Third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-3)

Statement on Agenda item 4 - TRASH HERO WORLD

Thank you Mr Chair.

Trash Hero works to clean and reduce waste, in particular plastic pollution, in more than 120 communities, primarily in SE Asia. We are a member of the GAIA network, BFFP and IPEN.

Every single person in this room very likely already has plastic inside their body - as do your citizens. This chemical load is increasing every day, as we are exposed to plastics in packaging, clothing and equipment, as well as micro- and nanoplastics in the air, water and food chain.

Plastics are fossil fuels - linear, not circular materials - and at the start and end of their one-way journey, their toxic burden is intensifi ed and disproportionately affects those living in the Global South and in fenceline communities in the Global North.

We are facing an imminent public health crisis, on the scale of tobacco or greater.

The good news is that we already have existing models for plastic-free systems in the hundreds of successful zero waste cities around the world that prove we can tackle this crisis, and the other complex problems caused by plastic production

In the zero draft, we have an ambitious starting point. We urge member states to adopt Option 1 across the provisions, together with:

- legally binding language;
- the formation of dedicated and independent scientific committees under the governing body; and
- a differentiated approach for financing, but not for control measures.

In this way, the treaty will be able to protect public health, slow climate change, restore biodiversity and bring justice to the millions of people affected by plastic pollution.

One serious hurdle, however, remains: the involvement of the plastics and petrochemical industries in the treaty process. It is crucial to remember that plastics play no role in the general economic development of any member state. The benefits
they bring to a few companies are far outweighed by the societal, health and environmental costs suffered on a global scale. We request that the Chair of the Secretariat enforce a conflict of interest policy and call on member states to remain strong in the face of industry interference. The right to vote must be protected in cases where consensus is not possible.