African Statement on Objectives and Scope

Thank you Mr. Chair,

The African Group wishes to see a broad but ambitious objective that covers plastics over the entire life cycle and protective of human health and the environment. This objective must be underpinned by equally ambitious means of implementation; including new, additional, predictable and adequate finance, technology transfer on concessional and preferential terms and capacity building, while upholding the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

To this effect Mr. Chair, the African Group wants to see the ambition reflected in the treaty that results in an end to the plastic pollution problem, including in the marine environment, for the benefit of the present and future generations. The instrument must be based on the polluter pays principle. It must address human rights issues – including socio-economic rights – that takes into consideration the differentiated economic and social circumstances of countries.

The objective needs to reflect national, regional and international coordination and cooperation among countries, supported by relevant stakeholders, to realize a shared global goal of eliminating or minimizing the harmful effects from plastics along the value chain, taking into consideration the transboundary nature of the challenge.

The African region would therefore like to see an instrument that encourages action by all stakeholders including industry, academia, labour, the informal sector, as well as local communities and indigenous peoples.

Mr Chair, On the Scope of the Instrument,

The Africa region envisages a scope that is broad enough to cover all aspects of the sources of pollution and the impacts they have on human health and the environment including, including their impact on marine resources.

The treaty should reflect a scope to cover all aspects of the life cycle of plastics including production processes, design options, the application of harmful chemicals and additives. The scope must reflect the adoption of the principles and practices of circularity in the core actions that are taken across all stages of the life cycle of plastics. The instrument must have clear provisions for monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress.
It should cover the management of plastic waste including, legacy plastics, illegal trafficking and dumping thereof, as these are particularly important to our region.

The scope should also cover upstream, midstream and downstream measures to control different types of plastic pollution sources including, single use plastics, fishing gears, microplastics, among others.

Mr President, we would like to see the vital role of states in coordinating actions as well as the necessary support to be provided by stakeholders clarified in the process.

Thank you Mr Chair!