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**United Nations
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**Intergovernmental negotiating committee
to prepare a global legally binding instrument
on mercury
Sixth session**

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Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda*

**Work to prepare for the entry into force of the Minamata
Convention on Mercury and for the first meeting of the
Conference of the Parties: activities to facilitate rapid
entry into force of the Convention and its effective
implementation upon entry into force**

**Development of guidance on the environmentally sound interim
storage of mercury**

Note by the Secretariat

1. In paragraph 3 of article 10, the Minamata Convention on Mercury requires the Conference of the Parties to adopt guidelines on the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury and mercury compounds intended for a use allowed to a party under the Convention, taking into account any relevant guidelines developed under the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and Their Disposal and other relevant guidance.
2. In 2011, at its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention adopted the technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of elemental mercury and wastes containing or contaminated with mercury (UNEP/CHW.10/6/Add.2/Rev.1).¹
3. By decision BC-11/5, on technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of elemental mercury and wastes containing or contaminated with mercury, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention decided to include the updating of the technical guidelines in the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group. The Conference also invited parties to consider serving as lead country for the updating of the technical guidelines and invited parties and others to nominate experts to participate in the small intersessional working group. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of that decision, Japan, as lead country, working in close consultation with the small intersessional working group, prepared the draft updated technical guidelines, which were made available on the website of the Basel Convention on 23 December 2013. The draft technical guidelines will be submitted to the Open-ended Working Group for consideration at its ninth meeting in September 2014 and then to the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in May 2015.
4. It is noted that, while the guidelines contain a section on storage, the section in question focuses on the storage of mercury wastes, rather than on the interim storage of elemental mercury intended for future use. A number of subsections, however, in particular those on technical and operational

* UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/1.

¹ Available at www.basel.int/TheConvention/Publications/TechnicalGuidelines/tabid/2362/Default.aspx.

considerations for storage facilities, on special considerations for storage of wastes consisting of mercury or mercury compounds and on special considerations for storage of wastes contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds, contain information and guidance which may be relevant in the development of guidelines on interim storage (UNEP/CHW.10/6/Add.2/Rev.1, paras. 140–147).

5. Although the supply and storage partnership area within the Global Mercury Partnership of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has focused on the reduction of mercury supply, its work has included some assessment of options and technologies for the storage or final disposal of excess mercury supply from other sources. The partnership area has collected information on storage options used at the national level by a number of Governments, and this information may be useful in further developing the guidelines.

6. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 1, on arrangements in the interim period, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries requested the Committee to support, as practicable and consistent with the priorities in the Convention, those activities required or encouraged by the Convention that will facilitate the rapid entry into force of the Convention and its effective implementation upon entry into force, including in particular guidelines on the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury.

7. The Committee may therefore wish to provide further input to the secretariat to assist in the preparation, for consideration by the Committee at its seventh session, of draft guidelines on the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury. Such guidelines would draw on the information available within the Basel Convention and the work of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership, and also on information to be provided by Governments. In accordance with the request of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, the interim secretariat would seek to cooperate closely with the secretariat of the Basel Convention in developing the draft guidelines. The Committee may wish to request Governments to make relevant information available to the secretariat in a timely manner to facilitate the preparation of such draft guidelines.
