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Dear Dra. Aspasia Camargo,

It is with great pleasure that you have embraced the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology's proposal delivered by our representatives Anita Vazquez Tibau, and Dr. Blanche Grube. As NGO, (ONG) stakeholders in the recently concluded Minamata Convention on Mercury, we felt it critical to develop the Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) in order to facilitate the mandate of the treaty regarding the phase down of mercury in dentistry.

Our organization was founded on the premise of "First do no Harm and Show me the Science." For more than 25 years, we have continued to research, and utilize safe alternative materials that do not contain mercury. This led us to also include safe dental mercury removal and how to handle the toxic mercury waste created in the dental office.

Because of Brazil's very important biodiversity and its importance as an emerging economy, we felt it was imperative to launch the TAP in Rio de Janeiro. Your country has more dental schools, only second to India, and about 10,000 graduating dental students per year. The majority of the dentists entering the field are women, therefore, safety in the office is critical, as research has shown that women dentists/dental assistants have fertility problems due to mercury exposure in the work place.

We also know that Guanabara Bay is a very big concern, due to the tremendous amount of mercury that is being released into the water daily, making the fish and aquatic life unsafe to eat. Moreover, once mercury enters the environment, through the wastewater it cannot be captured or contained.

Brazil can be the first country in Latin America to create a "Mercury Free Dental Zone." The impact that this will have not only in Brazil, but around the globe will be immediate, therefore giving the hope that this can be replicated in all counties worldwide.

We remain at your service and look forward to launching the TAP in Rio de Janeiro.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'William Virtue DDS'.

William Virtue
President
IAOMT