Intervention - Inuit Circumpolar Council  
April 26, 2024  
Plenary

Thank you.

Inuit Circumpolar Council calls on parties to ensure the preamble text recognizes the Arctic as a vulnerable and sensitive region, as it is stated in both the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions, as well as the rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is vital as our Arctic environment continues to change at an unprecedented rate.

Further, in the principles and the operative text, ICC urges parties to include a direct reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In line with this, any references to Indigenous Peoples or the Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples cannot be conflated with the term local communities or local knowledge. Our rights and our Indigenous Knowledge are distinct and must be recognized as such.

When the text acknowledges human health and the environment, it needs to include the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. This does not create new obligations, but adds continuity, clarity, and alignment with the existing human rights framework.

Finally, ICC would like to highlight the role of observers and specifically, Indigenous Peoples in these negotiations. Indigenous Peoples are rights holders, not stakeholders and the lack of space for our direct engagement in these spaces violates UNDRIP article 41 and ultimately, will lead to a treaty that creates more issues, rather than solving them.

I look forward to the opportunity to engage directly in the following days and into INC5.

Thank you.