

Fifth Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention

FDI - IADR Statement

Item 4 (b): Mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used: Amendment to annexes A and B, and consideration of feasibility of mercury-free alternatives for manufacturing processes listed in annex B

The FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) represents over one million dentists worldwide and the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (IADR), represents over 10,000 researchers around the world.

FDI and IADR are committed to improving the oral health of populations globally and ensuring this is done in an equitable and evidence-based way. We, therefore, fully support the current Minamata Convention on Mercury, as last modified at COP 4.2, without the need for further amendments to Annex A at COP-5.

The current phase down approach to dental amalgam is working as measured by the decline in amalgam placement by dental offices and by the steep decline in manufacturer sales of dental amalgam.

The Minamata Convention presents a unique opportunity for the prevention of caries, reducing the overall demand for restorative materials (including for dental amalgam). We urge governments to invest in public health measures that provide oral health promotion, including public regulations to reduce sugar intake.

Furthermore, best environmental practices for the waste management of dental amalgam must be reinforced, including use of the ISO 11143 standard amalgam separator in dental offices and facilities.

Also, for alternative materials to be considered as viable replacements to dental amalgam, data on their similar clinical longevity under different clinical conditions, safety and cost-effectiveness is needed. The public and private sector must continue to invest in research to improve these alternative materials.

Caries rates largely differ between countries as well as dental prevention programs and the success of such programs. A phase-out approach will lead to a negative impact on the provision of quality treatment for dental caries and an increase in tooth extractions, threatening to widen oral health inequalities.

As outlined in the Global Oral Health Action Plan, we urge all Parties to maintain the current phase-down model which respects differences in country capacities and guarantees access to oral health and the overall well-being of populations.

Thank you.