

PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

Eastern European States regional preparatory meeting for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury



18 – 19 September 2023

Ani Grand Hotel

Yerevan, Armenia

Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

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NOTE: This document provides links to external and third-party websites, for the convenience of meeting participants, and for use at their discretion. The Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury cannot vouch for the accuracy or correctness of the information contained therein.

GENERAL

The **Eastern European States regional preparatory meeting** for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-5) is scheduled to be held at Yerevan, Armenia, on **18 and 19 September 2023**.

MEETING VENUE

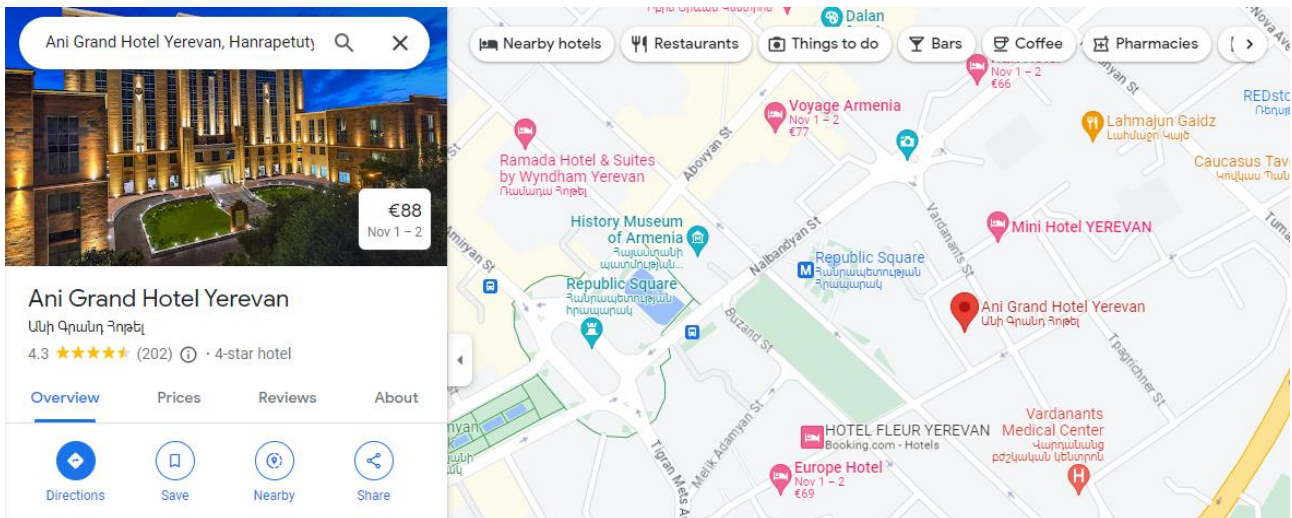
The regional consultations will be held at:

Ani Grand Hotel

Address: Hanrapetutyán 65,
Yerevan, 0010, Republic of Armenia

Website: <https://anigrandhotelyerevan.com/>

Please [click here](#) for location on Google Maps.



SCHEDULE

The regional consultations will be held from 09h30 to 17h00 (UTC +4) on Monday, 18 September and Tuesday, 19 September 2023.

Lunch breaks are planned to be held between 12h30 and 13h30.

REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Registration of the participants will take place on Monday, 18 September 2023, **from 9:30 to 10:00 at the lobby** of Ani Grand Hotel. **Identification badges** will be issued to participants at registration.



LANGUAGE

The regional preparatory meeting will be conducted in English.

MEETING DOCUMENTS

The **provisional agenda** for the meeting has been developed in cooperation with the COP-5 Bureau members for the region and posted on the [COP-5 webpage](#). The agenda includes presentations of the documents for COP-5 (to be held from 30 October to 3 November 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland) followed by discussions among Governments and possible development of positions for the various issues to be addressed at COP-5.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the participant to obtain the visa (if required) to enter Armenia. Participants are requested to check the [list of countries](#) whose nationals are **unilaterally exempted** from the requirement of obtaining a visa and the [list of countries](#), with which Armenia has a **visa-free regime** according to bilateral and multilateral agreements. Holders of all other national passports and travel documents, including **UN Laissez-Passer**, are required to obtain an entry visa.

