don Muang International Airport should follow the requirements below:
1. The applicant must possess a passport from the list of countries whose nationals are eligible to apply for visa on arrival (List of countries entitled for Visa on Arrival) with the validity of more than 30 days, at least one completely blank page, and be in possession of a valid return ticket with date of departure within 15 days of the date of entry.

2. The applicant must fill out an application form, which is available at the Visa-on-Arrival counter at the airport, supply one recent passport-sized photograph and a fee of Thai Baht (THB) 2,000.

3. An online application is available at Visa on Arrival (immigration.go.th). Upon presentation of printed Transaction Reference Number (TRN), the applicant could obtain the visa at the Visa-on-Arrival counter at the airport before proceeding for immigration procedures.

4. The applicant must provide proof of means of living expenses at the amount of THB 10,000 per person or THB 20,000 per family.

NOTE: The information provided above is accurate as of October 2022. Please visit Immigration Bureau Thailand for the most updated information.

ARRANGEMENT FOR SPONSORED DELEGATES

Thanks to donor contributions, financial assistance may be available to support the participation of one delegate per eligible developing country Party and Party with economy in transition. The assistance will include daily subsistence allowance (DSA) at United Nations rate and round-trip ticket. The sponsored participant must be clearly specified in the official nomination letter. We encourage that the required information is provided to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience, and no later than 21 July 2023.

Once confirmed for participation, the sponsored participants will receive additional instructions on their travel arrangements. Air travel will be arranged according to the United Nations regulations, via the most economical and direct means possible in all cases. Please note that changes to air tickets after they have been issued will not be permitted.

In order to facilitate the payment of subsistence allowance at the venue, sponsored participants will be requested to submit copies of their passport and boarding passes to the Secretariat staff at the meeting venue. For any query related to travel and DSA, sponsored participants are invited to contact the Secretariat at: mea-minamatameetings@un.org.

Please note that sponsored participants who are unable to stay for the entire duration of the meeting are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible after their arrival, so that their subsistence allowance can be adjusted accordingly.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels, located relatively close to UNESCAP or by mass-transit routes, may be used by participants, should they choose to. The selection of hotels at a walking distance from the UNCC is encouraged to reduce participants’ local travel emissions and their exposure to traffic. Please find below a list of hotels, with indicative prices.

NOTE: the Secretariat cannot vouch for accuracy of the information or rates contained in the document. The list is meant purely for reference and for ease of participants. Participants are expected to confirm the actual rates with the hotel directly.
Participants are responsible for booking their own rooms and are requested to contact the hotel well in advance. Any cancellations, postponements or other changes should be reported to the hotel. Rooms not occupied may be charged to the participants as per the hotel’s policies.

Before departure from Bangkok, participants should settle directly with the respective hotels all accounts, including room charges and other expenses, such as for local and long-distance telephone calls, Internet usage, business center usage, laundry room and hotel transportation services, mini-bar items, as well as restaurant and bar services. Participants are also responsible for any charges incurred with respect to rooms remaining vacant owing to late arrival or rescheduled departure for which inadequate prior notice is given.

**LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**

**Travel Advisory**

Visitors are advised to be respectful of Thai customs at all times. Please note that Thailand has laws against making negative comments about the institution of the monarchy. Such laws are strictly enforced and are applicable to spoken, written, gestures and electronic communication, including social media.

**Transport from and to Airport**

Participants need to make their own transportation arrangements from Suvarnabhumi International Airport or Don Mueang International Airport to their respective hotels. For the Airport Rail Link, an express and commuter rail connecting to Makkasan Station (MRT subway Petchaburi Station) and Phayathai Station (BTS Skytrain), passengers should go to Level B. Detailed information can be found at [https://www.srtet.co.th/index.php/en](https://www.srtet.co.th/index.php/en).

Electric taxis (EVsociety/VIP) are currently available at the Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The counter is
located next to the main taxi area. The service is available 24 hours and can be pre-booked via:

Line ID: @evsociety  
Phone: +66 2039 8888  
Email: taxivip@evsociety.co.th  
EV Society Facebook

**Metered-taxi and bus services** are readily available at the airport. More information is available at [https://www.bangkokairportonline.com](https://www.bangkokairportonline.com).

