Thank you, chair.
Allow me to begin by thanking the Bureau members for the strong leadership shown throughout the whole INC process. I would like to also thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the Zero Draft of the instrument and the government of Kenya for hosting the INC-3.

To begin, let me express Korea’s strong support for the instrument. As indicated in the last session in Paris, we should not miss our opportunity to tackle plastic pollution anymore.

In recognition of such urgency, Korea has been fully dedicated, from the process of adopting the UN resolution to end plastic pollution. It is, therefore, our honor and privilege to contribute to the successful completion of the instrument by hosting the INC-5 in Korea.

In the spirit of a Korean proverb, ‘Well begun is half done,’ I would like to state that Zero draft of the instrument stands as a solid starting point for all of us.

Today, Korea supports the regional statement of Asia Pacific Group. To go further, let me share Korea’s views on what could be reflected to the next version of the draft text, based on the essential elements reflected in the Zero Draft.

First, as for the objective of the instrument, we would like to reiterate the importance of circular economy. Since we are adopting the lifecycle approach, circularity is both the beginning and the end of a solution to tackle plastic pollution.
With this in mind, we propose that measures of the instrument should highlight the importance of effective plastic management as well as building institutions and full participation of stakeholders.

Also, measures to prevent plastic pollution should be based on scientific evidence, ensuring responsible implementation of the instrument, as it ought to be embraced by all members.

To address potential knowledge gaps, we are hoping technical intersessional works to be followed in due course.

Third, the instrument should build on the progress made by existing multilateral environmental agreements, avoiding duplication with them.

Fourth, matters regarding national plans and financing should be determined in full consideration of their feasibility. We know from past experiences that delivering on goals is more important than setting them. In achieving global environmental goals, implementation should be supported with an adequate level of financial resources through the effective use of existing financial arrangement.

We have long and intense rounds of negotiation ahead of us. Given the time constraints of our negotiation process, I suggest we focus our discussions on substantive elements, for efficient decision-making.

As challenging as this process may be, I am certain that this will still be remembered as a defining moment for the planet for the sake of our future generation. Thank you.