

Statement by Cambodia

Madam Co-chairs, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Plastic consumption is rapidly increasing in Cambodia, driven by rapid economic growth, urbanization and changing production and consumption patterns. Yet, mismanaged plastic waste represents a considerable challenge for ecosystems and human health. Open burning creates hazardous smoke and greenhouse gas emissions. Open dumping leads to leakage into water systems and the ocean. Plastics and microplastics harm animals and spread throughout the food chain. Polluted landscapes and beaches hinder tourism development.

2. At the national level, the Royal Government of Cambodia has taken steps to tackle environmental pollution through the formulation and implementation of a number of policies and regulations. In fact, Cambodia has established the National Policy on Green Growth and the National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan that incorporate fundamental elements of sustainability in the development process. Cambodia also has an inter-ministerial mechanism, called the National Council for Sustainable Development, to coordinate among relevant ministries and stakeholders to integrate environmental consideration into development plans. Moreover, Cambodia is decentralizing the tasks of environmental protection, where the sub-national levels will implement the government's policies and enforce laws, and the national levels will monitor and supervise their implementation and enforcement. In addition, while Cambodia has had regulations on pollution control, recently created Trash and Solid Waste Management in Urban Area, Drainage System and Wastewater Treatment System Management and Plastic Bag Management, which special attention has been placed on (1) the production, distribution, use, and recycling of plastic bags, and (2) the storage and disposal of the electronic waste.

3. The most anticipated move for Cambodia in tackling pollution is the Environmental Code. While the Code is in drafting process, and it will be soon finalized and submit to parliament after the Council of Ministers' approval. Contained in the Code, better environmental standards and mechanisms will be employed and assured. The Code will encourage a better framework for green investments and infrastructures.

4. At global level, Cambodia has been a very active supporter of climate change negotiations and has ratified the Paris Agreement and implementer of Stockholm and Basel conventions. We hope that all other large emitters will follow suit. We need to make clear commitments at global level, and put in place strong mechanisms to monitor progress and address challenges of marine litter and microplastics. This should be done in a spirit of cooperation, with technologies made available and resources allocated to support action in developing countries, where coastal communities are particularly vulnerable to the changes affecting the ocean, and where additional resources to enforce maritime regulations are often needed. Cambodia welcomes all partners, to work together and share our best practices on marine litter and microplastic so that we can achieve our common goals.

Being confident that with our collective will and efforts, we can bring about the substantive outcomes towards attaining marine litter and microplastics in the new targets and schedules that is aligned and more responsive to the emerging needs and concerns of the region as well as the world while staying committed to its vision of establishing a sustainable sea and ocean.

Thank you Madam Co-chairs.