RIGHTS HOLDERS FACING TOXIC THREATS

21 SEPTEMBER 2022 | 13:30 - 15:00 CEST | CAV & ONLINE

With the support of:

Office of the Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights

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21-22 SEPTEMBER 2022
CENTRE ADMINISTRATIF DE VAREMBÉ & ONLINE
Taking place on the sidelines of the 51st session of the Human Rights Council, the Toxic Free Talks will be celebrating 25 years of the mandate and the struggle for the right to live in a toxic free environment.

21 September | 25 years of Struggle to be Free from Toxic Threat
- 13:30-15:00 | Rights Holders facing Toxic Threats
- 16:00-17:00 | In the Palais des Nations – HRC51 side event on the SR Report on Mercury
- 18:15-19:45 | The Right not to be Exposed, a Contribution to a Toxic Free Planet
- 20:00-21:00 | Reception for the 25 years of the mandate on toxics and human rights

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SEE THE EVENT HERE: tiny.cc/TFTRightsHoldes
SPEAKERS

Marcos ORELLANA
UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

Tatiana SANTOS
Policy Manager for Chemicals & Nanotechnology, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Yuyun ISMAWATI
Senior Advisor and Co-Founder, Nexus for Health, Environment and Development Foundation (Nexus3) | Lead for ASM and Mining, IPEN

Ana Maria SUAREZ FRANCO
Accountability Coordinator & Representative in Geneva, FIAN International

Sascha GABIZON
Executive Director, Women Engage for a Common Future, International

Yves LADOR
Representative of Earthjustice to the United Nations office in Geneva | Moderator
AGENDA

Welcome and Introduction
- Yves LADOR, Geneva Representative, Earthjustice
- Marcos ORELLANA, UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

Rights Holders Facing Toxic Threats
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Closing Remarks
- Marcos ORELLANA, UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights
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Geneva Representative, Earthjustice
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Marcos ORELLANA
UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

Office of the Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights
Geneva Environment Network
EarthJustice

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Senior Advisor and Co-Founder, Nexus for Health, Environment and Development Foundation (Nexus3) | Lead for ASM and Mining, IPEN
Toxic Threats of Mercury to the Population

Rights Holders facing Toxic Threats

Yuyun Ismawati
IPEN lead for ASM/Mining
Senior Advisor of Nexus3 Foundation
yuyun@nexus3foundation.org
International Pollutants Elimination Network

- Reducing and eliminating the world’s most hazardous chemicals
- Promoting stronger international chemicals standards
- Halting the spread of toxic metals
- Building a global toxics-free movement

- 600 IPEN Participating Organizations
- 124Countries
- 8 Regional Hubs
HONORING MINAMATA

Unresolved Minamata issues include: Examination of responsibility for the pollution and the victims; Compensation for all victims; Cleanup of Minamata Bay mercury contamination, including the reclaimed land contaminated with mercury sludge; and Clarification of the full extent of damage caused by Minamata disease.

Please make a strong Mercury Convention which will never again cause such a tragedy and never again give victims such pain.

— SHINOBU SAKAMOTO
Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society
Minamata Disease Victims’ Mutual Aid Society

Pictured: Aileen Smith, Shinobu Sakamoto and Fernando Lugris
(Photo: J. Wicken INC2, Chiba, Japan)
# Mercury in gold-mining environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>Phases of mercury action in the environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 1: Hg pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10—20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Hg-use in gold-mining
- Hg poisoning the miners
- Distribution of Hg-vapour downwind
- Metallic Hg pollution in waters
- Hg accumulation in sediments
- Metallic Hg transformed to CH$_3$Hg
- CH$_3$Hg accumulation in fish
- Downstream Community poisoned by CH$_3$Hg
Malacard of mercury poisoning

Selected Mercury Waste Hot Spots around the World

A treaty that lacks adequate, legally-binding measures to prevent construction of many new coal-fired power plants, to control mercury use in ASGM and as a catalyst in chemical production and to minimize and prevent the generation of mercury-containing waste cannot be considered sufficient to prevent future Minamata-like tragedies.


