Thank you Chair.

At the outset, India would like to thank the Government of Canada for their warm hospitality in welcoming the delegates for the fourth session of INC, and also congratulate the INC Chair and Secretariat as well as UNEP for organizing this meeting.

As we initiate the fourth session to negotiate this very important agreement, India would like to reiterate its commitment to the principle of consensus in decision-making process on substantive issues under multilateral environmental agreements. This approach underscores our commitment to collective decision-making and adheres to the shared responsibilities of nations.

India believes that consensus-based approach in multilateral decision making is crucial for ensuring fairness, equity, and inclusiveness. It enhances ownership of the outcomes, leading to durable and effective solutions, ultimately contributing to achieving the objective of ending plastic pollution.

In that context, we wish to emphasize that decisions on substantive matters shall be taken by consensus. Recalling the interpretive statement
relating to Rule 38.1, adopted by the INC Chair at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Session of INC in Paris, our delegation seeks assurances from the INC Chair that Rule 38.1 will not be invoked during the INC meetings until the Rules of Procedure are formally adopted. Echoing the sentiments of many of Member States, India is confident that a commitment to a consensus-based approach will enable us to move forward constructively in discussions on substantive issues.

I thank you.

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