

Statement delivered by Mr. Gopal Prasad Aryal, Director General of Department of Environment, Nepal , in the meeting of ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare for the work of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

Dakar, 31 May, 2022

Thank You Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I congratulate you for your nomination as the chair of this ad hoc open ended working group (OEWG) and successful handling of the meeting so far under your able leadership. Further, would like to congratulate to the government of Senegal for hosting this meeting with full of hospitality and thank to the secretariat of UNEP for their hard-work bringing in very important documents including scenario notes and draft rules of procedures for the work of intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) developing a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

Mr. Chair,

We are discussing here to prepare for the work of the Inter-governmental negotiating committee that is to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, as mandated by the resolution 5/14 of United Nation Environment Assembly adopted on 2 March 2022 .

Looking at the wider deliberations since yesterday on various aspects of our agenda, my delegation has a reflection that the (OEWG) meeting is moving ahead on right track to explore key issues, challenges and priorities to be addressed in substance and also in procedures for ending the plastic pollution through negotiated legally binding multilateral instrument. Nepal would like to engage in this process constructively and underscores the importance of transparent, inclusive and scientific approaches along with need-based implementation capacity development support mechanism specifically to the least developed countries, in dealing with environmental problems including of plastic pollution. In Nepal, as identified in the preliminary studies, more than 3.7 million tons plastic waste is being generated per year and has created numbers of pollution problems including waterway blockage and air pollution from plastic burning in open air and low temperature. In order to minimize the

risks of pollution government of Nepal has legally banned the production, import, buy and sale and use of single use plastic bags thinner than 40 microns. Despite the legal ban and administrative measures based on national action plan, we are still facing various challenges to ensure the compliance on ban. It is realized that an integrated and lifecycle based approach to the plastic problem needs to take into account for the better results.

Mr. Chair,

To be specific on draft rules of procedure prepared by the secretariat and annexed to the document UNEP/PP/OEWG.1/4 which consists of 6 sections and 58 rules, my delegation feels that it is a well - designed comprehensive document, prepared on the basis of rules of procedures practiced on UN bodies as well as at the work of other intergovernmental negotiating committees similar in nature of creating international legally binding instrument, more importantly in the areas of environment. This comprehensive document, I believe helps to govern the negotiation procedures of INC, considers the need of inclusive and effective participation of the members which is very important not only to ensure ownership on outcome but also on finding implementable solutions for the plastic pollution problems. I believe, a hybrid form of meeting to share information, opinion and ideas could be easier and useful, however , it needs to ensure in person meetings for finding the negotiated solutions in various critical issues and to ensure the system that no conflict and confusions be raised on the agreed solutions.

Thank you