

Global Youth Coalition on Plastic Pollution (GYCPP)

Thank you for the floor, Mr. Chair

My name is Suzanna Schofield from the United States speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Coalition on Plastic Pollution. We welcome the INC Secretariat's continued commitment to youth and stakeholder engagement within this process. Channeling the perspectives of thousands of children and youth globally, these are the priorities we would like to see addressed during the negotiations:

- First, we must recognize that plastic pollution affects population groups differently, and we urge for a focus on safeguarding the health and rights, and supporting the participation of those who are **most harmed but least heard**, including children and youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, informal waste pickers, workers and other rights-holders.
- Second, explicit recognition is needed of the unfair burden of transboundary plastic waste on SIDS, LDCs, and developing countries situated downstream of international watercourses - a form of neo-waste colonialism. Additionally, capacity building and technology transfer should not be reflected as solely a one-way flow from "Global North to Global South countries" but be a dynamic process that recognizes the value of innovation in Global South countries and **promotes knowledge co-development, global cooperation and just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all**.
- Third, further explicit focus is required on the **upstream part of the plastics life cycle**, especially on primary plastic production. Exempting any one phase of the life cycle or only focusing on downstream waste will allow plastic pollution and toxic exposures to rampantly persist, in direct contradiction with the scope stated in UNEA Resolution 5/14.
- Fourth and finally, we would like to see the delivery of binding control measures on **all forms of plastic pollution**, including hazardous chemicals used and present in plastics, providing transparent, traceable frameworks of accountability. It is central to establish time-bound and progressive binding targets to reduce primary plastic production by curtailing upstream activities like fossil fuel extraction and overconsumption of feedstocks.

We, the children and youth, in all our diversity, remain committed to intergenerational cooperation and reaching an equitable and just legally binding instrument born from the collaborative priorities of member states, children and youth and other stakeholders to ensure a future where our health and human rights are not threatened by plastic pollution.