National Statement for the opening plenary of INC-4

INDIA

Thank you, Chair.

The Indian delegation is grateful to the Government of Canada for graciously hosting the fourth session of INC and extends warm appreciation for their hospitality. We congratulate the INC Chair and Secretariat as well as UNEP for their diligent organization of this meeting.

As we begin the negotiation of INC-4 with a constructive spirit, we thank the INC Secretariat for preparing the Zero Draft based on submissions presented by the parties. Going forward, we look forward to continue with deliberation in transparent and inclusive manner, where everyone’s voice is heard.

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 2nd Session of INC in Paris, our delegation seeks assurances from the INC Chair that Rule 38.1 will not be invoked during the INC 4 meeting until the Rules of Procedure are formally adopted. Echoing the sentiments of the Like Minded Group, India is confident that a commitment to a consensus-
based approach will enable us to move forward constructively in discussions on substantive issues.

Taking into consideration smaller delegations, India also requests that no more than two parallel contact groups or negotiation sessions be held so as to permit inclusiveness and universal participation.

We recognize the essential role of plastic in various economic sectors, and firmly believe that the INC should focus on creating an instrument to end plastic pollution without imposing binding targets or caps on the production of plastic polymers. The coverage of substances, materials or products should directly address the issue of plastic pollution.

Excellency, while we ambitiously take up the mandate of Resolution 5/14, our enthusiasm should not transgress to the trade-related issues which are within the purview of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

India also believes that like in all other environmental negotiations, we adhere to the Rio Principle 12 that states that environmental trade policy measures should not lead to discrimination or act as a trade barrier, and that environmental measures should ideally be based on international consensus.

India is also of the view that the negotiated instrument reflects the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and respective capabilities of the member states.

The legally binding instrument should aim to end the plastic pollution, by addressing the availability, accessibility, affordability of alternatives including cost implications and by specifying arrangements for capacity-building and technical assistance, technology transfer, and financial assistance. Further, the cost and environmental benefits of alternative polymers also need to be considered.

As a committed member of this process, we look forward to successful outcome at this fourth session of INC to end the global environmental challenge of plastic pollution in a country driven manner.

Thank you.