Thank you for the floor,

Dear distinguished delegates,

My name is Ruth Spencer, from the Marine Ecosystems Protected Areas (MEPA) Trust of Antigua and I’m speaking on behalf of the Women’s Major Group to UNEP.

There is already abundant scientific evidence that the lifecycle of plastics is harmful in a variety of ways, and disproportionately affects women. We need to address the inequitable impacts of plastic production and pollution on women and girls all over the world.

There is no time for delay, it is time to act.

We applaud all the States who made mention of human rights, women’s rights and gender equality. But we need more than “mentions”. We need gender equality as a fundamental principle for the global Treaty.

We need the inclusion of gender responsive measures into all parts of the Treaty, including in the Objectives, the Core Obligations, the Control Measures, and the Means of Implementation.

The Treaty should abide by the Rio principles: polluter pays, precautionary principle, access to information, public participation and justice.

Women, girls, and non-binary people must be fully and meaningfully included in decision making processes at local and global level, and supported as leaders in innovation and solutions to end plastic pollution in our communities and economies.

Honor the rights of women and girls in all their diversity, by agreeing on a global Treaty that ensures the human rights of all to a safe, clean and healthy Environment and sets urgent and ambitious targets to significantly decrease plastic production and pollution now.

Thank you chair