



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

MINISTRY FOR COORDINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DIRECTORATE OF COOPERATION

To: Fatoumata Keita-Ouane
Minamata Convention Interim Secretariat, Chemicals Branch,
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Our Ref. **343** MICOA/DC/189/14

Maputo, December 12th, 2014

SUBJECT: Letter of Expression of Interest to Access the Funds of the Global Environment Fund (GEF) for development an National Action Plan (NAP) in Support for the Ratification and Implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Dear Sir

Mozambique is a developing country consisting of eleven provinces, among which six are located in the central and north region namely Manica, Sofala, Tete, Zambezia, Nampula, and Niassa. In the particular case of Mozambique, the use of mercury is a common practice in the activities of small-scale artisanal mining for gold purification, where every day more people are engaged in this activity, among them children and adults mainly women, resulting in severe impacts to water resources, endangering aquatic ecosystems therein including public health.

In the activities of artisanal mining for gold extraction, the methods used are digging wells and trenches and for its purification people use the washing process. Environmental problems found as a result of artisanal mining consists of: water contamination, silting of rivers, soil erosion, land degradation, destruction of vegetation including occupational health risks related to Mercury use.

Given the need of an exploration of natural resources in a sustainable manner, the Government of Mozambique decided to undertake policy reforms in the mining sector, which led to the improvement of the legal framework clearly defining the government as regulator and supervisor.

The private sector responds as operator and implementation agent, taking into account the intensity and long tradition of artisanal mining in Mozambique.

Since 1999, the government of Mozambique has made efforts in conducting studies and research on artisanal mining, in order to obtain baseline data on the use of mercury in gold processing, and assess the organization and the relations of production, marketing, identifying constraints and problems affecting the development of the artisanal mining sector, evaluating the impacts of artisanal mining on public health and the environment in general.

We are aware of the challenges that lie ahead, taking into account the financial, technical and scientific constraints to immediate solutions nationwide. However, the signing and ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury will boost the necessary actions for implementation of this Statutory Instrument in our country, strengthening our legal framework.

In that context, we would like to manifest our intention to benefit/access the Global Environment Fund (GEF) for development an National Action Plan (NAP) considering in first place the start on the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector, because we believe that the sector is the "more than insignificant" on the use of Mercury at the moment, are required to take steps to reduce and where feasible, eliminate the use of mercury. This process will help Mozambique in the support of the ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, whose address and contact are bellow for correspondence.

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