

**Dear Mr. John Buccini**  
**Director, UNEP Chemicals**

Referring to your letter dated on 20 of May 2005 regarding the implementation of the UNEP Governing Council decision 23/9 IV on the mercury program, I have the honour to inform you that the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority (EQA) considers the issue of dealing and management of chemical materials including mercury and its compounds as an important issue on its agenda.

We are glad to participate in this project since the Environment Quality Authority is the governmental institution responsible for monitoring and giving environmental approvals to the factories, industries and any other economic activity which use hazardous chemical substances including heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium and other hazardous materials.

Many elements in trace amounts are essential for normal life but the greatest risk normally arises from its emission to the environment with the human use of these heavy metals and their derivatives.

We in Palestine, like other countries suffer from output of some industries such as food processing, textiles, tanneries, shoe manufacture, metal construction, aluminum manufactures, electronic component manufacture, electroplating, surface-coating industries, paint and batteries which produce many heavy metals to the environment that negatively affect the human health and well-being.

Actually, we don't have any statistics on the waste production from these industries and those smuggled into Palestine from Israel and Israeli colonies in the occupied Palestinian territories.

So, it will be of great benefit to us to join this partnership on mercury and other heavy metals.

**PRIORITY AREAS OF PARTNERSHIP FOR PALESTINE**

- ❖ Make inventory and Data Base about the sources of Mercury, Lead, Cadmium and other heavy metals in Palestine.
- ❖ Participate in the workshops, Seminars and training courses, which held under the umbrella of UNEP.
- ❖ Promote the development of environmentally sound disposal and remediation practices of mercury.

- ❖ Increase the public awareness about the risk of these heavy metals and introduction of alternative technologies and substitute products and chemicals.

I look forward for more cooperation and continuity with the developing of this important partnership.

We are at the Environment Quality Authority in Palestine looking forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,  
Minister, Dr. Yousef Abu – Safieh  
Chairman of Environment Quality  
Authority

***Contact person: Mr. khalil Ibrahim Hassanein  
Deputy Director of environmental impact assessment  
Environmental Quality Authority  
Palestinian Authority  
Ell Nasser Street, Gaza , Palestine  
Email [ARTLBC@YAHOO.COM](mailto:ARTLBC@YAHOO.COM)  
Tel:00972-8-2822000  
Fax:00972-8-2847198***