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## Switzerland

### Interventions following the agenda, item 5

Fourth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics,  
09 – 13 November 2020

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#### Agenda item 5:

Consideration of potential response options pursuant to subparagraph 10 (d) of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/7

Chair, colleagues,

Already at UNEA-1, in 2014, Member States overwhelmingly recognized the global environmental threat of marine plastic pollution. UNEA called for further information and immediate action. Over more than six years, we have now been working at the expert level and intergovernmentally. We have increased our knowledge on one, **governance** and two, on **technical and research-related** work.

We can now make a fair conclusion that the **status quo**, i.e. continuing to rely on existing measures that have proven insufficient - is not an option.

We learned that numerous national and regional initiatives have been implemented around the world, but gaps in policy remain. Marine plastic pollution is a classic example of a global coordination problem that requires a global response. The existing legal framework covering marine plastic pollution is fragmented and ineffective to the extent that is also not sufficiently coordinated. We want to avoid duplication of processes and enhance coordination and improve on governance.

We are of the opinion that the overarching aim must be to work towards **clear, comprehensive, coherent, efficient and effective international rules with corresponding institutions to effectively address this environmental issue of global concern.**

**Therefore, with respect to form**, this delegation argues for creating a global architecture that includes existing and new, voluntary and legally binding elements, in a multi-layered, governance approach, in an agreement, as our preferred global response.

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Distinguished delegates, gaps in addressing plastic pollution exist in various aspects, including knowledge, policy, technology, financing and awareness.

Therefore, **with respect to content**, the response must cover the life-cycle of plastics including sourcing, sustainable production and consumption, and focus on mitigation. Further components include arrangements for capacity building and technical and financial assistance, and harmonize reporting and monitoring for compliance towards accountability. To name just two of the components.

From Switzerland, it is estimated that every year 0,0002 % of the world total pollution of plastics enters via the rivers into the oceans. Our own, recent report on the “State of the Environment of Switzerland” reminds us, however, that 75% of raw material consumption of Switzerland is caused abroad. We highlight the importance of ensuring a healthy and resilient marine environment and recognize that all States have a shared responsibility.

Distinguished colleagues, over the course of six years, since 2014, we negotiated and decided on 13 pages of decision text on the issue. Already in 2014, I recall, we decided quickly on an almost uncontested resolution. Member states all agreed that a coherent and effective global response on the issue is needed. We need to make the next step towards an agreement.

Thank you.

Reference: R472-1762