Source categories of waste contamination by mercury:
- Artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM)
- Mercury waste disposal
- Other industrial production
- Chlor-alkali industry
- Large scale mining (LSM)

Threats for environment compartments:
- Water
- Air
- Soil
- Wildlife and food (fish)
- Humans
Mercury exposure of women in Latin American ASGM countries: Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia (2021)

Figure 19. Mean mercury levels of all participants by location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Hair Mercury (ppm, fw)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil (Vila Nova)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela (El Callao)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia (Iquira)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia (Egyo Quibo and Portachuelo)</td>
<td>13.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mercury level (ppm) by occupation - Vila Nova, Brazil

Vila Nova women mean mercury level by age bracket (ppm)

Mercury Threat To Women And Children In Small Island States And Countries (2018)

Figure 19. Mean mercury levels reported for all participants in each location. Red line equals 1 ppm reference level and dashed red line equals 0.58 ppm proposed reference level.

Mercury-hair in women of child-bearing age in 25 countries (2017)

>1,200,000 gold miners
10,000,000 population at risk
3,500 T Hg/year, 175 T Au/year

30 Provinces out of 34 (88%)
190 Regencies/cities out of 514 (37%)
15 National Parks/Grand Forest/Protect Areas
\( \pm 125,000 \) Hectares degraded land (open access)
Mercury intoxication: more than 70% of adults and almost 50% of children

Source: World Bank, Nexus3, BRI, 2020
What are the economic consequences of mercury pollution?

Table 1. Cost of anthropogenic mercury (Hg) exposure using a logarithmic model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Segment of population (percentile)</th>
<th>Cost of American anthropogenic emissions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90–95.1 Hg</td>
<td>$9.4–10.9 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of maternal total Hg concentration</td>
<td>95.2–99.3 Hg</td>
<td>$10.4–15.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>≥99.4 Hg</td>
<td>$15.0 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed maternal total Hg concentration</td>
<td>4.84 µg/L</td>
<td>$0.7–3.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effect concentration (maternal total Hg)</td>
<td>3.41 µg/L</td>
<td>$0.5–1.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ points lost at assumed concentration</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>$0.1–0.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of 1 IQ point = decrease in lifetime earnings</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>$1,032,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For boys, lifetime earnings (1.93%) decrease</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>$863,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of boys in birth cohort affected</td>
<td>45,863</td>
<td>$81,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of girls in birth cohort affected</td>
<td>43,001</td>
<td>$77,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost income</td>
<td>$1.1 billion</td>
<td>$1.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost = $8.7 billion in each year’s birth cohort</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1.1 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions: EAF = 70%, main consequence = loss of IQ over lifetime.

Figure 1. Portions of cost of methyl mercury exposure attributable to sources. Assumptions: 18–36% attributable to sources; 41% of American emissions attributable to American power plants.

MERCURY POLLUTION COSTING OUR FUTURE

Also identified 1566 additional cases of mental retardation associated with IQ loss from methylmercury toxicity, at a cost of $2.0 billion. (Trasande et al Am. J. Ind. Med. 49:153–158, 2006)

Trasande et al Environ Health Perspect 113:590-596 (2005)
Thank you

Contact: leebell@ipen.org
        yuyun@nexus3foundation.org
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Tatiana SANTOS
Policy Manager for Chemicals & Nanotechnology, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

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HIGH-TECH TECHNOLOGY REDUCES THE ROLE OF PEASANTS AND WORKERS TO MERE EXECUTORS, IF NOT MAKING THEM ENTIRELY REDUNDANT. IT ALSO CREATES FOOD PRODUCERS' DEPENDENCY ON THE OWNERS OF THESE TECHNOLOGIES, OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH DEBT.

AT LEAST I STILL HAVE A JOB...

DON'T WORRY!
Toxic pesticides violate the Right to Food
Rights Holders Facing Toxic Threats

Sascha Gabizon

Executive Director, Women Engage for a Common Future, International
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Conclusion and Wrap-up

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Marcos Orellana

UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights
THANK YOU FOR JOINING!

Marcos ORELLANA
UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

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GENEVA TOXIC FREE TALKS

MERCUry, small-scale GOLD MINING and HUMAN RIGHTS
HRC51 Side Event
Palais des Nations, Room XXV & Online
Wednesday, 21 September, 16:45-17:30 CEST

THE RIGHT NOT TO BE EXPOSED,
A CONTRIBUTION TO A TOXIC FREE PLANET
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WHAT'S NEXT?

genevaenvironmentnetwork.org
GENEVA TOXIC FREE TALKS

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PROGRAM

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