

Date: 31 August 2015

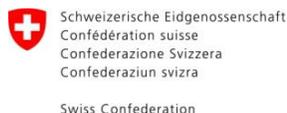
Excellency,

On behalf of the Governments of Japan, Switzerland, the United States of America and Uruguay, we have the honour to invite you to attend a Special High-Level Event, ***“The Minamata Convention on Mercury: Promoting environmental protection through early entry into force and effective implementation”***. This event is scheduled to be held on Thursday 24 September 2015, from 1.15 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. in Conference Room 6 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on the margins of the seventieth session of the UN General Assembly opening on 15 September 2015 and on the eve of the UN summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda starting on 25 September 2015.

This Special High-Level Event will provide important momentum to accelerate entry into force and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the first new global Convention on environment and health in close to a decade. The negotiation process was chaired by Uruguay, concluded in Geneva, Switzerland, and the Convention was opened for signature at a Conference of the Plenipotentiaries in Kumamoto, Japan. The United States became the first country to join on 6 November 2013. The Convention, which aims to protect the human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds, was adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on 10 October 2013 in Kumamoto, Japan. In Kumamoto countries as well welcomed the Swiss offer to host the first Conference of the Parties. The Convention will enter into force ninety days after 50 States deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession. To date, 127 countries and the European Union have signed the Convention and 12 countries have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession, with the United States of America the first country to do so.

With a view to ensuring early entry into force and effective implementation of the Convention through full membership, those Member States in a position to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession to the Convention are hereby invited to do so at this Event. This Special High-Level Event on the Minamata Convention will include a ceremony for the deposit of such instruments as well as an opportunity to exchange views among high-level representatives of Member States present at the occasion of the General Assembly.

To: All Member States of the United Nations
For the attention of Ministers responsible for matters concerning the Minamata Convention on Mercury



In addition to circulating this invitation through diplomatic channels, we have requested the UNEP Secretariat and the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention to inform all Governments about this Special High-Level Event and to make practical arrangements to facilitate wide participation.

We would be grateful if you could confirm your participation, including, where relevant, information on whether your Government will deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession during this Special High-Level Event to treaty@unep.org and mercury.chemicals@unep.org at your earliest convenience.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Masaaki Kobayashi
Vice-Minister for
Global Environmental
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Ministry of the
Environment
Japan

Bruno Oberle
State Secretary
Ministry of
Environment,
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and
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