



**International
Labour
Organization**

The second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on plastic pollution (INC-5.2)

Statement by the International Labour Office

Your Excellency, Chair of the INC, distinguished delegates, observers, ladies, and gentlemen,

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a tripartite organization bringing together the views of 187 member states, employer organizations, and workers organizations.

In 2023, ILO constituents declared that the future of economies, societies, jobs and livelihoods is at stake as they depend on the planet's ecosystems and natural environments. The prospective gains from addressing the environmental crisis are not automatic unless they are based on a just transition.

As we enter the final round of the treaty negotiations, it is crucial to promote a just transition for all workers in all sectors, enterprises, including small and micro enterprises, as well as communities and Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, across the full life cycle of plastics, while ensuring their access to decent work opportunities and full recognition of their rights at work.

With a commitment to advancing decent work for all, the International Labour Organization urges Member States and observers to:

1. Maintain Article 10 on Just Transition to ensure reference is made to creating decent work opportunities for all workers along the full lifecycle of plastics including those in the informal economy; fostering safe and healthy working environments; providing an enabling environment for enterprises of all sizes, in particular small and micro enterprises; and reducing inequality and poverty.
2. Maintain Article 19 on Health and ensure that explicit considerations are made for workers' safety and health throughout the lifecycle of plastics, including issues related to chemicals of concern. Occupational considerations should be included within any health-related aspects in a Health Article and throughout the treaty, including in the preamble.

3. Ensure that models for a just transition are anchored in sound and sustainable national policies, including sectoral, industrial and active labour market policies.
4. Observe the [Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#), as outlined in the ILO Decent Work framework, along with adequate social protection coverage for all concerned workers along the full lifecycle of plastics is essential.

The ILO emphasizes that International Labour Standards and relevant guidelines offer legally binding and internationally agreed standards as reference points for ensuring the right to a safe and healthy working environment.

Action on just transition should be guided by the ILO [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#), which provides the foundation and framework for action in this area. Aligned with the guidelines, effective social dialogue should be integral to national and enterprise level policymaking that impact the world of work.

The [Policy guidelines for the promotion of decent work in recycling](#), adopted by a meeting of experts in May 2025, provides guidance on policy measures and actions that governments, employers, workers and other actors can implement to promote decent work opportunities and to address challenges in recycling operations in all sectors where recycling takes place. This document, which will be submitted to the ILO Governing Body for its consideration in November 2025, provides a critical framework to advance decent work in the recycling of plastics.

The ILO stands ready to support all Member States and observers in this collective endeavour to end plastic pollution while advancing social justice and decent work for all.

Thank you for your attention.