With the rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution representing a serious global environmental issue that can negatively impact the environmental, social, economic, and health dimensions of sustainable development, particularly for Small Island Development States, plastic pollution is a concern for Barbados, particularly in the form of marine litter. As a net user of plastics, and a country that must manage the disposal of plastics wastes, any efforts on the international stage to promote the sustainable use of plastics, the design of plastics for circularity, and the improved management of legacy and current plastic wastes are welcomed.

More pointedly, Barbados envisions that the internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution negotiated by 2024 will embody the following:

- A goal that should focus on the long-term elimination of plastic pollution through a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life-cycle of plastics to protect the environment and human health. To ensure the longevity of the instrument, a time-bound aspiration need not be attached to the treaty’s goal.

- Core obligations that comprise a set of global legally binding obligations with time-bound aspirations, which serve as targets to be achieved, and to emphasize the urgency with which actions must be taken. The core obligations should include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - Actions to eliminate and reduce certain plastics which pose high pollution risk, particularly, the three categories that constitute the largest portions of current plastic uses namely, single use plastics, synthetic fibres/textiles, and plastics used in construction, and fishing gear, packaging, plastics used in health care, and agricultural plastics. Measures for elimination and reduction could include:
    - Global bans of categories of plastics such as the manufacture and use of unnecessary, avoidable, and problematic plastic items, once their terms have been clearly defined.
    - Control on virgin plastic production, which is a necessary precursor to achieving sustainable production and consumption plastics, attaining-
economic circularity, and establishing the enabling conditions for the reduction and elimination of plastic pollution.

- **Phased reductions** including “phase-outs” and “phase-downs” by set dates.
- **Economic instruments** such as fiscal incentives and disincentives, with the aim of influencing the behaviour of economic actors and incorporating environmental costs into decision-making as a key feature. Any proposed economic instruments should not however, increase economic burdens of developing countries.
- **Mandatory requirements and standards** to specify how products are designed, manufactured and labelled, and on the materials they contain, including hazardous chemical additives, with the goal of significantly reducing or eliminating the use of specific plastic categories. Products that do not meet the requirements are effectively prohibited.
- **Other measures** which could include behavioural interventions such as public awareness and engagement initiatives, incentives for innovation, and the promotion of safe, sustainable alternatives, and substitutes.

### Measures for a non-toxic circular economy and environmentally sound management of plastic wastes. Such measures could include:

- Targets for circulation and management on, *inter alia*, collection, recycling, recycled content and reuse, and specifying the levels of performance that states must achieve on waste and resource management systems, within a given timeframe;
- Economic instruments for circulation and management of plastic wastes that promote or discourage certain behaviours of economic actors to achieve desired environmental outcomes;
- Minimum requirements and standards that could be applied in reuse and refill, recycling, recycled content, collection, disposal, microplastics controls and reduction of potential harms to drive improved circulation and management, as well as further reduction in plastic use even for products and materials that are not prohibited.
- Obligation to set up Extended Producer Responsibility and Deposit Refund Scheme regulations for certain product groups (e.g. packaging, electrical and electronic equipment) or specific products (e.g. PET bottles) that meet specific requirements and standards set by the treaty; and
- Promotion of a culture of repair.

- Implementation measures under the treaty should include, at a minimum, national action plans, definitions, monitoring and reporting and implementation support.
• **National Action Plans.** These plans should detail how countries will implement binding obligations and deploy additional policies beyond global requirements, while taking national circumstances into account.

• **Definitions.** The treaty should include globally agreed technical definitions, for example, distinguishing between recovery and recycling. For example, Barbados recovers wastes to be recycled but there is yet no comprehensive recycling programme.

• **Monitoring & Reporting.** The treaty should include common methodologies to monitor and report on the progress of implementation and achievements through mechanisms such as National Action Plans and National Reporting and Effectiveness Evaluation. Moreover, a combination of both economic and environmental indicators is needed.

• **Implementation Support.** There should be timely, predictable, accessible, and sufficient support, including both financial and technical resources, technology transfer and capacity strengthening, for effective implementation. A dedicated multilateral fund would be the surest means to ensure reliable, predictable, and efficient funding to achieve adequate means of implementation. Specifically, there is need for technical assistance, finance, and technology transfer to support the following:
  - Solid waste management, including source separation and recovery;
  - Public awareness and engagement;
  - Legislative development and regulatory enforcement;
  - Increased knowledge of Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices;
  - Capacity building in areas such as material flow analysis and life cycle analysis; and
  - Institutional strengthening.

  With respect to financing, the following should be taken into consideration:

  • What resources are needed?
  • What is the role of private finance?
  • Who should pay and for what?
  • What should international public financing pay for? In this regard, the following should be considered: green economies not just green projects, regional approaches rather than national ones, assistance to the private sector, and data and analytics.
  • How to make sure that people have access to the funds?
The treaty should learn from, capitalize on synergies, and fill gaps in the following existing Multilateral Environmental Agreements to enhance management of hazardous plastic wastes and slow current exports of plastic wastes into least-developed countries:

- The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and in particular of Plastic Amendment,
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants,
- Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade,
- Montreal Protocol and the Vienna Convention on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer,
- Convention on Biological Diversity,
- UNFCCC and Paris Agreement,
- The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), and

- The treaty should contain non-party provisions which set out how a party to the treaty should interact with ‘non-party’ states. These provisions should include requiring parties to encourage non-parties to become parties, and imposing trade restrictions on parties in their dealing with non-parties, unless those non-parties conform to the requirements of the treaty. It should be borne in mind, however, that such provisions should not hinder trade or prevent those parties with limited knowledge, financing and technology, from exporting plastic waste that they cannot manage.

- The treaty should consider the use of white, grey and/or black lists to manage those polymers, additives or products with minimal, uncertain, and high risks environmental contamination respectively.