

Ref.: MC/COP4/2021/38

Geneva, 5 July 2021

Subject: Invitation to the online segment of the fourth meeting of the Conference of Parties of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (1–5 November 2021)

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to invite you to the online segment of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-4). As was agreed by the COP-4 Bureau and communicated to parties and stakeholders on [30 April 2021](#), the first segment of COP-4 will be held online from 1 to 5 November 2021. The second segment will take place in person in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia. COP-4 will decide on the exact dates of the in-person segment during its online segment. Invitation letters for the in-person segment will be sent in due course. The provisional agenda for COP-4 is attached as annex I to this letter.

A limited number of agenda items will be considered during the online segment, namely the Convention's programme of work and budget for the 2022–2023 biennium and three other time-sensitive items. Annex II to this letter contains the tentative schedule for the online segment as agreed on by the COP-4 Bureau. During the in-person segment, the Conference of the Parties will consider and/or resume consideration of all remaining agenda items on the provisional agenda for COP-4.

The working languages of COP-4 will be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Official documents and information on practical arrangements will be posted on the Convention website mercuryconvention.org as they become available.

Logistical and other information relevant to the meeting, including on pre-registration, official nomination letters, assistance to representatives from developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition, and credentials for parties, is included in annex III to this letter.

For further information on the meeting, please send an email to MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org or consult the [meeting website](#).

We look forward to the participation of your Government in this important meeting as part of your continuing commitment to making mercury history.

Sincerely,



Monika Stankiewicz
Executive Secretary

To: National focal points for the Minamata Convention on Mercury
Governments through their official channels of communication with the United Nations Environment Programme

Cc: Permanent missions to the United Nations Environment Programme and to the United Nations in Geneva
Bureau of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Annex I

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organization of work;
 - (c) Election of officers for the intersessional period and the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
 - (d) Report on the credentials of representatives to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
3. Rules of procedure for the Conference of the Parties: consideration of rule 45.
4. Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties:
 - (a) Mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used:
 - (i) Review of annexes A and B;
 - (ii) Information on dental amalgam;
 - (iii) Customs codes;
 - (iv) Proposals for amendments to annexes A and B;
 - (b) Artisanal and small-scale gold mining;
 - (c) Releases of mercury;
 - (d) Mercury waste: consideration of the relevant thresholds;
 - (e) Financial resources and mechanism:
 - (i) Global Environment Facility;
 - (ii) Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance;
 - (iii) Review of the financial mechanism;
 - (f) Capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer;
 - (g) Implementation and Compliance Committee;
 - (h) National reporting;
 - (i) Effectiveness evaluation;
 - (j) Secretariat;
 - (k) Financial rules;
 - (l) Gender.
5. International cooperation and coordination.
6. Programme of work and budget.
7. Dates of the resumed fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties; venue and dates of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
8. Other matters.
9. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
10. Closure of the meeting.

Annex II

Tentative schedule for the online segment of COP-4 (1–5 November 2021) agreed on by the COP-4 Bureau

The online segment of COP-4 will comprise five days of online sessions, including three days of plenary sessions with interpretation in the six official languages of the United Nations. The plenary sessions on Monday, 1 November and Friday, 5 November will last up to four hours, while the session on Wednesday, 3 November will last up to two hours. Provision will be made for a contact group on the programme of work and budget to meet (working in English, with no interpretation) on Tuesday, 2 November and Thursday, 4 November. At the end of the plenary session of Friday, 5 November, the meeting will be adjourned until the start of the in-person segment. Following is the tentative schedule for the online segment agreed on by the COP-4 Bureau.

COP-4.1	Monday, 1 November	Tuesday, 2 November	Wednesday, 3 November	Thursday, 4 November	Friday, 5 November
4-hour session on 1 and 5 Nov. 2021 2-hour session on 3 Nov. 2021	Item 1: Opening of the meeting	<i>Contact group on POW/budget (English only)</i>		<i>Contact group on POW/budget (English only)</i>	<i>Consideration of the outcome of the contact group on POW/budget</i>
	Item 2: Organizational matters (a) Adoption of the agenda (b) Organization of work (d) Report on the credentials of representatives to the meeting		Item 7: Dates of the resumed fourth meeting; venue and dates of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties		<i>Draft decision on POW and budget</i> <i>Draft decision on dates of the resumed session</i>
	Item 6: Programme of work and budget		Item 4: Matters for consideration and/or action by the Conference of the Parties (h) National reporting (e) Financial resources and mechanisms (i) Global Environment Facility		Item 9: Adoption of the report of the meeting Item 10: Adjournment of the meeting
	Item 4: Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties (i) Effectiveness evaluation				

The tentative schedule above provides for selected agenda items and sub-items to be considered during the online segment. The agenda items for the in-person resumed meeting are set out below. All agenda items on the provisional agenda of COP-4 are to be considered at the resumed meeting.