In all other cases the visa regime for the citizens of Armenia with foreign states is regulated by the internal law of those countries and might be changed in accordance with them. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia recommends checking on the latest information on [visa requirements](#) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or from the diplomatic missions of the destination country before the trip.

Citizens of foreign countries for whom a visa-free regime is set can stay on the territory of the Republic of Armenia for **no more than 180 days** during one year if no other term is defined by the international agreements of the Republic of Armenia.

For the list of documents required for issuing a visa and more information, please visit the site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.mfa.am/en/visa/>.

Should you need a visa support, please contact Ms. Mery Aghababyan from the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Armenia (e-mail: m.ghababyan@env.am).

ARRANGEMENT FOR SPONSORED DELEGATES

Thanks to the donor contributions, financial assistance may be available to support the participation of **one delegate per eligible developing country Party and Party with economy in transition**. The assistance will include daily subsistence allowance (DSA) at United Nations rate and round-trip ticket. The sponsored participant must be clearly specified in the official nomination letter. We encourage that the required information is provided to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience, and no later than 4 August 2023.

Once confirmed for participation, the sponsored participants will receive additional instructions on their travel arrangements. Air travel will be arranged according to the United Nations regulations, via the most economical and direct means possible in all cases. Please note that changes to air tickets after they have been issued will not be permitted.

In order to facilitate the payment of subsistence allowance at the venue, sponsored participants will be requested to submit **copies of their passport and boarding passes** to the Secretariat staff at the meeting venue. For any query related to **travel and DSA**, sponsored participants are invited to contact the Secretariat at: mea-minamatameetings@un.org.



Please note that sponsored participants who are unable to stay for the entire duration of the meeting are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible after their arrival, so that their subsistence allowance can be adjusted accordingly.

ACCOMMODATION

Participants are responsible for their own hotel bookings. Although the event period is held off season, participants are still advised to contact the hotels at their earliest convenience. Participants can choose to stay either at Ani Grand Hotel (where the meeting will take place) or other hotels from the list:

Hotel	Price	Address
Double Tree by Hilton Hotel	Single room - 69 300 AMD Double room - 73 260 AMD	Grigor Lusavorich Street, 4 2, 0010, Yerevan, Armenia
Armenia Marriott Hotel	Single room - 159 000 AMD Double room - 171 000 AMD	Amiryan Street 1, 0010 Yerevan, Armenia
Ani Grand Hotel*	Single room - 52 000 AMD Double room - 57 000 AMD	65 Hanrapetutyan Street, 0010 Yerevan, Armenia
Best Western Plus Congress Hotel	Single room - 51 000 AMD Double room - 62 000 AMD	Italy Street 1, 1110 Yerevan, Armenia
Ibis Hotel	Single room - 52 000 AMD Double room - 57 000 AMD	Northern Avenue, 5/1 Building, Yerevan, Armenia
Tufenkian Hospitality Yerevan Hotel	Single room - 49 000 AMD Double room - 59,000 AMD	Hanrapetutyan Street, 48 Building, Yerevan, Armenia

* At Ani Grand Hotel, block booking has been done at a special rate for a limited number of rooms. Participants can make reservation through reservation@anigrandhotelyerevan.com indicating their participation in Mercury Regional Meeting or via website <http://www.anigrandhotelyerevan.com> indicating the Promo Code **Mercury2023**.

NOTE: the Secretariat cannot vouch for accuracy of the information or rates contained in the document. The list is meant purely for reference and for ease of participants. Please confirm the room rates with the hotel directly.

