ZMWG INC 3 Intervention – Supply and Trade

Mr. Chairman, as you instructed I will be brief in the interest of time and simply make two points not made in plenary yesterday. First, a technical observation in the event Annex A is retained. We note byproduct mercury from gas production is listed as a supply source, but not byproduct mercury from oil production.

Second, on a more conceptual level, we wish to remind the INC why strong provisions limiting the global mercury supply must be put in place. Demand for mercury responds to the available supply. Availability and price pressures propel mercury users, large and small, to make changes to the way they do business. This is not just economic theory; it is the current reality. The global price of mercury has risen dramatically in the last two years, in response to the supply pressures created by the export bans enacted in the European Union and the United States. We have already witnessed the impact this has had on ASGM communities in the Philippines and elsewhere, where there is heightened interest in ways to reduce or eliminate mercury use. And this price pressure has been cited to us by companies reliant on mercury-based manufacturing processes in both the developed and developing world as a major reason why they are actively pursuing new ways of doing business.

The INC can build on this dynamic process, where supply reductions induce demand responses. Consider the potential impact on demand where mercury production and trade is quantified and tracked, primary mercury mining is terminated, the mercury from closing or converting chlor-alkali plants is stored instead of sold, and trade is limited to certain uses. This is the market context we should strive to create through the treaty supply and trade provisions.