Thank you, Chair, ladies and gentlemen.

First and foremost, I want to first thank the original spirits and people of these lands, for this beautiful day and allowing us to gather here this week.

My name is Frankie Orona, my traditional name is Che-u cha-wat ha-tako, I am Tongva and Chumash from California and Borrado from Texas.

Moving forward, this assembly must strive to make future negotiations more equitable and inclusive to Indigenous peoples, frontline communities, waste pickers, and the youth of our next generation.

As those who suffered generations of injustice and the worst impacts of plastic pollution, we cannot be forgotten or treated as an afterthought.

The rates of chronic respiratory illness and cancer in our communities are 3 to 5 times higher than the national average in the US. The chemicals used during the production of plastics are destroying communities that industry and enabling governments have deemed sacrifice zones.

This assembly has a mandate to confront plastics pollution across the full life cycle.

99% of plastics are made from fossil fuels which means we have a responsibility to examine the impacts of extraction, petrochemical refinement, manufacturing, and consumption in addition to the waste accumulating in all environments.

We have evidence of microplastics in everything from tap water to table salt, to human lung tissue, breast milk and cord blood.

We must not forget that we are the air. We are the water. We are the land. We are not separate from the environment. We are the environment.

Without a strong, legally binding global instrument, we are all at risk of becoming vehicles of toxic plastic pollution, whether we live in a sacrifice zone or not.

As original peoples of the land, we have an inherent right to protect the environment, our land, our air, our water and all creation. As human beings, we all have a responsibility to do our part and take care of Mother Earth, but it is imperative that this assembly hold the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries accountable for the plastic pollution crisis.
A treaty that fails to do this and neglects the demands of communities most impacted by the plastic pollution crisis will be a treaty destined to fail.

As these negotiations unfold, we implore this assembly to address the intergenerational harms of fossil fuel extraction, plastic production, consumption and waste, while prioritizing public health and human rights for all.

The majority of the plastic pollution was created in the last thirty years. We need a just transition away from plastics and the addiction of convenience that is destroying frontline communities around the world.

Thank you