Participants are responsible for booking their own rooms and are requested to contact the hotel well in advance. Any cancellations, postponements or other changes should be reported to the hotel. Rooms not occupied may be charged to the participants as per the hotel's policies.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

From/to airport

Zvartnots International Airport, EVN <https://www.zvartnots.aero/>, is about 10 km from Yerevan. Free Wi-Fi is available in the departure terminal. Facilities, such as ATMs, currency exchange, car rental, information centre and cafes, are available at the airport.

Taxis are available to the city centre. "Airport Service" is the only official taxi service provider in Zvartnots International Airport (with a dedicated desk). The taxi service can be reached at +374 98 828 200, +374 10 595 900, +374 60 430 000. A ride to Yerevan city centre typically costs around AMD 5,000 (about 12 USD).

Elitebus Company arranges express bus service from the airport to Yerevan city and vice versa. The price for



the ride Yerevan – Zvartnots Airport or from the airport to Yerevan is 300 AMD (approximately \$0.7) per person per ride. Currently, it runs every 30 minutes between 07h00 and 22h00. The payment should be made in cash.

Alternatively, participants can request a **pick-up service from their hotels**, usually more expensive. In order to avoid unpleasant situations, it is recommended to negotiate the trip cost with the taxi driver upfront.

Getting around the city

The following means of public transportation are available in Armenia:

Metro: Yerevan subway system has one-line stretching from the north to the Railroad Station in the southern edge of the city. There are 10 stations. The fare is 100 AMD (approximately \$0.25).

Buses: There are buses running in major directions. The fare is 100 AMD.

Taxi Services: There are many taxi services, which accept orders by mobile application (iOS and Android mobile applications are available) such as:

- GG Taxi, www.ggtaxi.com/signin Apps: iOS and Android;
Tel.: (+374 94) 302 300 also via (+374 95) or (+374 96)
- Yandex Taxi, https://taxi.yandex.com/en_am/#index Apps: iOS and Android;
- U Taxi, <https://www.u.taxi/en> Apps: iOS and Android;
Tel.: (+374 12) 532 222, mob.: (+374 44) 532 222, also via (+374 77) or (+374 91)

Regular taxi: There are taxi stands at major city intersections. Fares are according to counter. Participants are advised to make sure that taxi has a counter before getting in.

HEALTH AND VACCINATION

COVID-19 Travel Requirements

Foreign nationals are **NO LONGER REQUIRED** to present a COVID-19 PCR test or a Certificate of complete vaccination against COVID-19 to enter the Republic of Armenia. Please visit <https://www.gov.am/en/covid-travel-restrictions/> for the most updated information.

Insurance

All participants are advised to arrange (at their own expense or their respective organization's) insurance against sickness, accident, permanent or temporary disability, death and third-party risk for the period of the meeting, including the journey to and from Armenia.

Drinking Water

The tap water is drinkable in Armenia. However, mineral and/or still water bottles will be usually provided by the hotel.

BANKING FACILITIES

The banks in Yerevan are open from 10h00 to 16h00 on weekdays and from 10h00 to 13h00 on Saturdays (no lunch breaks). The ATMs can be found on all the major streets.

Exchange offices are open until midnight and operate on weekends and on public holidays. There are 24/7 currency exchange booths with good rates in all big supermarkets.

ATMs are widely available in larger towns. Visa Electron is the most commonly accepted card at ATMs in Armenia.

Credit cards are widely accepted in hotels, big commercial centres, restaurants, and cafes.



CURRENCY AND RATE OF EXCHANGE

The official currency in Armenia is **Armenian Dram (AMD)** known as “dram”. US Dollars and Euros can be exchanged almost anywhere in the country, with other major currencies also easy to exchange. Exchange booths do not charge a commission and rates are almost always competitive.

As of 7 July 2023, exchange rates for the major currencies are as follows:

USD	1	386.19
GBP	1	492.82
EUR	1	420.64

For more updated information, please visit: <https://www.cba.am/en/sitepages/exchangearchive.aspx>.

ELECTRIC PLUG AND SOCKET

The electricity in Armenia is 220 volts, 50 Hz. Electric outlets in Armenia use European plugs with 2 round pins. The outlet plug adaptors can be purchased at any electronic shop or supermarket in Yerevan.



