

GRULAC STATEMENT
Second Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee INC2

Paris, May 29th, 2023

I am honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC).

At the outset, GRULAC would like to thank the Republic of France for hosting this important meeting. We would also like to commend the Chair and the Secretariat in diligently preparing for this round of negotiations. GRULAC reiterates its commitment to developing an ambitious and effective instrument, to end plastic pollution to protect human health and the environment, supported by robust means of implementation. In this regard, in the interest of moving directly towards substantive negotiations, we have decided as a group to waive our national interventions and request the secretariat to duly register them.

During this session, we aim to build substantively on the progress made during INC-1 and to agree on a mandate to develop a zero draft for INC-3 as well as for a participatory, inclusive and gender balanced intersessional work

Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing global, regional and national challenges, and is interlinked to other environmental crises such as climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, land degradation and drought. It adversely affects ecosystems, the achievement of sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to health and to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Plastic pollution, which can be of a transboundary nature has disproportionate negative socio-economic and environmental consequences in our region and, demands immediate attention and concerted action.

The future treaty must also address plastic pollution in the marine environment, as it negatively impacts biodiversity, fisheries, the shipping industry, and food security.

For this second meeting of negotiations, in our pursuit of viable solutions, GRULAC reaffirms the importance of addressing plastic pollution through actions across the full life cycle of plastics, including by preventing and

reducing plastic pollution at its source, taking into account national circumstances and capabilities. We also deem it imperative to tackle existing plastic pollution through this future instrument.

In order to end plastic pollution, we advocate for measures that will result in sustainable production and consumption patterns; increase transparency, including through traceability mechanisms; evaluate the use of safe and environmentally sound substitutes and alternative materials and technologies; implement sustainable waste management and remediation strategies.

Therefore, measures governing the regulation of extended producer responsibility , and restrictions as appropriate , should also be part of a comprehensive package of solutions.

We need to develop precise criteria for identifying additives, plastic polymers and plastic products that negatively impact human health and the environment, while promoting safe circularity, as well as design for sustainable recycling and reuse.

GRULAC considers that the human rights approach, gender-responsive considerations, transparency, access to information and collaboration among governments, academia, industries, and civil society are paramount in negotiating and implementing these strategies successfully, taking into account just transition principles for workers, especially waste pickers, in plastic production, packaging, collection and recycling the Rio Declaration principles and national circumstances and capabilities, to leave no one behind, especially the most vulnerable groups and those most affected by plastic pollution.

We call for a Treaty that provides for effective socioeconomic inclusion measures as well as social and environmental regulation for protecting workers, in particular waste pickers, from occupational health risk, as well as residents of frontline communities, exposed to multiple hazardous chemicals applied in the manufacturing of plastics, about which we call for more transparency.

We recognize the significance of raising public awareness, fostering a culture of sustainable consumption and production, waste management and encouraging behavioral change. Education and outreach programs must be developed to inform individuals and organizations about the detrimental effects of plastic pollution and empower them to make sustainable choices.

Another crucial aspect of our discussions revolves around the need for international cooperation and shared responsibility. It is imperative that nations collaborate, exchange best practices and co-develop new technologies, and establish robust frameworks to combat collectively and sustainably plastic pollution.

Therefore, GRULAC highlights the importance of the best available science, traditional knowledge, knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge systems, as well as socioeconomic information and assessment related to plastic pollution throughout the negotiation process. We also call for close communication between the INC and the OEWG which is developing a Science-Policy Panel mandated by resolution 5/8 of the UNEA 5.2

Moreover, GRULAC emphasizes the importance of establishing robust financing mechanisms, technical assistance programs and technology transfer schemes to effectively support developing countries, including landlocked developing countries and Small Island Developing States, in addressing plastic pollution.

We also call on countries to advocate for implementation measures on par with the ambition of the instrument. National action plans, and periodic evaluation and monitoring are decisive for the success of this instrument, including their role to identify gaps in means of implementation.

We welcome the adoption of Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 and General Assembly resolution 76/300 recognizing the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the recent adoption of the resolution on chemicals and health at the World Health Assembly.

By working together, in a supportive way, we can make substantial progress towards ending plastic pollution, safeguarding our environment, protecting human health, and securing a sustainable future for present and future generations.

Thank you.