Distinguished Chair, dear Members and Colleagues,

I am Andres Naranjo, representing the Friends World Committee for Consultation, or FWCC. We extend our profound gratitude for the progress achieved this week, and congratulate Ambassador Luis Vayas Valdivieso for his election as Chair of the INC.

Rooted in Quaker values of stewardship, peace, justice, sustainability, and community, we urge the development of an international legally binding instrument that confronts the root causes of plastic pollution. Central to this is the elimination of subsidies fuelling harmful plastic production, including primary plastic polymers and chemicals of concern. We are, however, concerned that this important piece of work has not been further reflected in potential intersessional work, which could inform and support policymakers in future discussions.

In our discussions, let us prioritize those most impacted by our decisions – the marginalized, the voiceless, future generations, and global consumers unknowingly exposed to plastic-related risks and hazards. Subsidizing plastic production not only worsens the plastic pollution crisis but also diverts essential funds that could otherwise be allocated to remediation efforts and to support impacted communities.

In addition, we are strongly concerned with the potential influence of conflicting interests in these negotiations, which could lead to the adoption of a weakened instrument or even lack the much-needed package of comprehensive and robust upstream measures. Such measures are essential to curtail unsustainable production and consumption patterns of plastic, and to protect our planet and societies from current and future harm.

Yet, we remain hopeful. We trust this committee to include a robust system against conflict of interest, and lead to a treaty that not only tackles plastic pollution but upholds the highest standards of environmental integrity and human rights norms.

As we move forward, let us embrace this opportunity with determination and compassion, striving for a treaty that reflects our shared aspirations for a sustainable, equitable, and thriving world. The decisions we make today will resonate through history, marking our collective commitment to this critical endeavour.

Thank you for your dedication to this vital cause.

Sincerely,

Andres Naranjo
Representative, Friends World Committee for Consultation