

Gracias Senor Presidente, SafeMinds is an international NGO seeking to end the threats from toxic exposures that impact the neurological health and well-being of our children. We would like to thank Uruguay for their hospitality, thank the secretariat for their continuing efforts, welcome honored delegates and other participants at this INC and applaud the progress made to date on the treaty.

It is a well-established fact that the aggregate of mercury exposures can result in cumulative impacts to exposed individuals. SafeMinds feels the mercury treaty needs to recognize this. And we acknowledge that the inclusion of proposed health language in Article 20 bis would help ensure proper consideration of the ever-increasing knowledge base regarding health threats from all sources of mercury exposure and issues of synergy, accumulation and inter-generational impacts.

Until now, most discussions on article language for products and processes has focused on addressing industrial and commercial uses and releases. As a result, routes of exposure from medical and dental uses currently remain outside required action under the proposed language. Yet, today, interventions from regions, nations and NGOs have indicated a strong desire that the instrument address these sources as well.

SafeMinds recognizes, a mix of political, economic and technical challenges have precluded success in eliminating all medical and dental uses to date, but a global signal to end these uses would go far in creating the dynamic needed so companies and institutions would invest in actions to create cost-effective and technically-viable alternative solutions beyond those currently referenced.

Helping expedite elimination of these two direct mercury exposures -- one as a component of pharmaceutical and personal care products (PPCPs) and the other as a dental restorative material (DRM) would validate **the spirit of the treaty** and help further the INC's leadership on this issue by sending a global signal that the instrument **will** address mercury exposures to **all** individuals from **all** sources.

SafeMinds looks forward to discussions with those in the room on how the mercury treaty can incorporate initiatives already undertaken for other pollutants in other instruments when addressing mercury uses here and thanks you for this opportunity to intervene.

Mercury Free Kids Have Safe Minds

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