

# Celebrating Event for the Minamata Convention on Mercury

– Voice from Minamata towards the Entry into Force –

Date: July 1 (Sat.), 2017

Venue: Minamata City, Kumamoto Prefecture

Organizers: United Nations Environment Programme, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, Kumamoto Prefecture, Minamata City

On Saturday July 1, 2017, a celebrating event for the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Minamata City, Kumamoto, Japan. The event was attended by those who contributed to the entry into force of the Convention, who will lead the implementation of the Convention, as well as people of Minamata. They expressed their expectations for the Minamata Convention and disseminated the "Voice from Minamata" to wish the world without mercury pollution.

## Voice from leaders

The event was opened by Mr. Yoshihiro Seki, State Minister of the Environment, Japan, who was followed by the messages from Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, and other leaders from national and local governments and international agencies. They welcomed the entry into force of the Minamata Convention and thanked the relevant parties who committed for the Convention, while expressing their determination to fully engage themselves to realize the world without mercury pollution.



## Commemorative speech

A commemorative speech was delivered by H.E. Mr. Fernando Lugris, who has led the negotiations process from the beginning to the adoption and to the entry into force of the Minamata Convention as the Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury. He emphasized that we are moving to the right direction to confront the threat of mercury to human health and the environment and praised the Convention for enabling us to tackle the threat.

## Minamata Talk

People from Minamata City, including the Mayor, the storyteller of Minamata disease, and younger generation, relayed their messages on the sense of accomplishment to culminate the lessons of the Minamata disease to the Minamata Convention as the global commitment to protect people's lives and health. They also expressed their wish that the tragedy of Minamata should never happen again, and emphasized the importance of increasing awareness among world children on the environmental conservation.



## Messages from the young generation

Eight junior high school students in Minamata City gave the messages to the world: "Bring the world without tears by mercury," "Prevent child labor from mercury-related works," "Call the people in the world to visit Minamata to learn about mercury," and "Protect people in the world with Minamata Convention."

## Voices from Minamata



**Mr. Yoshihiro Seki**  
State Minister of the Environment, Japan



**Mr. Erik Solheim**  
Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme



**Mr. Toru Tajima**  
Vice Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture



**Mr. Marc Chardonens**  
Director of the Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland



**Dr. Naoko Ishii**  
CEO, Global Environment Facility



Junior high school students in Minamata City



**H.E. Mr. Fernando Lugris**  
Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury



**Mr. Hiroshi Nishida**  
the Mayor of Minamata City



**Mr. Katsuaki Miyamoto**  
Previous Mayor of Minamata City



**Mr. Masami Ogata**  
President of Storytellers' Group at  
the Minamata Disease Municipal Museum



**Ms. Hitomi Sonohata**  
Volunteer of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers



**Ms. Yukina Arita**  
Student of Minamata High School



**Ms. Claudia ten Have**  
Senior Programme Coordination Officer,  
Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury



**Dr. Yasushi Mochizuki**  
Director General, National Institute for Minamata Disease



Participants of the event

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Organizers : United Nations Environment Programme, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, Kumamoto Prefecture, Minamata City

No. of Participants : 184 persons

URL : [http://www.env.go.jp/chemi/minamata\\_eif/en/index.html](http://www.env.go.jp/chemi/minamata_eif/en/index.html)



Ministry of the Environment