



First session of the Inter-Governmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution (INC 1)

General Statement – Switzerland

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 28th November 2022

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Let me first join my voice to express our appreciation to Uruguay for hosting this important meeting.

This delegation would also like to congratulate you, Gustavo Mezacuadra, for your election as Chair of the INC process. We are very much looking forward working with you and you can count on our full support. Our thanks also go to the Executive Secretary, Ms Jyoti Mathur-Fillips and her dedicated staff.

Our mandate is clear – we need to elaborate an international treaty with international binding rules in a very ambitious time frame. Without a **common international regulatory framework**, we will not be able to address the global and increasing challenge of plastic pollution. This view is supported by a wide range of stakeholders, including the business coalition.

Voluntary and fragmented national or regional approaches have proven to be insufficient. To find the right approaches, we need to be open-minded and **examine the whole range of possible international obligations across the full life cycle of plastics** – from measures aiming at reducing the production

of virgin plastics, to banning the most problematic plastics and harmful substances as well as transparency requirements. Many Member States, from all regions, have already taken steps – we can learn from their experience and the challenges they face in order to devise measures at the international level.

We know as a fact that **the world cannot deal with the amount of plastic we produce** – there is no silver bullet. We will need a wide range of tools and cost-efficient measures to allow for the required system change. As more scientific findings and data will be available – we need a treaty structure that will allow gradual strengthening. As a member of the High Ambition Coalition (HAC), **Switzerland is calling for a treaty that will protect the environment and human health from plastic pollution and puts us on track to end plastic pollution by 2040.**

Switzerland is impressed by the level of commitment and engagement of so many **stakeholders** from MEAs, civil society, International Organizations, , Scientists and the private sector. We need to **mobilize and catalyse this expertise in support of the drafting of a meaningful and ambitious treaty.** We don't have the luxury to work in silos. Many UN organizations and MEA's in different United Nations duty locations can support these efforts. A presence on site is required to connect and work with them , and to benefit from the opportunities. We are ready to do our part in Geneva and beyond.

We look forward to engaging with all Members States and stakeholders to have a structured discussion during this first INC.

I thank you for your attention.



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Statement on Scope, objective(s) and options for the structure of the instrument (agenda item 4-2) – Switzerland

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 29th November 2022

Thank you Mister Chair

With the UNEA resolution 5/14 we have the mandate to negotiate a legally binding instrument that has a **broad scope covering the whole lifecycle of all plastics** – starting at feedstock sourcing, covering the production of virgin plastics and products, their use, disposal, recovery and recycling including the reintroduction of recycled materials into the lifecycle.

The Swiss delegation sees the **objective** of the treaty **to protect the environment and human health from plastic pollution**. To reach this objective, we need to achieve sustainable levels of production and consumption, ensure a safe circular economy of plastics by excluding hazardous chemicals and problematic and unnecessary plastics and further ensure an environmentally sound management of plastic waste.

- Regarding the flow of negotiations, **we acknowledge that an initial discussion on scope and objective is useful**. A broad understanding will allow us to provide a sense of direction for the INC process. This said, we don't yet need an agreement on these issues to advance the discussion on other items such as core obligations and control measures.

On the structure of a treaty, we need an instrument that includes legally binding global rules, including targets, bans and transparency requirements. Using the term as outlined in the INC document 1/4 we can best achieve this with a **specific convention**. **Indeed, a treaty with annexes would allow for gradual strengthening**.

Thank you very much chair.



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Item 4 (obligations/control measures)– Switzerland

30th November 2022

Excellencies, colleagues,

Obligations and control measures will constitute the heart of the treaty. It must be the primary focus of our work going forward. Many other important obligations and measures should be discussed at a later stage – once we have more clarity on the type of international obligations that will be contained in the treaty.

To protect the environment and human health – we have to ensure a non-toxic circular plastics economy. This can be achieved through:

- Reducing the amount of plastic we produce and consume to sustainable levels - as we cannot currently deal with the plastic we produce;
- Prohibiting problematic plastic product and harmful substances and additives;
- Providing guidance for design for circularity;
- Managing plastics that cannot be reused or recycled in an environmentally sound manner.

Transparency requirements, including for material and chemical composition throughout the life-cycle of plastics, are also necessary.

We are listening to stakeholders and we heard loud and clear their call for a global regulatory framework to allow for systemic change. Voluntary and fragmented national or regional approaches have proven to be insufficient and are barriers for business, investments and innovation. For example, to promote “reuse models” at scale or to support a viable secondary market for recycled plastics – we need to establish global common rules, targets and criteria

The global framework will enable us to achieve substantive progress at the national level. A strong collaboration with existing MEAs, in particular the BRS conventions and relevant international organisations will help us to design effective measures and avoid duplication.