Delegates are strongly encouraged to carry their own adaptors for use with laptops and other electrical appliances as the Secretariat will not be able to provide these.

INTERNET SERVICES

Free Wi-Fi is available at the meeting venue.

CATERING SERVICES

Coffee breaks are served in the coffee break area located next to the conference hall, whereas lunch (self-service buffet) is served at the restaurant located on the ground floor.

ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Accessibility support at the meeting venue for persons with disability includes a ramp at the doorstep of the hotel and a wide doorframe.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

A number of safety and security features are available at the meeting venue. These include 24-hour security, CCTV in common areas as well as outside property, security alarm, smoke alarm and fire extinguishers among others.

CONTACTS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

101 - Fire department

103 - Ambulance

102 - Police department

911 - General emergency

TIME ZONE AND WEATHER INFORMATION

Time zone

Armenia follows AST (Armenia Standard Time), which is 4 hours ahead of UTC (UTC+04:00).

Weather

The geographical location of Armenia and its unique topography creates as much weather contrasts as the country itself. The climate is unusually varied according to altitude and runs to extremes, but, as a whole, is defined as continental. September, the first month of the autumn in Yerevan, is still a warm month, with an average temperature ranging between max 28.7°C (83.7°F) and min 13.4°C (56.1°F).

In September, the average relative humidity is 51%. September is the month with the least rainfall. Rain falls for 4 days and accumulates 8 mm (0.31") of precipitation.

The average length of the day in September in Yerevan, Armenia, is 12 h and 28 min.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY

Yerevan has a nice mixture of the distant past and the rhythmic present. There are old churches, historical and cultural monuments, museums and galleries, as well as modern sights and recreation places. The sunny Yerevan with a magnificent view of Biblical **Mount Ararat** is a great attraction for the tourists. **Republic Square** is the central city square of Yerevan, and it is one of the main architectural complexes of the capital.

Armenian carpets, cognac, fruits, and handicrafts are some of the most popular things people take home from Armenia. Most of these are plentiful at "**Vernissage**", a seemingly never-ending market next to Republic Square with the more touristy stuff. Participants are advised to **bargain prices in open market**. Souvenir and craft shops are available in shopping plazas and hotels. Most shops/restaurants are open every day.

For more information about the city, please visit <https://visityerevan.am/en/>.

USEFUL WORDS

Armenians are much like any other Europeans in their manners and lifestyle. English is becoming more widely spoken in Armenia. However, knowing a few words in local language will be helpful for building up rapport with the natives.

The Armenian language is the national language of the Armenians and the official language of the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh (or Nagorno Karabakh). It belongs to the Indo-European language tree and occupies an independent branch.



Some useful words and phrases in Armenian include barev dzez (hello, formal), barev (hello, informal), khndroom em (please), neroghootyun (excuse me, formal), knerek (excuse me, informal), inchpes eq (how are you, formal), vonts es (how are you, informal), lav em, shnorhakalootyun (fine, thank you, formal), lav, mersi (fine, thank you, informal) and so on. For more useful words and phrases, please visit this [website](#).

CODE OF CONDUCT

As [notified by the Executive Secretary](#) on 11 January 2023, the United Nations issued the Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN System events, which include meetings, conferences, side events, workshops and other events organized under the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The United Nations has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, and will deal with such complaints promptly.

The Secretariat of the Minamata Convention is committed to enabling events at which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment. Delegates are invited to familiarize themselves with the [Code of Conduct document](#).

GREENING THE COP

The Minamata Convention Secretariat has taken steps to enhance and promote the environmental sustainability of its activities, including in the preparation and conduct of its regional preparatory meetings. For more information, please visit: <https://mercuryconvention.org/en/meetings/cop5#information-participants>.

DISCLAIMER

The United Nations Environment Programme disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended that participants secure prior to departure insurance for the period of participation.
