

## **Agenda Item 6-National Statement-Trinidad and Tobago**

Trinidad and Tobago would like to thank the Kingdom of Thailand for its hospitality and the warm reception. We would also like to congratulate you Chair for your appointment, as well as the interim Chair for her willingness to undertake this role. We also extend appreciation to the Secretariat for the preparatory work and logistical support that has been provided for this Meeting.

Trinidad and Tobago supports the statement presented by Costa Rica on behalf of GRULAC. We also see value in developing a broad and flexible mandate for the scope of the panel that would not limit its current or future work. We also support calls for an integrated and inclusive approach, which would be facilitated by ensuring geographical and gender balance in the composition of the Panel, a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach, and the incorporation of capacity building, as this would only strengthen the Panel's execution of duties. Further, we emphasize the need to ensure traditional knowledge is incorporated in the Panel's assessments.

Trinidad and Tobago also recognizes the importance of efforts that are made to ensure complementarity and avoidance of duplication of existing multilateral frameworks and subsidiary bodies. In this regard, the Panel should function as an authoritative entity that ensures transparency and access by relevant audiences of rigorous scientific information that fill gaps, particularly in line with the priorities of developing countries. In so doing, the Panel's outputs should take into consideration national and regional circumstances, in a form that is palatable to policy makers so that solutions presented will lead to long term positive impacts. Overall, we believe it is important that the Panel's work should align with the mandate set in UNEA Resolution 5/8, with the protection of human health and the environment and the minimization and prevention of the adverse impacts of the unsound management of chemicals and waste as the basis of its work.