INC Youth Focus Group
Major Group for Children and Youth

Agenda Item 4.3.C, Support to monitoring and evaluation of progress in, and effectiveness of implementation and national reporting – 1 December 2022

Thank you, Chair. I am Abubakar Bamai speaking on behalf of the INC Youth Focus Group of the Major Group for Children and Youth.

Firstly, we are aware that to eradicate plastic pollution, the management of such waste takes paramount importance. However, we also strongly think that equal attention should be given to transitioning to alternative materials that are not harmful to the environment as a whole.

Firstly, we want to draw attention to a 2015 report from UNEP titled “Biodegradable Plastics and Marine Litter.” We are highlighting three points from the summary:

- One, that claims and counterclaims about the biodegradability of polymers in the environment appear to be influenced by commercial interests;
- Two, public perceptions about whether an item is biodegradable can influence littering behaviour; and
- Three, based on available evidence, biodegradable plastics will not play a significant role in reducing marine litter;

Therefore, we highly urge that scientific findings should guide this instrument’s creation and implementation and that we do not hurry into moving to alternatives that end up creating problems to solve later.

Secondly, on effectiveness of implementation:

- One, we are in solidarity with sentiments that the core of the instrument on reporting of implementation should be respectful of the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities;
- Two, we support designing global mandatory measures to restrict virgin plastic polymer production;
- Three, while National Action Plans could be an option to be considered, we also want to highlight that over-reliance on this method would lead to inefficiency as we see happening in the context of National Determined Contributions & Paris Agreement. This is because the NDCs are not legally binding. Therefore, a mechanism for non-compliance should form part of this instrument such as in the Montreal Protocol.
Thank you, chair!

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