

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I speak on behalf of IPEN, an international network of more than 700 public interest nongovernmental organizations.

Contaminated sites contribute to global mercury pollution because they re-mobilize and re-emit mercury. This means that contaminated sites threaten both local and global communities. A recent report by IPEN and the Biodiversity Research Institute sampled fish in Vlora bay, Albania, next to a contaminated site from a former chlor-alkali plant.

Half of the fish contained mercury above consumption guideline levels, but this bay supplies fish to the entire country.

More than 50 years ago, the Chisso Company dumped mercury into the Bay and caused the Minamata tragedy.

These examples provoke this question: Does the currently proposed treaty text on both contaminated sites and wastes in article 14 prevent future Minamatas? Unfortunately we have to answer „No“. In fact, countries do not have to identify or clean up contaminated sites.

Developing countries cannot apply for funding to address contaminated sites if they want to protect their populations. A treaty with no actions on contaminated sites cannot carry the name of Minamata.

We ask delegates at INC5 to do at least one small improvement and allow developing countries to get a tool for financial assistance for identification and assessment of contaminated sites. This would allow a deletion of the words „endeavor to“ in first paragraph of article 14, so that “each party shall develop appropriate strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury or mercury compounds”.

Thank you for considering our views.