Opening statement of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) at the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution INC-3 
(14 November 2023, Nairobi, Kenya) 
2 minutes

Thank you Mr Chair, 
Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, UNEP Secretariat,

The International Trade Union Federation, and Global Union Federations (GUFs) directly represent and organise hundreds of millions of workers of the global plastic supply chain: from production and manufacturing; to food and drink processing, packaging; catering and hospitality; all the way waste collection, transportation, sorting, reuse, recycling and final disposal.

We also represent workers directly affected by the adverse impact caused by plastic pollution and exposed to its health risks, such as dangerous chemicals and microplastics. These include workers in water and sanitation; health and care; agriculture and fisheries; public emergency services and firefighters.

Excellencies, the labour dimension of transitioning away from plastic pollution – including occupational health and safety - is critical for the success and the effective implementation of the instrument. The global trade union movement wishes to remind negotiators of three key points:

First, the instrument needs to ensure that ALL workers - upstream and downstream the plastic life cycle, be them formal, semi-formal or informal – are mentioned and that their fundamental role is duly acknowledged in the First Draft.

Second, three key principles must be enshrined in the First Draft and rooted in the definitions of the relevant multilateral UN bodies, which are their custodians, to ensure policy consistency and clarity of interpretation. These are:

1. “Decent work”: as per the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)
2. “Just Transition”:¹ also as per the ILO definition
3. "One Health" per the definition of the World Health Organization (WHO)

Third, we call for the urgent establishment of an **Intersessional Group on Just Transition** to support negotiators with consistent, concrete and actionable language options for the First Draft on this key topic. This requires the direct involvement in the Group of the ILO and of social partners including workers' representatives.

We thank you for your attention.