To use the airport **limousine service**, participants should only contact the authorized officials at the counters located in the airport arrival zone. These officials will issue a ticket for the assignment of a limousine for transporting passengers to the desired destination, upon request. The Suvarnabhumi International Airport limousine service counters are located on Level 2 at Baggage Claim and Arrival Hall exits, channels A, B and C.

For **public taxis**, participants are advised to proceed to the Level 1 of the Passenger Terminal, between exit doors 4 and 7, outdoor area, where they will find automatic dispensing machines from which they can collect a queuing ticket for a public taxi. In addition to toll fees, there is a THB 50 surcharge to be added to the meter charge from the airport to the city. Please refer to the airport website noted above for details.

**Transport to attend meetings**

Participants need to make their **own transport arrangements** to and from the UNCC. Metered taxis are readily available in the city and can be booked via applications such as Grab and Volt. Some hotels close to the UN building may provide complimentary transfer service on fixed schedule, to and from the UNCC, so participants are advised to check with the hotel concierge.

**Travel agent**

The American Express Global Business Travel (AMEX-GBT), office located on Level 1, UNCC, can offer assistance in making reservations. Participants may send a request to escap_amextravel@un.org.

**HEALTH AND VACCINATION**

**Entry Requirements (as of 1 March 2023)**

Thai Department of Disease Control (DDC), Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) issued “Public Health Measures for Foreign Travellers Entering Thailand”, which is effective from 1 March 2023 until further notice, as per the following:

1. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination is **no longer required**.
2. Proof of health insurance is **no longer required**.
3. Any passenger having symptoms of COVID-19 on arrival shall be recommended to get COVID-19/RT-PCR test at arrival.

**NOTE:** Health requirements are subject to change. It is the participants’ responsibility to keep abreast of updates or changes. For more information, travellers can contact the **DDC Hotline 1422** or visit [https://ddc.moph.go.th/en/index.php](https://ddc.moph.go.th/en/index.php).

Upon arrival at the port of entry in Thailand, participants who are nationals of or have traveled from/through
countries listed below, which have been declared **Yellow Fever** infected areas, must provide an **International Health Certificate** proving that they have received a valid Yellow Fever vaccination at the Health Control Office upon arrival before proceeding to immigration. A valid vaccination certificate means that the vaccine was administered at least 10 days prior to travel to the affected country. The International Health Certificate must also be submitted together with the visa application form.

The countries/areas listed below have been declared yellow fever infected areas (Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand](https://www.mfa.go.th/) dated 30 November 2022):

1. Angola  
2. Argentina  
3. Benin  
4. Bolivia  
5. Brazil  
6. Burkina Faso  
7. Burundi  
8. Cameroon  
9. Central African Republic  
10. Chad  
11. Colombia  
12. Congo  
13. Republic of the Congo  
14. Cote d’Ivoire  
15. Ecuador  
16. Equatorial Guinea  
17. Ethiopia  
18. French Guiana  
19. Gabon  
20. Gambia  
21. Ghana  
22. Guinea  
23. Guinea-Bissau  
24. Guyana  
25. Kenya  
26. Liberia  
27. Mali  
28. Mauritania  
29. Niger  
30. Nigeria  
31. Panama  
32. Paraguay  
33. Peru  
34. Rwanda  
35. Sao Tome & Principe  
36. Senegal  
37. Sierra Leone  
38. Somalia  
39. Sudan  
40. Suriname  
41. Tanzania  
42. Togo  
43. Trinidad & Tobago  
44. Uganda  
45. Venezuela  

**Zika virus**

Zika is endemic in Thailand and cases have been reported amongst tourists. All travelers are advised to protect themselves from mosquito bites while in Thailand. Given possible transmission of the disease to unborn babies, pregnant women should consider postponing travel to Thailand or talk to their doctor about the implications of traveling to Thailand during this time.
In addition to the above, Medical Services Division at UNHQs advises that pregnant UN personnel should not undertake duty travel or be relocated to countries/areas where local transmission of Zika virus is known to occur. Women who are seeking pregnancy should obtain individual advice from their medical practitioner on risk management regarding their plans to travel into a Zika-affected area. For further information, please refer to the Zika virus FAQ.

