Thank you Mr. Chair.

In many ways, emissions is the heart of the treaty. Countries need to agree to meaningful reduction and elimination of mercury pollution in this section. The outcome of this section will likely be the principal way the public will evaluate whether the treaty actually addresses mercury pollution.

A few key points to raise:

1. The article should obligate overall reduction of emissions.
Currently, it appears that delegates are leaning toward control of emissions on a “per facility” basis. This approach will simply legitimize increased mercury pollution as the number of facilities increases.

National reductions in emissions should be part of authentic actions to reduce and eliminate mercury pollution

2. Emission sources to water and land need to be effectively addressed.
The new UNEP report estimates emissions to water are enormous. This week IPEN and BRI released a report showing levels of mercury in fish and hair from sources that release into water that violate health advisory levels. Releases to land need to include large-scale mining. In the US state of California more than 47,000 contaminated sites still exist from a gold rush that happened 150 years ago. In addition to their large emissions, large scale mining operations are also a supply source of mercury. The mercury which is co-mined with metals ends up being sold on the global market. This mercury often ends up destined for use in ASGM, thereby contributing to enormous mercury emissions.

In our view, the simplest way to insure releases to land and water are addressed is to have one annex that combines Annexes F and G.

3. Finally, the treaty should incentivize alternative, sustainable
forms of energy that do not release mercury. So far, the emphasis on control measures in the treaty has been on end of the pipe solutions.
However, we believe that the treaty should promote a wider menu of options that include techniques for alternative energy production that do not rely on fossil fuels and their associated mercury emissions. We note that mercury emissions from fossil fuel combustion occur over the entire lifetime of operation. However, for alternative energy sources, there is a cost up-front but over the life of operation there are no associated concerns for mercury emissions or controls.

Currently the articles on emissions will not actually reduce global mercury pollution. This needs to change this week. Mercury pollution represents a large and serious global threat to human health and the environment and a robust and ambitious global response to this threat is needed.

4. Finally, we support the proposition by Mali on behalf of African region to include open burning of waste as emission source in Annex F of Article 9.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.