Statement by the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) at INC-3

Part II Item 4 Exemptions available to a Party upon request

Nairobi, Kenya – 15 November 2023

Delivered by: Palau on behalf of the Pacific Small Island States

Co-facilitator,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the 14 Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), and we align ourselves with the statement made by Samoa on behalf of AOSIS.

PSIDS supports the text in item 4 that covers the exemption registration. Allowing Parties to register exemptions for specific products is a pragmatic approach, recognizing that a total and immediate ban on all plastic products might not be feasible. The item also supports the exemption expiry that sets a default expiration for exemptions ensuring that Parties don’t indefinitely postpone phase-out dates, maintaining pressure to find alternatives. In addition, the language here gives Parties flexibility by allowing for extensions for exemptions that might need more time to comply due to unique challenges. There is also flexibility for Parties in setting a final deadline for all exemptions ensuring long-term compliance and progress towards plastic pollution reduction.

PSIDS suggest improving the text by adding consideration for Transparency and Public Availability by making the register of exemptions publicly available and promoting transparency and accountability, which are crucial in environmental governance. We would be adopting a balanced and evidence-based approach to tackling plastic pollution, providing flexibility where needed while ensuring accountability and progress towards reduction goals. It is vital for this global treaty on plastic pollution to be consistent and prevent a “race to the bottom” with clear and binding commitments, along with strong enforcement mechanisms, can ensure that all parties are held to the same standards, preventing industries from relocating to countries with less stringent regulations and ensuring a level playing field.

We will send our proposed additional language for consideration.

Thank you.
Suggested new paragraph:

“The register of any exemptions and any extensions to exemption shall include the name of the Party to which the exemption applies and the period of the exemption. The register shall be kept updated by [the governing body] and shall be publicly available.”

This paragraph is inspired by article 6 of the Minamata Convention