In order to enable a more focused and concrete discussion going forward – we need to have in advance of INC 2 – a document that would contain options and elements for obligations and control measures across the full life cycle of plastics. Such a document should be the basis for discussion at INC 2 to allow us to move to a “treaty-making mode”. We therefore welcome the proposal from the Chair to establish a group to discuss this key issue in a format conducive to informal exchange with a view to prepare an INC decision. In that regard and in addition, it might also be useful to think about additional information the INC will need to have to inform its deliberations on control measures. Such information could include factual information on existing negative or positive lists of plastic products, polymers and additives that should be removed from the plastic economy, including the criteria used to classify them.

Thank you for your attention.



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4b) Support of implementation, including CB, TA and financial support

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 30 November 2022

Thank you Mr. Chair,

- To mobilize the required resources to end plastic pollution, will not be an easy task. We have to be innovative, to mobilize investments, to collect finances from all sources and include the private sector.
- An important component will be the implementation of the polluter pays principle, e.g through EPR schemes that allow to reduce plastic pollution and mobilize financial resources.
- A few years back, we have developed the integrated approach to the long-term funding of the Chemicals and Waste Agenda that was adopted by the Governing Council of UNEP. The approach with the three element “mainstreaming, industry involvement and dedicated external finance” is relevant and meaningful for the field of plastic pollution and could be a good starting point for further discussions.
- As outlined in the UNEA Resolution 5/14, capacity building and financial & technical assistance will be required for a number of countries to meet their obligations and enhance the implementation.
- Concerning the financial mechanism – the form, mechanism and arrangements will strongly depend on the structure and content of the treaty, and in particular on the objective and legally binding obligations the treaty contains.
- Last but not least, we are committed to define measures that are cost-effective to make best use of financial resources and to use the synergies with existing instruments, in particular the BRS conventions, to lower the costs of managing the treaty and to lower the administrative burden for Member States.



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4a.) Support monitoring and evaluation of progress in, and effectiveness of implementation and national reporting

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 1st December 2022

- Mr. Chair,
- Monitoring, evaluation of progress and national reporting are of importance to achieve an effective implementation of the instrument.
- National Reporting is the basis that Parties can inform about the implementation on their level and how they comply with their obligations. This crucial information creates trust among Parties about the common effort and the joint respect of the legal obligations. It further allows to gather information about challenges and difficulties. In this regard it will be as well important to establish a compliance mechanism.
- Monitoring & evaluation of progress are key elements to check if the instrument does generate the expected results and is the basis to identify needs and approaches on how to adjust and improve the instrument.
- To develop the elements and instruments for monitoring, evaluation of progress and national reporting, we can benefit from models in existing MEA's. It will be important to harmonise methodologies and forms, to create an efficient system that does not duplicate the administrative burden.
- We as well agree with the delegates from Saudi-Arabia and Brazil that the form will strongly depend on the content of the treaty, or as we say "form follows function". This should be considered in the organization and sequencing of the further work.

Thank you Mr. Chair



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Sequencing and recommended further work to be undertaken

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 1st December 2022

Mr. Chair,

We have a demanding task, we need to elaborate an international treaty with international binding rules in a very ambitious time frame. During INC 1, we have the chance to present and hear views on a variety of topics related to the treaty.

At INC 2, we will have to move into treaty making mode, meaning going deeper into the substance and discuss possible elements of the instrument, in particular obligations and control measures throughout the life cycle of all plastics. The discussions should be based on the elements paper the secretariat is going to prepare, based on inputs from Member States and Stakeholders.

To facilitate discussion, two contact groups should be established, ideally already at INC 1, to discuss possible elements of the instrument. The groups could be structured as following:

- Group 1: Objectives, Control measures & Implementation (including NAP)
- Group 2: Means of Implementation & Institutional arrangements and other elements (including stakeholders),

Support the call by many others to support participation for countries in need with two delegates,



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Stakeholder participation and engagement

Punta del Este (Uruguay) – 30 November 2022

Thank you Mr. Chair

Switzerland very much values the engagement, expertise and inputs from stakeholders. We cannot elaborate an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution without the engagement and involvement of civil society, scientists, and the private sector. Early and meaningful engagement is therefore essential. We also welcome the coalitions that are emerging from business, scientists and the civil society that are supportive of an ambitious treaty with a strong global regulatory framework.

We are interested in finding the best ways to support a dialogue and to benefit from their inputs. One way to catalyse and mobilise expertise in a concrete and targeted manner – is to receive written inputs to inform the negotiations. This is why my delegation is very supportive of the elaboration of a document that would contain options for obligations and control measures across the full life cycle of plastics that would be based not only on inputs from Member States but also from stakeholders.

We also believe that the intersessional period is a good moment to allow for exchanges in a variety of format. Dialogues during this time has the advantages to allow Member States to digest and integrate relevant information in their position for relevant INCs.

As we move into treaty making mode – it would also be of great interest to my delegation to see how best to ensure that stakeholders, in particular the private sector, could support the implementation of the treaty. The Multistakeholder Action Agenda is one of the ways and we are interested in discussing its modalities as we move into the negotiations of the treaty.

And finally, let's not forget that we have an ambitious time frame. The priority is to allow for efficient negotiations. There are many other forums and voluntary initiatives and we should avoid creating duplication or a burdensome process in the context of the INC process.

I thank you.