



Intervention on Dental Amalgam of
Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO
at Minamata COP5, October 30, 2023, Geneva

Thank Madam President,

ESDO strongly believe that the both measures support phasing out the use of dental amalgam by 2030 is the urgent need to protect environmental health. The Parties have been moving in that direction for some time now by adopting additional measures to decrease the use of dental amalgam, discourage its use in pregnant women and children (through the 'children's amendment' which takes effect in September 2023), and ultimately eliminate it.

Over 17 countries have phased out amalgam useⁱ, announced plans for phasing out amalgam use, or use de minimis amounts of amalgam¹. In addition, measures requiring mercury-free dentistry for children have been adopted in the entire European Union and another 12 countries². Furthermore, the market is also moving towards mercury free fillings. Dentsply Sirona – the world’s largest manufacturer of dental products – exited the amalgam market in December 2020.ⁱⁱ

Mercury exposure occurs through dental amalgam for a minimum of 5-10 years, making it crucial to phase it out to safeguard human health and the environment. Bangladesh has already made remarkable progress in the elimination of mercury from the dental sector. However, the phase-out of mercury is still not managed completely. Bangladesh receives a large amount of mercury through transboundary movements. Unfortunately, the country does not have the capacity to determine and remove mercury products based on their concentration. To ensure the safety of both the environment and public health, it is necessary to implement a ban on mercury dental amalgam. As mercury is commonly used in dental amalgam, it may be an admissible option to phase out its use by 2030.

Though the use of Mercury in dental amalgam should be made impermissible immediately, Bangladesh requires sufficient time to administer the alternatives, build up and improvise the infrastructure to make them sustainable, and strict legislation to illegalize Mercury-added amalgam. So, phasing the Mercury amalgam out by 2030 is feasible for Bangladesh and all the developing countries considering all these aspects.

Given the recent global developments towards phasing out dental amalgam, ESDO believes that such amendments should be supported as they are feasible without undermining dental care needs since mercury-free alternatives are available, effective, and affordable worldwide.

I thank you.

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ⁱ <https://environmentalmedicine.eu/mercury-free-dentistry-for-planet-earth/>

ⁱⁱ Link to Dentsply's annual report: <https://investor.dentsplysirona.com/static-files/89f1f08d-3eac-439b-9e93-7e0bfe2893b1>

¹ The European Union, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Moldova, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname, among others

² Japan, Lithuania, Mauritius, Moldova, Nepal, Philippines, Russia, Suriname, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, the United States, Vietnam, and Zambia.