

CHAMPION'S GATE, Fla., Oct. 4, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- History will be made next week when nations of the world sign a [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\) treaty](#) to reduce mercury emissions, and as a result, the [International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology](#) (IAOMT) is calling for the U.S. to finally join other countries by taking action against dental mercury.

The IAOMT is a network of dentists, doctors, and scientists who have been working to end dental mercury since 1984, and representatives participated in [negotiating UNEP's "Minamata Convention on Mercury"](#), which includes a phase-down of dental mercury.

IAOMT President Griffin Cole, DDS, explains why the UN treaty signals time for change in U.S. dental policy: "While I am thrilled that over 140 nations agreed upon the text of this monumental treaty to rid our world of industrial mercury, I am dismayed that the American Dental Association continues to promote the use of mercury in dentistry. It is unconscionable that our self-proclaimed leaders in American dentistry choose to stray from the global direction of protecting the world from health risks and environmental contamination caused by mercury fillings."

Dr. Cole is referring to current U.S. policy on mercury/silver dental amalgam fillings, which is largely dictated by the American Dental Association (ADA), even though the ADA is a trade association and not a government authority.

The ADA was founded as a dentists' membership group in 1859 with the premise that amalgam fillings were acceptable for dental use, and their position has not significantly changed, despite the fact other countries have banned dental mercury or limited its use for pregnant women and children.

UN Mercury Treaty Signals Time To Change U.S. Dental Policy, Says International Academy

Written by Australian Business

Mercury is a neurotoxin with the potential to seriously harm humans and the environment, and the IAOMT cited [hundreds of peer-reviewed scientific studies](#) about the hazards of dental mercury as part of the negotiations process for UNEP's treaty.

However, the IAOMT is concerned the ADA's position could hamper global efforts to reduce dental mercury usage, especially because last year, the [ADA petitioned](#) a U.S. official not to ban or limit dental amalgam in the UNEP treaty.

Additionally, the IAOMT recognizes that [ADA policy forbids dentists](#) to suggest removing mercury fillings to reduce toxic exposure in non-allergic patients.

Furthermore, the ADA has been known to rebuke the media for representing anti-mercury views. This most recently occurred in March when *Dr. Oz* ran a televised segment on mercury fillings, and the ADA [immediately issued a press release](#) accusing the show of "sensationalism."

Controversy has also stemmed from a [1995 ADA legal brief](#) about amalgam which stated: "The ADA owes no legal duty of care to protect the public from allegedly dangerous products used by dentists."

As the rest of the world agrees on the "Minamata Convention on Mercury," the IAOMT insists that this event serve as a wake-up call to change an outdated and toxic U.S. dental policy.

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SOURCE International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology