Japan Statement, 2nd December 2022

The first session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment under agenda item 4 “Sequencing and recommended further work to be undertaken”

Chair,

The delegation of Japan expresses gratitude to the Chair and the co-facilitators of the informal group for listening carefully to the views of Committee Members on the issues of intersessional work and engagement of multi-stakeholders.

The report by the co-facilitators was the result of long discussions over the past few days, and my delegation respects the outcome.

INC2 seems so far away, I mean in time. For me, personally, and for Japan, as a delegations, it will probably be after an important diplomatic event Japan will host in May. In order to use the time in between efficiently, delegations have to do their homework. Our delegation will certainly do so. We have come to the beautiful city of Punta del Este, also renowned as the sacred city for trade lawyers in the context of the Uruguay round, with certain ideas on how the instrument will look like. We have heard each other. Each delegation will have to take home what we have heard, including from the stakeholders in the multi-stakeholders forum, and from the statements of observers from the floor, as well as through informal contacts in the hall. We have to capitalize on the enthusiasm of UNEA resolution 5/14 and start transforming the energy into essential elements and then into legal text. In this regard, we should perhaps remind ourselves that international instruments address primarily the States Parties. We should be discussing what obligations or voluntary measures the State Party is to undertake. In treaty language, we are talking about Parties shall do something, Parties are encouraged to do something, or Parties shall endeavor to do something. Then, usually, the Parties follow by domestic legislation or policy in an appropriate manner. Japan never becomes a party of an international agreement without passing the necessary domestic measures at the same time or beforehand. This is to
secure full compliance from day one.

Japan will participate actively in the intersessional work including the submission of a written contribution, and the multi-stakeholder engagement. On working methods in INC2 and beyond, the delegation of Japan accepts the two streams of work proposed by the Chair. Japan agrees to the need to work expeditiously and effectively. I have heard differing positions this week on priorities among the elements. Capacity building depends on the obligations, control measures and assessment of progress. Obligations and measures depend on national capacity to implement, for instance. The bottom line, is that there is a correlation among the elements. Japan will engage seriously in both work streams, it being understood that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. As I stated before, the instrument must be an effective instrument for all States. I recall that the Statement made by Jordan on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group stressed that the instrument should encourage participation and actions by all countries, whether large or small, developed or developing, island or continental, coastal or land locked.

A medida que nos acercamos al final de la semana, esta delegación quisiera expresar su agradecimiento al Presidente, Embajador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, por su excelente liderazgo. También agradecemos a los amigos del Presidente, la secretaría del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente, el país anfitrión y la ciudad anfitriona, los intérpretes y todo el personal que ha hecho posible esta importante reunión. También agradezco a todos los delegados y observadores, incluidas las organizaciones internacionales y todas las partes interesadas, en particular los representantes de la juventud y los pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo, por su participación activa y constructiva. Como dije en mi declaración de apertura, sigamos trabajando juntos por nuestro océano y por nuestro planeta.

Muchas gracias