

## Youth Plastic Action Network (YPAN)

Opening Intervention - Plenary Hall, August 5, 2025/ 10:00 - 11:30

Thank you, Chair.

We speak on behalf of the Youth Plastic Action Network, a global platform for youth engagement in the plastics treaty process. From day one, our message has been simple and urgent: **we need a treaty that protects human health, our shared ecosystems, and the rights of future generations.** At this decisive moment, there is no middle ground: we either conclude with a strong, science-driven treaty that addresses the full life cycle of plastics or we report back to UNEA that we have collectively failed to deliver on resolution 5/14.

**Plastic pollution may not kill instantly, but it is already costing lives and futures.** Today, children are born with microplastics in their blood, and microplastics are already being found in fish that are sold on grocery store shelves. If we fail to deliver the treaty, healthcare systems will be strained under rising cancers and toxic exposure, billions will be spent managing pollution instead of preventing it, and oceans could hold more plastic than fish, collapsing coastal economies and food security. Entire industries risk becoming stranded as we delay the transition to a clean industry.

**Plastic pollution does not respect borders or generations.** A weak treaty will not protect any country from the social, economic, and environmental consequences that are to follow. Many of you will not see that world, but we, the children and youth of today, your children, and your grandchildren will. We will inherit governments that failed to act when they could, societies burdened by pollution and debt, and planetary resources pushed beyond repair.

We call on Member States: seize this moment. Commit to **binding reduction targets**, embed **human rights and intergenerational equity** throughout the treaty, and build strong **financial mechanisms** for implementation and **capacity building**. Stand with ambition. Deliver the treaty the world desperately needs and the future deserves.

Thank you.