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

Item 2: Organizational matters

Item 3: Rules of procedure for the Conference of the Parties: consideration of rule 45

Item 4: Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties

Note: All items from (a) to (l)

Item 5: International cooperation and coordination

Item 6: Programme of work and budget

Item 7: Dates of the resumed fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties; venue and dates of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Item 8: Other matters

Item 9: Adoption of the report of the meeting

Item 10: Closure of the meeting

Annex III

Logistical and other information about the meeting

1. Becoming a party in time for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

The Minamata Convention entered into force on 16 August 2017, the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. For each State or regional economic integration organization that ratifies, accepts or approves the Convention or accedes thereto after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument, the Convention will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit by such State or regional economic integration organization of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. Hence, in order to be parties to the Minamata Convention at the time of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, countries and regional economic integration organizations that have not yet done so should deposit their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the United Nations Secretary-General, who is the depositary of the Convention, **no later than Tuesday, 3 August 2021**. The updated list of parties can be found on the [Convention website](#).

2. Registration

The names and contact information of your designated representatives (including postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses, where available) should be communicated to the Secretariat using the pre-registration platform that will be available **from 1 August 2021** at www.mercuryconvention.org. Pre-registration, including submission of the required documentation, should be completed by **Friday, 1 October 2021**. An official nomination letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or a *note verbale* from the Permanent Mission of the party to the United Nations Office at Geneva will be required for pre-registration. Please send pre-registration documents to MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org.

Nominations can be submitted specifically for participation in the online segment of COP-4. Alternatively, they can be submitted for participation in both the online and the in-person segments of the meeting.

Once the Conference of the Parties has agreed on the dates of the in-person segment, an invitation letter specific to the in-person segment will be sent. Parties will then be able to nominate representatives to the in-person segment, or to submit updated nominations for the in-person segment as needed if nominations were previously sent for both segments.

The plenary sessions of the online segment of COP-4 will take place on the Interprefy platform. To ensure that the platform functions well during the plenary sessions, all delegations will be required to identify one spokesperson who may take the floor, while other representatives will be directed to participate in the meeting through the live stream link. The Secretariat will, unless advised otherwise, consider the head of each delegation as its spokesperson.

3. Assistance to representatives of developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition

Financial assistance is available to support the participation in the online segment of one person per delegation from eligible developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition that would otherwise not be able to be represented at the online segment.

Such parties should write to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting at MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org stating that they wish to receive the communication cost allowance and that their participation in the online segment is contingent on provision by the Secretariat of funding for internet access.

The Secretariat will identify the best option for processing the allowance. The disbursement of the communication cost allowance is contingent on verification that the representative attended the entire meeting.

4. Credentials of parties

In order to take part in decision-making at the meeting, parties must be accredited. Credentials for the head of delegation, alternate representatives and advisers are issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In the case of a regional economic integration organization, credentials should be issued 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 Minamata Convention website's [COP-4 webpage](#).

Parties are invited to submit original or electronic versions of credentials by **Monday, 4 October 2021** to facilitate the clearance process. Considering the exceptional circumstances of the online segment, if credentials have not been submitted by 4 October 2021, electronic copies of credentials must be submitted by email no later than 6 p.m. Geneva time (UTC + 2) on Tuesday, 2 November 2021.

The COP-4 Bureau, at its meeting of 16 June 2021, agreed on its approach for preparing the report on credentials for the two segments of COP-4. Bureau members agreed that if copies of credentials in good order were submitted instead of originals, they would accept such copies with the understanding that the originals would be submitted as soon as possible thereafter.

Credentials can be submitted specifically for the online segment of COP-4. Alternatively, they can be submitted to cover both segments of the meeting.

Once the dates of the in-person segment are agreed on by COP-4, an invitation letter specific to the in-person segment will be sent. Parties will then be able to submit credentials for their representatives for the in-person segment, or update the credentials for their representatives for the in-person segment as needed if credentials were previously sent for both segments.

Original credentials should be sent 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

Electronic copies of credentials can be sent to MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org.

5. Further information

For further information about COP-4, please send an email to MEA-MinamataMeetings@un.org or consult our website mercuryconvention.org.