Distinguished Chair, Co-Facilitators, Members and Colleagues,

We would like to commend you for your efforts this week to advance the negotiations of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

My name is Andrés Naranjo, and I am representing the Friends World Committee for Consultation, or FWCC. Rooted in Quaker values of stewardship, peace, justice, sustainability, and community, we urge the development of an international legally binding instrument that confronts the root causes of plastic pollution. Central to this is reducing plastic production, beginning with the elimination of the subsidies that are fueling the production of primary plastic polymers and chemicals of concern. In our discussions, let us prioritize those most adversely affected by our decisions — the indigenous and frontline communities, future generations, and global consumers unknowingly exposed to plastic-related risks and hazards. Subsidizing plastic production not only worsens the plastic pollution crisis but also diverts essential funds that could otherwise be allocated to remediation efforts and to support affected communities.

We regret, also, that no agreement was reached on intersessional work prior to INC-4, which is fundamental to informing and supporting policy-makers in future discussions. If this trend continues, we are concerned that this can lead to the adoption of a weakened instrument or even one that lacks the much-needed package of comprehensive and robust upstream measures.

Yet, we remain hopeful. We trust this committee to yield an ambitious intersessional work agenda for INC-5, leading to a treaty that not only tackles plastic pollution but upholds the highest standards of environmental integrity, biodiversity, and human rights norms. Given the time allotted for the INC process, robust intersessional work that encompasses the full lifecycle of plastics, particularly on the production phase, is essential to curtail unsustainable production and consumption patterns of plastic, and to protect our planet and societies from current and future harm.

Let us embrace this opportunity with determination and compassion, striving for a treaty that reflects our shared aspirations for a sustainable, equitable, and thriving world. The decisions we make today will resonate through history.

Thank you for your dedication to this vital cause.

Sincerely,

Andrés Naranjo, Programme Associate
Sustainable and Just Economic Systems, QUNO