



MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

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23 May 2018

Excellency,

In following up on the excellent work done by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury last September in Geneva, I am pleased to introduce myself and report that, in accordance with the governance arrangements adopted by the Conference of the Parties, I have been appointed by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, on a temporary basis, as Executive Secretary, pending permanent arrangements to be agreed upon regarding the Secretariat. I am very honoured with this charge and trust that my 24 years of professional experience with the United Nations in various capacities, including my last one, as Senior Legal Adviser and Head of the Legal Unit in the Corporate Services Division of the United Nations Environment Programme, will be of use to the Convention.

I would like to update you on the creation of the three trust funds established by the Parties to support the activities of the Convention. As requested by the Conference of the Parties and in collaboration with the UN Controller's Office, the Convention's trust funds have been created. Furthermore, a number of governments have already paid contributions to all three trust funds and others have indicated their intention to do so. We sincerely thank them. Allow me, for those of you who have not yet done so, to kindly request the submission of your annual contribution to the General Trust Fund of the Convention, as it is essential to ensure the delivery of the adopted Programme of Work. The status of contributions is published on the Convention website (www.mercuryconvention.org).

In implementing the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, also the necessary master data has been created, namely the relevant independent Organisational Unit, Fund Centre, Cost Centre, and the Funded Programme that will allow the Secretariat to perform its operations including recruitment of its staff. The relevant positions have been created and are currently at the final stages of the necessary classification exercise that will allow them to be advertised.

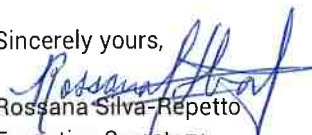
Let me also take this opportunity to enthusiastically share with you that the Governing Board of the Specific International Programme (SIP) held its first meeting last 15 and 16 May and successfully agreed on the Rules of Procedure for its meetings, and on guidance and relevant procedures for the submission, screening, appraisal and approval of project proposals. The first call for proposals will be launched in the coming days and will be open until 31 August 2018. It is expected that the Board will meet later in September to review and approve project proposals.

An important aspect of the effective work of the convention is also the need to designate a national focal point for exchange of information including in relation to trade in mercury. It is also expected that national focal points play a key role in the implementation of the SIP. I would therefore appreciate your prompt designation of your country's focal point.

I very much look forward to working with your Government towards a successful implementation of the Minamata Convention and preparation for the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Thank you for your continuous commitment to "make mercury history"!

Sincerely yours,


Rossana Silva-Repetto
Executive Secretary

To: Ministers of Environment

Cc: National Focal Points for the Minamata Convention on Mercury; Permanent Missions to the UN Environment Programme and to the UN in Geneva

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