

**General Statement of Ethiopia 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC-1) to develop a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. 28th November 2022, Punta Del Esta – Uruguay**

**Opening Plenary – Statement by Ethiopia**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the government and peoples of Uruguay on behalf of the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting this beautiful and important conference on the solution to end plastic pollution (INC-1).

**Mr. Chairman, excellences and delegates** Plastics manufacturing is increasing dramatically on a national and international scale, and the use of plastic is expanding significantly in many sectors of the economy. The production and use of plastic continue to rise in tandem with the economy. The lack of domestic resources and technology leads Ethiopia largest importer of plastic raw materials and packaging machines.

**Mr. Chairman,** The use of plastic materials, such as PET, for packaging materials and shopping bags, as well as its manufacturing and use, has increased significantly. Around 95% of these plastic materials are destroyed through burning, dispose in open spaces, and waste dump sites. However the collection and recycling of plastic shows significant progress in recent years.

Plastic endangers human and ecosystem health due to poor management, occupational and health hazards in its manufacturing, and environmental pollution; it contributes to climate change and depletes the ozone layer throughout its life cycle. Furthermore, the informal plastic waste collection for recycling exposes the socioeconomic impacts on the poor community, particularly women and children. Beside this with poor waste management, plastic shortens the life of engineered sanitary landfills into waste disposal areas and also harms the economy of the country.

The national recycling rate is still in its infancy and follows the manufacturing, use, and disposal cycle. There is a lack of sophisticated technologies for plastic waste recycling, a lack of data management on recyclable and non-recyclable plastic materials, a lack of awareness and waste management are the core.

**Mr. Chairman Excellences and delegates** A comprehensive and integrated approach to managing plastic through its life cycle with a circular economy, technology transfer, awareness creation, education, and dissemination; and with research and knowledge development, compliance, revise existing and develop new tolls to follow the circular approach to plastic pollution and to end the use of single-use plastic are required for environmental sound management.

**Mr. Chairman Excellences and delegates,** the government of Ethiopia recognizes the development of internationally legally binding tools to combat plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, at the national level.

Thank you.