

**Zero Mercury Working Group closing statement at COP1  
by Elena Lymberidi-Settimo, ZMWG International coordinator**

**Friday 29 September 2017**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Zero Mercury Working Group would again like to thank Switzerland for their warm hospitality and commitment to the mercury work, and congratulate the Interim Secretariat for the organisation of this first COP.

We further congratulate all the countries that have ratified the Convention and all the important work that has been done so far. It is now important to ensure that the momentum from the Convention's first Conference of the Parties and the wave of new ratifications is not lost.

We need to bear in mind however, that mercury reduction activities are not happening here at the COP, but in the countries.

To promote the Convention's entry into force, our NGO partners from around the world have been diligently working on various mercury reduction activities. Via projects in developing countries, NGOs have been supporting their respective governments with early ratification and implementation of certain Treaty provisions.

These include:

- collaborative efforts with stakeholders in Bangladesh, India and Nepal resulting in significant reduction in mercury usage in health care,
- Assisting the preparation of a National Action Plan (NAP) and Promoting responsible Artisanal small scale gold mining in the Philippines, Tanzania and Ghana
- Contributing to the development of a "checklist" of steps for phasing out mercury-added products in Nigeria, Mauritius, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, and South Africa, presenting this checklist to representatives of 29 African countries in May this year in Nairobi and over 10 Caribbean countries in Trinidad earlier this month, giving them the opportunity to draft their own national roadmap.

For those who have already ratified, we now encourage you to start implementing national activities towards reducing the use, supply, trade, emission and exposure to mercury nationally and globally.

Where possible, the Zero mercury working group is committed to helping in those activities anyway we can, so please don't hesitate contacting us if we can be of assistance.

In closing, we are looking forward to seeing you at the next COP and having many more countries become Parties to the convention.

Thank you and safe travels to all