Thank you, Chair, and good afternoon Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, dear Colleagues, Ladies, Gentlemen, and all Gentlepersons.

I represent COARE – The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education, and this afternoon, I also have the privilege of speaking on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, Action on Smoking and Health, and Corporate Accountability International.

We have learned so much over the last several years, and the more we examine this problem, the worse we realize it is. The lifecycle of plastic impedes every single one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and threatens ALL human rights, not just the right to a healthy environment.

We cannot address plastic pollution without addressing plastic production. We must turn off the tap on plastic and cap the amount of plastics being produced.

Using the same analogy of turning off the tap, we must also realize that a mop or bucket are not our first priority. They can be important tools, but without first focusing on turning off the tap, they are irrelevant and useless.

We firmly believe that transparency in the lifecycle of plastics is important to recognize and avoid harmful substances, but transparency is also important in our discussions. Conflict of interests exist here, and we must recognize and understand that some parties in this room do not have our collective interests at heart. If a participant – or those they represent – stand to profit from the status quo, or from a proposed solution, it is imperative that we are aware of their relationship, and how they may profit. We must take such statements or positions with a proverbial grain of salt.

Lastly, but certainly not of least importance, we urge Members here to ensure that decisions here consider and protect the rights and needs of vulnerable populations and peoples disproportionately impacted by the harms of the lifecycle of plastic.