Thailand’s written statement
at the fourth session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution,
including in the marine environment (INC-4)
23 April 2024, Shaw Centre, Ottawa, Canada

Good day Mr. Chair and all distinguished colleagues,

At the outset, Thailand would like to express our sincere appreciation to the government and people of Canada for their warm hospitality in welcoming us all to Ottawa. Our profound gratitude is also extended to you, Mr. Chair, and your team for your leadership and dedications, the Executive Secretary, her team and all bureau members for your tireless efforts and intensive works in preparing this crucial fourth session of INC.

Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the State of Palestine on behalf of Asia-Pacific Group.

Since Thailand actively participated in the negotiation of the UNEA resolution 5/14 from the beginning, Thailand therefore fully supports the mandate of the resolution to end plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument, which will address the plastic pollutions throughout the entire life-cycle of plastics, aligning with concepts of the waste management hierarchy and circular economy. Thailand also welcomes the revised draft text that can capture most of issues of the resolution.

Thailand also welcomes the circulating scenario note for INC-4, in particular the proposal on the establishment of the contact groups, the legal drafting group and the intersessional work. Thailand supports the establishment of both two contact groups including their proposed subgroups. However, we would like to share the same concern with other delegations that with small numbers of delegates, no more than two meetings of any groups should be convened at the same time. We also support the establishment of the legal drafting group as proposed but that we need to ensure that we will have transparent election of representatives from regional groups and also sub-regions in order to avoid conflict of interest.

Thailand reiterates itself that the committee should attain the ambitious agreement on, among others, core obligations, including the prevention and reduction of impacts on health and environment from the polymers production—either primary plastic polymers or any other replacements, the elimination, as necessary, of chemicals used in the plastic value chain by the risk base approach and with a proper certain phase-out or phase-down period, the elimination or minimization of over consumption of plastics and plastic products—in particular problematic and avoidable ones, the prevention and minimization of any plastic pollution leakages, emissions or released throughout the plastics life cycle including fishing and aquaculture gear, the leverage of the environmentally sound waste management level in accordance with the waste hierarchy, circular economy and mandatory determined EPR scheme to be implemented at national level.
Nevertheless, based on obvious divergent views among the committee on some particular provisions reflected in the revised draft text, Thailand is therefore in view of that, to fill this above-mentioned gap and address plastic pollutions including fishing and aquaculture gear at the upstream level, the committee may at least need a strategic key provision related to product design and innovation (including non-plastic substitute or replacement) to be prescribed in the manner that will urge each Party to mandatorily adopt the universal criterion or standards with specific requirements to be implemented at the local and national levels.

In term of the intersessional work before the INC-5, Thailand agrees that it is necessary to serve as an effective platform to advance the negotiation and preparation for the INC-5. Thailand would like to propose for intersessional work in the form of dedicated groups to develop and propose a common and verified understanding on core obligations, mean of implementation and implementation measures. Its most preferable modality would be the face-to-face meeting format upon the resource availability. If it is not possible, the workshop or webinar series will be an alternative platform as well, taking into account the flexible settings across time zone differences.

In addition, at least these two particular concerns should be included in the intersessional work:

1. A common sustainability criterion related to plastic products, based on outstanding scientific evidences or references, approach of sectoral, group of plastic products, chemicals using in the production or etc. related to “chemicals and polymers of concern in plastics”, “problematic and avoidable plastic polymers and products and related applications” and product design and performance; and

2. Financing mechanism and resources which should also be identified among others, such as terms for financing, activities eligible for financing, type of financing, delivery of fund, as well as possible appropriate type of innovative financing that could be included in the instrument.

Last but not least, Thailand will always make effort and join hands with all multi-stakeholders to cope with the plastic pollution problem, to show that Thailand values environmentally sound management of plastic pollution at all levels, be it national, regional and global. In this regard, I would like to emphasize that the inclusive and transparent of negotiation process is very important and Thailand hope the negotiation will success in time.

Thank you and Kob Khun Ka.