Thank you Mr Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of Alliance pour le Contrôle du Tabac en Afrique (ACTA) which is a member of the Stop Tobacco Pollution Alliance together with other observers such as Action on Smoking and Health, Corporate Accountability and Health Justice. Allow me to congratulate you, the Secretariat and the member states for the commendable strides made during this INC-3 towards a legally binding treaty on plastic pollution including in marine environment.

The progress made in the past week brings us closer to our common goal of mitigating the adverse effects of unsustainable plastic production on our oceans, the climate, biodiversity, health, and human rights.

However, if we are to reach this goal, we need to address the conflicts of interest that pose a threat to the objective of this instrument to protect human health and the environment. We also need to be willing to take swift and resolute action on matters of immediate concern such as on the most toxic forms of plastics.

We therefore encourage the INC to prioritize the following aspects during the intersessional work ahead of INC-4

- 1. Prevent and manage conflicts of interest among stakeholders by, among others, distinguishing the interests of industry, scientists, and civil society organizations and ensuring transparency. We propose drawing upon principles of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which is the only international treaty that offers a governance model for addressing the disproportionate influence by commercial actors.
- 2. Establish a criteria and identify the most problematic and avoidable plastic products, for which an immediate ban is due. Aligning with the position of the WHO, cigarette filters (and disposable vapes) merit urgent inclusion in this list.

In closing, we look forward to a treaty that strengthens health and environmental considerations to uphold human rights.
Thank you.