

First meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine Environment

28th November - 2nd December 2022

Punta del Este, Uruguay

Republic of Seychelles opening Statement

Thank You Chair,

Distinguished Delegates ladies and gentlemen,

Since our delegation takes the floor for the first time, on behalf of the Government of Seychelles I would like to express our gratitude towards the Government of Uruguay and the UNEP secretariat for their warm welcome and hospitality.

The Republic of Seychelles being a Small Island Development State is in favour of the development and adoption of legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including the marine environment

Seychelles being a small island states continue to face challenges and impacts as a result of trans boundary movement of waste, importation of goods which then turns into waste, lack of environmentally sound management solutions including lack of important resources to implement strategies towards elimination of waste and the prevention of plastic pollution.

In view of our strategic location in the Indian Ocean we continue to face continues threats, our environment especially the outer islands which are most often difficult to access tons and tons of plastic wastes are washed up on our shores. We are severely affected and Seychelles is the receiving end of plastic wastes and marine litter. We acknowledge the efforts being done at the National Level from the executive to the community at large in an effort to maintain the health of our natural environment leading to a healthier nation., Seychelles economic pillar remains the Tourism industry. Thus the pressure is on us to ensure that the necessary measures are in place to protect and preserve the quality of our Environment by reducing and eliminating plastic pollution.

During recent years we have, taken strategic actions aimed at early achievement of global targets. Noticeable actions include the ban on single use plastic bags, cutleries and polystyrene take away boxes in 2017. Restriction on single use plastic straws in 2019. We also promote the use and distribution of biodegradable alternatives. Just last year, we banned the importation, use as well as commercial distribution of balloons. This marks yet another landmark action towards waste management in our Country. These bold decisions, portrays our commitment and dedication including political support to advocate for bold actions towards sound management of plastic wastes. We recognize the fact that it will take a global effort to tackle plastic pollution. Hence, a intergovernmental negotiating committee is the way forward. We stress that to meet the obligations under the instrument, financial assistance will be required and capacity building programs as well.

Today I take this opportunity to call upon small islands states especially those of the Western Indian Ocean for us to come together, shoulder to shoulder so that a louder and stronger voice is heard for actions to be committed under the legally binding instruments

Seychelles believes in multilateralism, and urge others to come together in a collective manner so that a momentum is created for our respective countries build on and catalyze the impacts through initiatives.

We look forward to engaging on the development of global agreement to prevent new plastic pollution and manage existing plastic pollution.

Thank you.