Information on other non-vaccine preventable diseases to watch out for while in Thailand can be found here: Thailand - Traveler view | Travelers' Health | CDC.

Air pollution and Health
Bangkok, like many metropolitan Asian cities in the world, is periodically affected by high levels of air pollution, with haze and high concentrations of PM2.5 particularly of concern for sensitive groups.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand advises tourists to monitor Bangkok’s air pollution and take precautions when necessary. People who have existing asthma or are particularly vulnerable to the effects of air pollution should consult their treating physician as to whether a trip to Bangkok is advisable at this time. Information on the Air pollution can be found Air4Thai website, maintained by the government of Thailand with daily information on air pollution.

Insurance and emergency medical service
Delegates are strongly encouraged to subscribe to a travel or health insurance which is valid in the Kingdom of Thailand, in order to cover any medical bills or hospitalization fees. In case of medical emergency, they are advised to call 1669. The nearest hospital to the UNCC is Mission Hospital, which has English speaking medical support staff and can be reached at +66-282-1100.

When feeling unwell while in the UNCC
Anyone who feels unwell while already within the UNCC is advised to call any medical service staff at +66 2288 1352/1353/1761 during business hours, for further guidance. After business hours, they are advised to call the UN Medical Officer at +66 2288 1353 for further guidance. In case of a medical emergency within the UNCC, they are advised to call UN Security at +66 2288 1102/1120 for assistance in calling an ambulance.

BANKING FACILITIES
Banking services are available at the Siam Commercial Bank (SCB), United Nations Branch, located on Level 1 of the Service Building, from 08h30 to 15h30 during weekdays. Siam Commercial Bank ATMs can be found in front of the above-mentioned SCB Branch and next to the Registration desk on the Ground Level of UNCC.

CURRENCY AND RATE OF EXCHANGE
Any person who brings or takes an aggregate amount of foreign currency exceeding USD 20,000 or its equivalent into or out of the Kingdom of Thailand shall declare such amount of foreign currency to a Customs Official. Failure to make such a declaration or making any false declaration to a Customs official is a criminal offence.

The baht is the official currency of Thailand. It is divided into 100 satang.

For reference, participants may use – at their discretion – online currency conversion tool, such as https://freecurrencyrates.com for indicative currency conversion rates.
ELECTRIC PLUG AND SOCKET

The electric power in Thailand is 230V running at 50Hz and the plug types used are either Type A, Type B, or Type C. A hybrid socket is almost universally found, which accepts a combination of the above plug types.

Delegates are strongly encouraged to carry their own adapters for use with laptops and other electrical appliances as the Secretariat will not be able to provide these. In case of need, adapters can be purchased from shops in the city dealing in electronic and electrical items.

INTERNET SERVICES

Free wireless internet access is available in all conference and meeting rooms and in the public areas of the UNCC. Please use UN-WIFI, no password is required. Use of the internet at UNCC is governed by relevant Organizational policies and guidelines. Failure to adhere to policies may result in revoking of those services.

CATERING SERVICES

Operating hours

Catering services are available at the following locations:

- **International Cafeteria** (Level 1, UNCC), which serves breakfast from 07h30 to 10h00, and Thai, Halal and International menus for lunch from 11h00 to 14h00 on Monday through Friday.
- **Coffee Corner** (Level 1, UNCC), which serves assortment of bakery pastries and beverages, is open from 07h00 to 17h00 on Monday through Friday.
- **Rajapruek Lounge** (Ground Level, UNCC), which serves light meals and beverages, is open from 07h00 to 17h00 on Monday through Friday.

In line with the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) and Environmental Management System (EMS) principles, no single use plastic is available in the UNCC. Single-use food and drink containers have been banned within the UN compound in Bangkok. When purchasing coffee/tea at the Coffee Corner, customers are asked to pay a deposit of THB 100 for a cup, which will be returned upon return of the cup.

Dining venues at the UNCC also do not provide food storage boxes, plastic cutlery or straws for take-away orders. Customers wishing to take food away are advised to bring their own reusable food containers.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

For security and safety reasons, participants are reminded NOT to leave their belongings unattended. Belongings left unattended within the UNCC may be removed to the nearest **Lost and Found** counter or the
Security Operations Centre.

