



HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

In September 2017, at the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the world will come together in Geneva, Switzerland, to celebrate the entry into force of the Minamata Convention and the initiation of work to support the implementation of this newest multilateral environmental agreement.

Adopted in 2013 in Kumamoto, Japan, not far from the city of Minamata where, in the 1950s, mercury contamination from a chemical plant left a terrible human toll on the local community, the Convention commits to protect human health and the environment from the toxic effects of mercury and mercury compounds, while ensuring sustainable solutions.

On 18 May 2017, the 50th instrument of ratification of the Minamata Convention was deposited, which allowed the Convention to enter into force on 16 August 2017. The first Conference of the Parties of the Convention, convening from 24 to 29 September, is therefore a historic moment. It represents the culmination of the journey from Minamata and a celebration of the promise of joint multilateral effort, and stands as a call to action, to make mercury pollution history.

On the afternoon of Thursday, 28 September and the morning of Friday, 29 September a High-Level Segment will be hosted by the Government of Switzerland and opened by Her Excellency Doris Leuthard, President of the Swiss Confederation and Minister for the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication, to bring together leaders at the highest level, voicing perspectives from all regions on the actions needed to combat mercury contamination at the global level and highlighting the related socio-economic implications.

1. Objective of the High-Level Segment

The objective of the High-Level Segment is to provide a specific platform at the highest level for the celebration of the entry into force of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

This gathering will allow the articulation of the high ambition the international community has set itself to address the adverse effects of mercury and mercury compounds, and the importance of fulfilling that ambition. By bringing attention to the different challenges faced in different parts of the world, government dignitaries will together be able to underline the global commitment to address the effects of mercury in all its forms as set out in the Convention.

The High-Level Segment will also provide senior representatives of the United Nations as well as other speakers the opportunity to share their perspectives on the Minamata journey, their aspirations for a world without mercury contamination, and to inform on their work to support the Minamata Convention.

Finally, the High-Level Segment will afford an important opportunity for ministers to voice Action Messages for the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

2. Organization of the High-Level Segment

Opening

The High-Level Segment will take place at the Geneva International Conference Centre from 15.00 on Thursday, 28 September 2017 and will close at 13.00 on Friday, 29 September 2017. Opening remarks will be made by the President of Switzerland and by a senior representative of the United Nations.



Ministerial Roundtables

Following the opening session, ministerial roundtables will be held at the Conference Centre from 16.00 to 17.30 on Thursday 28 September. The ministerial roundtables will provide a platform for an interactive and dynamic discussion around the themes of mercury in land, air and water. While input to the ministerial roundtables will be received from the specific thematic sessions held earlier in the week on each of the topics of land, air and water, discussions at each of the roundtables will encompass all three topics.

The ministerial roundtables will be open to ministers and ministerial-level participants only. The language of discussion at each roundtable will be governed by the primary common language of the designated participants at each table. Given there is no interpretation, if necessary, ministers may be accompanied by an interpreter. Discussions at each roundtable will be guided by a moderator and will also have a rapporteur who will record the key elements of the discussions. It is expected that there will be six to eight tables each with up to ten participants.

At each table, participants will be requested to invite a designated speaker from among the ministers to report back on the Action Messages from that table to the Conference during the Friday morning session of the High-Level Segment.

United Nations Uniting for Minamata

A high-level interactive dialogue, steered by heads of UN organizations and the Global Environment Facility will take place from 18.15 to 19.30 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. The high-level panel will be open to all participants at the Conference.

Interventions and questions from ministers and other participants to the panel will be expected on the issue of action on the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

Ministerial Dinner

A Ministerial Dinner will take place at the Palais des Nations at 19.45 hosted by the Vice-Minister for Environment, Switzerland, Mr. Marc Chardonens. The dinner is for ministers only.

Keynote Talk and Messages from Ministers

The Friday morning session of the High-Level Segment will open with a keynote talk by Dr. M. Sanjayan, Chief Executive Officer, Conservation International. This talk will be followed by feedback from designated ministers on Action Messages emanating from their roundtable discussions.

Following those interventions, the floor will be opened for comments, firstly from ministers who may wish to add further information. Thereafter the floor will be open to all participants to make any additional comments. While it is not expected that there will be any time for prepared statements from ministers, those wishing to do so must contact the Minamata Convention secretariat prior to the beginning of the High-Level Segment.

Closing of the High-Level Segment

A closing statement with Key Take-home Messages from the High-Level Segment will be made by Mr. Chardonens, President of COP1.

The High-Level Segment will close at 13.00 on Friday 29 September 2017.



Minamata COP1 HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Minamata Convention: Make Mercury History

Geneva, Switzerland, 28-29 September 2017
(Programme subject to confirmation)

Thursday, 28 September 2017

Conference Center	<p>Opening of the Minamata COP1 High-Level Segment (All delegates) 15:00 to 16:00</p> <p><i>Opening Remarks by Her Excellency Doris Leuthard, President of the Swiss Confederation and Minister for the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication</i> <i>Opening Remarks by the United Nations</i></p>
	<p>Ministerial Roundtables on Land, Air and Water (Ministers only) 16:00 to 17:30</p>
Palais des Nations	<p>United Nations Uniting for Minamata (All delegates) 18:15 to 19:30</p> <p><i>Interactive Dialogue among senior United Nations officials and heads of other institutions committing to Action on the Minamata Convention</i></p> <p><i>Key Note Speaker: His Excellency Mr. David A. Granger, President of Guyana (tbc)</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment</i> <i>Mr. Li Yong, Director General, UN Industrial Development Organization</i> <i>Ms. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility</i> <i>Mr. Nikhil Seth, Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research</i></p>
	<p>Minamata COP1 Celebration Dinner (Ministers only) 19:45</p>



Friday, 29 September 2017

Conference
Center

Keynote speaker

10:00 to 10:30

Dr. M. Sanjayan, Chief Executive Officer of Conservation International

Ministers' Action Messages for the Minamata Convention

10:30 to 12:45

Presentation on the outcome of the Ministerial Roundtables followed by Action Messages by Ministers on the implementation of the Minamata Convention at the national and regional level

Closing of the Minamata COP1 High-Level Segment

12:45 to 13:00

Key Take-home Messages from the High-Level Segment by Mr. Marc Chardonnes, President of COP1.