Statement by Indigenous Peoples Representatives at INC-2 on Agenda Item 4

Thank you Chair for giving me the opportunity.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, and Ladies and Gentlemen

I am Prem Singh Tharu originally from Nepal representing here Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) would like to thank the UNEP for organizing the INC-2 and special thanks to UNESCO and the government of France for hosting this very important event. We also highly appreciate the progress made on Resolution 5/14 “End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument” adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly on 2 March 2022.

However, We, Indigenous Peoples are concerned about how plastic pollution is going to be ended without adequate solutions. We Indigenous Peoples have sustainable environmentally friendly solutions to pollution because we have nature based indigenous technologies and innovations that produce all sorts of necessary items from the natural resources by conserving and protecting the nature with sound safeguarding measures. The indigenous productions are environmentally sustainable, economically viable and affordable which can significantly contribute to the solutions to end the plastic pollution. In order to end the plastic and marine environment pollution, and protect the nature, biodiversity, ecosystem, and the mother earth, we, Indigenous Peoples are always ready to contribute our Indigenous Knowledge, skills, innovations, and technologies. Our knowledge systems are our intellectual property means our human rights, so the member states need to recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Knowledge systems, innovations, technologies, skills and productions have highly potential measures to support the efforts to end plastic pollution.

While recognizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and their knowledge and contributions to addressing and ending the plastic pollutions and marine environment pollutions, the rights to lands, territories and resources have to be legally guaranteed under the right to self-determination along with the full respect to the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) so that Indigenous Peoples can genuinely play the crucial roles with their knowledge, innovations, technologies and skills to give adequate solutions to combating pollutions.

The plastics treaty needs to integrate a human rights-based approach, with explicit reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), ILO Convention-169, Paris Agreement and other relevant international human rights instruments that have ensured the rights of Indigenous Peoples and have recognized Indigenous Knowledge, innovations, technologies, skills, and productions contributing to the nature-based solutions for all sorts of pollutions and hazards. As well, we Indigenous Peoples call on the UN agencies, member states and concerned stakeholders to partner with Indigenous Peoples and their organizations who are the real knowledge holders and practitioners of the nature-based solutions.

In protection of our rights, we call on the Secretariat, the Chair, the Bureau and member states to guarantee effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the negotiations of the plastics treaty and we recommend
the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples to include the sessions and intersessions of the treaty negotiations.

Thank you