Written Statement by Ethiopia Agenda Item 4 on the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

April 23, 2023 Ottawa, Canada

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the Government of Canada for the warm hospitality in welcoming delegates to the fourth meeting of INC. We would also like to thank the INC Chair, INC Secretariat, and UNEP for the organization of this meeting.

Ethiopia aligns with the statement made by Ghana on behalf of the Africa Group and reaffirms its commitment to developing an ambitious legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, to protect the environment and human health. This reflects the commitment of our government to the environment, to public health, to the protection and promotion of human rights, and, from a broader perspective to sustainable development in its social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

Mr. Chair

My delegation firmly believes that the implementation of the instrument will be successful if done through the lens of sustainable development. The broad issues we are grappling with in these negotiations should be interconnected with all Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

To have an effective instrument, we will need to consider how we can implement it. That is why Ethiopia again underlines the crucial need for robust mechanisms for means of implementation that goes beyond the traditional financial architecture. We need a new, dedicated financial mechanism for financing, given the fact that without a robust means of implementation, the outcome of our negotiations will only remain a dream. The financial mechanism will need to consider a cooperation mechanism through which capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and technology transfer are provided to developing countries, which can be facilitated by a clearing-house platform.

Mr. Chair

Regarding the way forward at this INC session, we welcome the efforts by the Secretariat in producing the revised draft text, which will be instrumental in kick-starting textual
negotiation at INC4. For this meeting, my delegation urges the Committee to start streamlining and prioritise discussions towards control measures where significant alignment already exists. These control measures include, global bans and phase outs of chemicals and polymers of concern, and problematic and avoidable plastic products, as well as product design and performance requirements needs to be further elaborated. Ethiopia is ready to advance on the necessary technical details, including the criteria and a lists of a few problematic plastics products, chemicals and polymers of concerns with an internal procedure for increasing ambition and expansion of the list over time. These technical details should be included in the mandate for consideration in the intersessional work.

We also call for member states at this meeting to streamline and offer a clear direction and practical solutions directly linked to enabling parties- compliance with the treaty’s control measures. Once again, Ethiopia wishes to see provisions that would guide eligibility for accessing finance that is differentiated according to the needs and capacities of respective countries rather than blanket quota systems that have in the past left vulnerable countries worse off compared to others.

In terms of expediency of work, we support the establishment of a legal drafting group and the commencement of work by this group during this session. We understand that delegates are eager to deep dive into developing a robust treaty that is clear and has detailed rules to cover all aspects of the plastics that also encompasses definitions of terminologies from the outset. It is imperative to start with non-contentious steps rather than tackle difficult steps such as defining terms. We therefore believe that to bring more efficiency to our work, definitions should be dealt with towards the end of the process rather than at the beginning.

As Africa has remained a dumping haven for global waste, we wish to have robust rules that would deter illegal dumping and control the transboundary movement of plastic waste across countries and regions.

**Finally Mr. Chair,**

We wish to reassure you that you have our support to make this crucial session a resounding success!

Thank you!