Statement by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) at CG 1 of INC-4

Distinguished delegates,

IMO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for developing and adopting measures to improve the safety and security of international shipping and to prevent marine and atmospheric pollution from ships, . IMO is also the secretariat for the treaties that regulate the prevention of pollution from dumping of wastes and other matter at sea, the London Convention and London Protocol.

[IMO conventions, upon entry into force, cover all ships, regardless of the flag they fly, as ships of non-convention States entering the waters or ports of convention States are subject to the “no more favourable treatment principle”, which is embedded in IMO treaties.

With respect to shipping - Since the entry into force in 1988 of Annex V to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), disposal into the sea of all forms of plastics generated during normal ship operations has been prohibited. This prohibition extends to fishing gear disposal and line scraps generated by the repair or operation of fishing gear.

In addition, under the 1972 London Convention, and the 1996 London Protocol the dumping of wastes at sea is strictly regulated, including plastic waste.

Notwithstanding these requirements IMO recognized that further action was needed and has adopted a Strategy and Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships. Through our technical cooperation programme, our two training institutes WMU and IMLI, and our partners within the UN system and beyond, we are working to further strengthen the implementation of IMO regulations globally.

The development of this international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, provides an opportunity to complement existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks by taking into account ongoing efforts in other global and sectoral bodies, while at the same time bridging regulatory gaps and addressing plastic pollution holistically.

IMO remains ready to provide input, advice and technical information to assist the Member States in the deliberations at this intergovernmental negotiating committee.

Thank you