

Opening Statement by Japan

Ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG) to prepare for the intergovernmental negotiating committee on plastic pollution

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters of meeting

Excellency and distinguished participants,

Japan would like to welcome holding OEWG meeting based upon resolution adopted in the UNEA 5.2 “End plastic pollution” and appreciate great efforts by hosting country Senegal and UNEP secretariat. We would like to express our condolences to the Senegalese people for the recent hospital fire causing the tragic-death of new-born.

Plastic pollution in the marine and other environments has become an urgent which affects the ecological environment across borders. In order to promote global efforts to address this issue, Japan has launched the “Osaka Bleu Ocean Vision” at the 2019 G20 summit to achieve zero additional pollution from marine plastic litter by 2050. The concept of this vision is now shared by 87 countries and regions. Under this vision, Japan has supported compilation and steady implementation of actions against marine plastic litter submitted by 42 countries, as well as capacity building and infrastructure development based on local needs.

The adoption of the UNEA resolution “End plastic pollution” was a landmark achievement toward ending plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. In the buildup, Japan proposed a draft resolution providing the basis of discussions at UNEA 5.2. We believe that we should accelerate discussion in INC towards taking concrete and effective actions swiftly at the global level. We hope that we all members should join forces and share basic concept of the resolution towards completing works and creating ambitious and effective instrument by the end of 2024.

Here we would like to point out that in addressing this urgent issue, it is important for us to create environment in which we will promote sustainable product design and development and standardization of new material and alternative material such as biodegradable plastic which will be soundly decomposed into carbon dioxide and water, and it is also important to promote innovation by private sector.

By taking into consideration that new international instrument will have a broad range of impacts on people’s everyday lives in many countries and regions and many stakeholders in the wide range of plastic value chain, the chairperson of INC will be required to carefully listen to a wide range of opinions and voices and to organize debate

and steer discussion in well balanced manner. In this context we believe that INC should have 2 co-chairs. We are sure that 2 co-chairs will be able to contribute to well-balanced constructive discussion and effective negotiation. Japan has nominated Mr. ONO Hiroshi, Director-General of the Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, as a candidate for co-chair of the INC. I would like to sincerely request all members' support for him. Thank you for your attention.