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**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Second meeting**

Geneva, 19–23 November 2018

Item 5 (k) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference
of the Parties: secretariat**

Review of the organizational arrangements of the secretariat

Note by the secretariat

1. In its decision MC-1/11, on the secretariat, the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury noted that a secretariat had been established pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 24 of the Convention; recalled paragraph 3 of article 24 designating the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention; and welcomed the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva and provide an annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs.
2. By the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions initially through a secretariat of the Minamata Convention located in Geneva; decided to review the organizational arrangements, including location and the host country contribution, at its second meeting, in accordance with the spirit of the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat; and requested that, in the interim, the secretariat continue to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise. The full text of the decision is reproduced in the annex to the present note.
3. Upon the conclusion of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme set up the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. The steps involved in setting it up included creating the secretariat as a new entity, setting up the premises of the secretariat, creating the posts of the secretariat and having them classified, establishing the trust funds of the Convention, commencing the implementation of the secretariat's programme of work, and establishing cooperation and coordination with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme.
4. In December 2017, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme received a letter from the then President of Switzerland, Ms. Doris Leuthard, confirming the content of the offer from the Government of Switzerland made during the first meeting of the Conference of the

* UNEP/MC/COP.2/1.

Parties to host the secretariat of the Minamata Convention in Geneva. The original letter, confirming the elements of the Swiss offer, is reproduced in document UNEP/MC/COP.2/INF/4.

5. At its meeting held in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 2018, the Bureau agreed that the President of the Conference of the Parties would work with the secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in developing an information document setting out, as requested by the Bureau, (a) the various services provided by the Minamata Convention secretariat, (b) how different services could be purchased from, or shared with, the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, and (c) how such purchases or shared services would affect the budget of the Minamata Convention. That information is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.2/INF/7.

Suggested action by the Conference of the Parties

6. The Conference may wish to consider the matter of the secretariat and review the organizational arrangements, including the location and the host country contribution, as decided in decision MC-1/11.

Annex

MC-1/11: Secretariat

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting that a secretariat has been established pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 24 of the Convention,

Recalling that paragraph 3 of article 24 of the Convention designates the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention,

Welcoming the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva and an annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs,

1. *Decides* that 60 per cent of the host country contribution will be allocated to the General Trust Fund and 40 per cent will be allocated to the Special Trust Fund to support developing country delegate travel;
2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions initially through a secretariat of the Minamata Convention located in Geneva;
3. *Decides* to review at its second meeting the organizational arrangements, including location and the host country contribution, in accordance with the spirit of the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat;¹
4. *Requests* that, in the interim, the secretariat continue to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise.

¹ See UNEP/MC/COP.1/INF/8.