



The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

First Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee Responsible for Developing an International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastics Pollution (INC-1)

28 November – 2 December, 2022

Punta del Este, Uruguay

Opening Statement

As this is the first time that Trinidad and Tobago is taking the floor, we would like to thank the Secretariat for not only convening this pivotal meeting but also for the preparation of the numerous working documents to assist with the groundwork leading up to this INC-1; and to the government of Uruguay we extend many thanks for being a most welcoming host. We also take this opportunity to congratulate our esteemed GRULAC colleagues his Excellency Ambassador Meza-Cuadra Velasquez of Peru and his Excellency Ambassador Vayas Valdivieso of Ecuador for assuming the alternating chairmanship of this INC.

At the outset, Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statements made by his Excellency Ambassador of Columbia on behalf of GRULAC and Ms. Asha Challenger on behalf of AOSIS.

Trinidad and Tobago as a Small Island Developing State prioritizes the development and adoption of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment; an issue that has wide reaching impacts and is of increasing importance within not only our twin isle, but globally.

Trinidad and Tobago's social and economic development is firmly anchored within the context of the UN SDGs, placing the environment at the center of our development goals. As such this instrument will form an integral part in addressing the many crosscutting issues that we face, associated with plastic pollution, and in particular efforts towards developing a circular economy. Plastic pollution and the resources for plastic production are known to exacerbate not only the causes but the negative impacts of climate change, which further highlights the complementarity of the ambitions of this future instrument to those of say, the Paris Agreement and the broader SDGs.

We therefore support expanding action against plastic pollution from solely a waste management perspective to now encapsulating its full life cycle and progressing to a more circular economy overall. We stand by our GRULAC region when we call for this instrument to provide remediation pathways for existing pollution; to allow flexibility taking into account national circumstances and respective capabilities; and to prioritize additional, predictable and adequate financial resources, capacity building and technology development, access and transfer. As a developing country we also call for allowances for financial support of at least two participants per delegation to reinforce our participation at this INC. We look forward to engaging constructively and continuing this journey and the work that lies ahead in developing this very critical instrument.

Thank You.