

UNEP NGO MG

Opening Statement for INC-5.2

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On behalf of: UN Environment NGO Major Group

Thank you, Chair, and good afternoon Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, dear Colleagues, Ladies, Gentlemen, and all Gentlepersons.

The excitement, euphoria, and hope that filled the room when Resolution 5/14 was gavelled at UNEA5.2 more than three years ago remains a vivid memory for all of us who were present in Nairobi. Still, these negotiations have failed to resemble what we witnessed there, and as we resume our fifth negotiation session, we must recognize that we have fallen far short of the ambition needed to effectively end plastic pollution.

Much of the enthusiasm we felt in Nairobi has been repeatedly undermined by reluctant parties who conveniently ignore the scope of this treaty that was clearly established in the mandate of Resolution 5/14. Addressing the full life cycle of plastics is fundamental to ending plastic pollution, and while circular discussions continue, the tide of plastic pollution rises each passing day, preventing the fulfilment of every single one of the Sustainable Development Goals, and threatening the health of our planet and peoples.

We *would* like to highlight the ambition and commitment shown by more than 100 countries who have consistently reiterated that only an agreement with foundational elements to end plastic pollution across the full life cycle of plastics is an acceptable outcome for these negotiations. We thank every delegate in the room who has honored the people whom they represent.

As I – as well as many of my colleagues – have stated and demonstrated numerous times, conflicts of interest exist in these proceedings, and we call upon this body to address this recurrent concern. While it is our *duty* to all work in good faith, some parties continue to obstruct our progress, and it is imperative that we proceed with the already provisionally agreed – as well as time-honored – voting procedures in the absence of consensus.

We **MUST** do what is right for everyone, and if this body requires voting procedures to gain ground, then so be it, and let us complete the work that was agreed to three years ago.

By uniting our expertise and unwavering commitment, we can stand on the right side of history, and we can forge a future free from plastic pollution.