



## SPEECH

### Remarks by David Kapindula, President of Minamata COP-3, at the opening ceremony of the Third Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

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*Geneva, 25 November 2019*

Thank you very much Mr. Pozzi

I appreciate the statements of our three opening speakers - Mr. Marc Chardonens, State Secretary, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Ms Inger Andersen, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, and Ms Rossana Silva-Repetto, our Executive Secretary.

Their comments place this convention in the broader environment and sustainable development scene.

As I look around the room, I recognise faces that were with me as far back as INC1.

When we were negotiating this treaty, we had high hopes and ambitions.

Those are reflected in the objective and the actions embedded in the convention.

And it is clear that at least 114 countries share that ambition – as is indicated by the list of Parties.

But now we are in the implementation phase – and that seems to be proving harder.

There are clearly some implementation issues that are challenging for us as individual Parties.

But there also seem to be challenges in reaching consensus on some key issues that are critical to the long-term success of the treaty.

For example, elements of our Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules.

The temptation seems to have been to dig in to our entrenched positions, and kick the issue down the road to the next meeting

Up until now, that “next meeting” has been a mere year away, and so the delay has not been great.

But now we face two-year delays in resolving issues – with consequent uncertainties that affect our ability to implement.

We have before us a challenging agenda. There are issues carried over from previous meetings, items relating to reviews of the financial mechanism and two of the annexes, setting in place arrangements for the evaluation of effectiveness, and the first proposal for an amendment of an Annex.

I hope that you share my concern that we must avoid building a legacy of unresolved issues that will adversely affect our ability to achieve the objective set out in Article 1 of the convention.

And I look forward to your support and cooperation in making this, our third meeting, truly a success.

I now declare this third meeting of the Conference of the Parties open.

**David Kapindula** (Zambia)  
President Minamata COP-3