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PRESS RELEASE

African Civil Society Releases Plan To Foster Transition of the Continent to Mercury-Free Dentistry

(Yaoundé, 13th October 2015) To celebrate Africa's second annual Mercury-Free Dentistry Day, *the Research and Education Centre for Development* (CREPD) is joining civil society across the continent by releasing a plan on how Africa can leapfrog into pollution-free dentistry.

Dental amalgam is 50% mercury, a dangerous neurotoxin. The pollution-free alternatives to dental amalgam are affordable, effective, and available. Led by the African Region, over 120 nations have signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which calls for an immediate scaling down of amalgam use.

Meeting in Nigeria in 2014, African NGOs adopted the Abuja Declaration for Mercury-Free Dentistry for Africa, now endorsed by 40 Civil Society Organizations. Noting Africa's ability to leapfrog steps that the West used in development, the Abuja Declaration states that Africa shall be first to end amalgam use.

Meeting in Côte d'Ivoire in 2015, francophone NGOs adopted "The Abidjan Plan to Implement the Abuja Declaration," a common-sense set of steps to change dental school curriculum, provide consumers and parents with information about their choices in the dental office, and change government policies to favor mercury-free dentistry. The Abidjan Plan is being released to celebrate Mercury-Free Dentistry Day for Africa, and is attached.

Gilbert KUEPOUO, Ph.D., and Executive Director of CREPD said: "Mercury-free dentistry protects our people and our environment's health; and the Abidjan Plan to implement the Abuja Declaration is an important tool towards phasing out amalgam in Africa".

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See some informative pictures below

