Mr. Chair

1. It is a great honour for me to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.

2. We wish to appreciate and congratulate the INC Chair, the Co-facilitators, Secretariat and members of the Committee for the progress made during this INC3 meeting.

Mr. Chair,

3. The African group appreciates the contribution of Member States during this INC meeting to ensure that we are on-track to deliver the much-needed objective of ending plastic pollution. We welcome all efforts to ensure that the different views are taken into account. However, the task ahead is still enormous and therefore, there is need to consider innovative ways of moving forward without compromising the process and desired outcomes.

4. African Group was looking forward to discussing key areas that are critical for furthering this work in INC4, including, among others, workstreams on primary plastic polymers, chemicals and polymers of concern in plastics and problematic and avoidable plastic products, product design and performance, transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling, Extended Producer Responsibility, existing plastic pollution and the financial mechanism necessary for successful implementation of the instrument.

5. We underscore the relevance of the science-policy interface and the need to ensure balanced reflection of such information, and Member State
participation in this process. We were looking forward to participating in a face-to-face intersessional process through an Open-Ended Working Group with at least one representative from each Member State.

6. We were expecting the outcomes from the intersessional process to inform further negotiations on the ‘draft text from INC 3’, with the understanding that Member States will have an opportunity to add or remove text during the consideration of the draft at INC4.

7. The African Group reiterates the importance of addressing plastic pollution across the lifecycle of plastics as mandated by UNEA resolution 5/14 and ensuring that the relevant principles are operationalized in the respective articles of the instrument.

8. The African Group reiterates the need for a new, dedicated and standalone financing mechanism for the instrument, taking into account the internationally agreed principles of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), equity, and respective capabilities, and would like to underscore the importance of adequate, easy to access, sustainable financial resources.

9. We look forward to further consideration of mechanisms for cooperation between parties and other relevant agencies for the provision of timely, sustainable, comprehensive and adequate capacity-building and technical assistance, to developing countries, in particular, to African countries, to facilitate implementation of obligations under the new instrument.

10. The African Group also reiterates the need to ensure a just and fair transition and clear linkages with the means of implementation. We welcome the proposal to develop a multi stakeholder engagement plan which takes care of regional economic integration, and people in vulnerable situations including waste pickers, for building collective and innovative solutions to combat plastic pollution.
11. The African Group appreciates the location of the UNEP Headquarters on African soil and would like to reiterate paragraph 88 of Rio+20 declaration on "the future we want" that calls for the strengthening of UNEP Headquarters. As such, we reiterate our support and ask other Member States to also support the idea of locating the Secretariat of the legally binding instrument at UNEP headquarters.

12. In conclusion, we welcome the in-coming Chairperson of the INC, Ambassador Luis Vayas from Ecuador, and congratulate him upon your election. We look forward to working with him to deliver the mandate of this INC in line with UNEA resolution 5/14.

I thank you.