

Japan Statement, 28 November 2022  
under agenda item 4

The first session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

Muchas gracias Sr Presidente, felicitaciones por su eleccion.

Japan associates itself with the Statement by Jordan on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group.

Japan is proactively addressing plastic pollution. Japan wishes to take a leading role in the INC to produce an effective and progressive instrument for all States.

The INC should fully capitalize on the wide and strong support to the “End plastic pollution” resolution.

Directly going to substance, Japan considers the following to be essential elements of the instrument.

First, general and simple objectives, centered around the mitigation of adverse impact by plastic pollution to the environment and biodiversity and to protect human health from potential risks. Plastic is useful and can be reused and recycled. Plastic itself is not entirely dangerous. Risks should be considered carefully based on solid scientific evidence. The issue is not eliminating plastic. What would have happened without syringes for COVID-19 vaccines? It is essentially about circular use of plastic, and finding viable alternatives to non-essential plastic.

Second element: a clear common goal. A possible goal is aiming to reduce additional plastic pollution particularly in the marine environment to zero by a certain year. The Osaka Blue Ocean Vision is now shared by more than 80 countries and regions. The target year is 2050. Now there is growing support to the target year 2040.

Let's negotiate an ambitious goal agreeable to all, together with the rest of the text.

Third, an appropriate mechanism to be established by States to promote an essential and effective circular economy on plastic and to control leakage. It should engage all the stakeholders from industries to civil society.

Member States must take necessary measures covering every stage of plastic lifecycle, including production, sales, distribution, consumption, waste management and disposal, to realize a reduce, reuse, recycle and renewable society. The instrument should provide a list of effective measures from which Parties will choose, taking into account national circumstances and capabilities.

There are various pathways. One-size-fits-all restrictions on the production or use of plastic may not work for all countries.

Fourth, national action plans including all relevant national measures, mid-term and long-term strategies and other appropriate relevant information. National plans and their implementation would be reviewed collectively in light of the objectives and goal under a robust and transparent PDCA cycle, making it possible for all States to progressively improve their efforts.

Capacity-building, technical assistance and financial assistance should be addressed. The content may vary corresponding to the level of ambition of the objectives, goal, obligations and measures. We should negotiate those first. Japan is willing to continue support to States without enough capacity.

I am pleased to announce that Japan, to express strong commitment, is planning to contribute approximately 820,000 USD to the budget of UNEP for the organization of INC 1 to INC 3, pending approval by the Diet of Japan.

Blaise Pascal said: 'The least movement is of importance to all nature. The entire ocean is affected by a pebble.'

Let's act together for our ocean, for our planet.

Thank you.