



## Quaker United Nations Office

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### Plenary Statement to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution *Second part of the fifth session (INC-5.2) – Geneva, August 2025*

#### About us:

*This submission is from the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva (QUNO), under the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). We are an ECOSOC accredited civil society organization which has supported peace and justice efforts at the United Nations since the 1950s. Earlier, in 1947, FWCC co-received the Nobel Peace Prize.*

12 August 2025

Distinguished Chair, esteemed delegates, colleagues, and members of the INC Secretariat,

My name is Andrés Naranjo, and I speak today on behalf of the Friends World Committee for Consultation, representing Quakers worldwide.

We meet at a decisive moment. The ambition of this treaty — and the trust the world has placed in it — will be measured by whether it addresses the full life cycle of plastics, as mandated by UNEA Resolution 5/14, and delivers real reductions in pollution, from extraction through disposal.

One of the most powerful — and too often overlooked — economic drivers of unsustainable production is the system of subsidies governments provide to the primary plastic polymer industry. These subsidies help make virgin fossil-based polymers relatively cheaper than recycled or sustainable alternatives. While they are not the sole reason for the low price of plastics, they do stimulate new capacity and entrench a linear, extractive model of production that runs counter to this treaty's purpose.

Our latest research, *Plastic Money: Turning Off the Subsidies Tap – Phase 3*, prepared with Eunomia Research & Consulting, presents the most comprehensive estimates to date:

- In 2024, total global subsidies to primary plastic polymer production are estimated at **USD 80 billion** — on par with support to sectors already recognised for their environmental impacts.
- If current trends persist, these subsidies could reach **USD 150 billion by 2050**.
- Removing them would significantly reduce production in high-subsidy economies, while the average price increase for most plastic-containing consumer goods would remain **below 1 percent**.

These findings show that subsidy reform is not a marginal issue: it is central to achieving the treaty's objective. Ending harmful subsidies would send a clear market signal, free up resources for sustainable alternatives, and align public finance with a healthy and open economic system.

Subsidy reform must also be paired with time-bound commitments to reduce primary plastic polymer production and tackle unsustainable production and consumption patterns at their source. This includes comprehensive measures across the full life cycle, enforceable timelines to phase out the most harmful products and chemicals, and transparent, equitable provisions to govern trade in plastics — closing loopholes, avoiding market distortions, and ensuring fair implementation.

We therefore urge negotiators to:

1. **Include explicit, time-bound obligations** to identify, report, and progressively eliminate subsidies that undermine the treaty’s purpose, using definitions coherent with WTO rules.
2. **Embed financial transparency and regular review** within the treaty’s monitoring and reporting architecture, ensuring it cannot be weakened over time.
3. **Link subsidy reform to the means of implementation**, so that financial flows — both domestic and international — drive sustainable production, protect human health, and uphold the rights and livelihoods of affected communities, including Indigenous Peoples and waste pickers.

At its core, this treaty must be rooted in justice. Indigenous Peoples, frontline communities, and future generations are disproportionately bearing the consequences of inaction. The treaty should explicitly recognise the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, ensuring that human rights and environmental stewardship advance together.

Chair, delegates — the world is calling for a treaty that moves past delay and delivers on its promise. We cannot build a framework that curbs one harmful flow while billions in public funds continue to fuel the problem. Let us align finance, trade, and production with the vision of a just, equitable, and sustainable future — for all peoples, and for the generations to come.

We invite you to explore the full findings of our Phase 3 briefing note, available for download via the following link or QR code:

<https://quno.org/resource/2025/8/plastic-money-turning-subsidies-tap-phase-3-%E2%80%93-briefing-note-inc-52>



*(Plastic Money: Turning Off the Subsidies Tap – Phase 3 Briefing for INC-5.2, QUNO & Eunomia, August 2025)*

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andres Naranjo', located below the 'Thank you.' text.

Andres Naranjo,  
Associate Representative,  
Sustainable and Just Economic Systems  
QUNO