

FDI World Dental Federation and International Association for Dental Research Statement

Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention

Item 4: Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties: (a) Mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used: (i) Review of annexes A and B; (ii) Information on dental amalgam; (iv) Proposals for amendments to annexes A and B

This statement is made on behalf of FDI World Dental Federation and the International Association for Dental Research. There is major concern about the African proposal to amend Annex A, Part II. This proposal asks for the replacement of the current phase-down approach with a phase-out strategy by 2029, with no complementary measures on caries prevention, research into mercury-free alternatives, and waste management – areas that still require much attention from both environmental and health sectors.

We ask **Parties to recognize that:**

- 1. The phase-down approach is working.** Major producers of dental amalgam have ceased manufacturing, and the dental profession is shifting towards the use of alternatives where available, affordable, and suitable for the restoration.
- 2. Emphasis on prevention remains crucial.** The Convention presents a unique opportunity for the prevention of caries – the most prevalent disease worldwide.
- 3. More research on alternative materials is needed.** Current mercury-free alternatives are still less than optimal based on clinical, economic, and practical reasons.
- 4. Alternative materials must be accessible and affordable.** Reimbursement schemes need to exist, or people will not seek timely treatment.
- 5. Waste management remains the most important action point even in a phase-out scenario.** This is still relevant for the recycling of amalgam that is removed and infrastructures must be reinforced to ensure recycling.

We urge Parties to keep channeling investment into prevention, alternatives, and waste management. Otherwise, we will witness an increase in oral health inequalities.

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who are committed to minimizing the environmental impact of mercury through the **Minamata Convention's phase-down approach to dental amalgam**