All drone unmanned aircrafts are prohibited from flying over the UNCC as per the security requirements. All occupants of the UNCC MUST comply at all times with all lawful directions given by the officers of the United Nations Security and Safety Section. Failure to do so may lead to the participant’s removal from the UNCC.

Contact numbers:

UN Security
Security Control Centre (24/7): +66.2.2881102
UN Security Emergency Number: +66.2.2881100
Mobile +66.81.8078471

Thailand Emergency Numbers:
Police general emergency call: 191
Fire: 199
Ambulance and rescue: 1669/1554
Tourism Police: 1155

Security protocols for UN personnel

In line with security procedures for UN staff, travel notification through the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) is required prior to any official travel. Upon notification of travel on TRIP, UN staff members will automatically receive an updated security advice for UN visitors to Thailand. Please visit https://dss.un.org to apply for this travel notification.

In addition, the UN Department of Safety and Security requires all UN personnel, including interns and consultants, to complete the mandatory BSAFE Security Awareness Training. These security certifications are required to be completed, prior to having commenced official travel.

ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

The UNCC is fully wheelchair-accessible and houses the Accessibility Centre on Level 1. For more information, please visit the Accessibility Centre’s webpages.

UNCC FLOOR PLANS

The UNCC floor plans are available at https://www.unescap.org/uncc/our-rooms. The UN buildings are smoke-free. Smoking is permitted only in the designated areas outside of the buildings and in the UNCC, the designated smoking area is outside of the Public Foyer.
Prayer/meditation rooms

Prayer/meditation rooms are located in front of ESCAP Hall on Level 2, UNCC.

Library facilities

ESCAP Library facilities are available on Level 1, Service Building from 08h00 to 16h00, Monday through Friday. For details on the use of the ESCAP Library facilities, please consult the staff on duty or call extensions 1329 and 1360. Further information about the ESCAP Library can be found on its website at http://www.unescap.org/library.

Lost and Found

Please contact the Security officer or call extension 1102.

Postal services

Postal services are available at the United Nations branch of Thailand Post, located on the Ground Level of UNCC. It is open from 08h00 to 16h00, Monday through Friday.

Souvenir shop

The souvenir shop is located on Level 1 of UNCC. It is open from 09h00 to 16h00, Monday through Friday.

TIME ZONE AND WEATHER INFORMATION

Time zone

Thailand follows ICT (Indochina Time), which is 7 hours ahead of UTC (UTC+07:00).
**Weather**

The weather in Bangkok is usually warm and humid. Light tropical clothing would be appropriate. The conference and meeting rooms at the UNCC are air-conditioned and the temperature is maintained in the range of 23-24 degrees Celsius (73-75 degrees Fahrenheit).

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY**

Bangkok has always been a popular city for tourists. Thanks to its historical sites and religious sites with beautiful architecture and wall painting, Bangkok has seen an increasing number of tourists every year. For more information about the city and the tourist attractions, please visit this [website](#).

**USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES**

Basic Thai words and phrases for greetings include Sa-wad-dee (Hello), Sa-Bai-Dee Mhai? (How are you?), Sa-bai-dee (I am fine), Khob-khun (Thank you). For more useful words and phrases, please visit this [website](#).

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

As notified by the Executive Secretary on 11 January 2023, the United Nations issued the Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN System events, which include meetings, conferences, side events, workshops and other events organized under the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The United Nations has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, and will deal with such complaints promptly.

The Secretariat of the Minamata Convention is committed to enabling events at which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment. Delegates are invited to familiarize themselves with the [Code of Conduct document](#).

Please report any incident to the Security and Safety Section either in person or by extension at 1102.

**GREENING THE COP**

The Minamata Convention Secretariat has taken steps to enhance and promote the environmental sustainability of its activities, including in the preparation and conduct of its regional preparatory meetings. For more information, please visit: [https://mercuryconvention.org/en/meetings/cop5#information-participants](https://mercuryconvention.org/en/meetings/cop5#information-participants).

**DISCLAIMER**

The United Nations 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.

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