



**AFRICA GROUP ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT ON PLASTIC POLLUTION, INCLUDING IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT**  
**Africa Regional Consultations on the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee Process**  
**16-18 May 2023, Accra, Ghana**



**INC 2 Africa Group of Negotiators Consultation, 16-18 May 2023, Accra, Ghana**

*With thanks to UNEP and its various programmes (Switch Africa Green, Bamako Convention, AMCEN), KAS and WWF for providing funds and technical support for the consultations*

## **1. Introduction**

The African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution (AGN) met from 16 – 18 May 2023 in Accra, Ghana to strengthen Africa’s position and concretize its negotiation strategy ahead of INC-2 in Paris, 29 May-2 June 2023.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution 5/14 established an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. In response to the above UNEA resolution, the resumed ordinary eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), in its decision 18/2, established the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) on plastics pollution with a view of coordinating Africa’s interests in the intergovernmental negotiation committee processes.

The INC process as called for by UNEA resolution 5/14, including identifying the objective, substantive

provisions including core obligations, control measures, and voluntary approaches, implementation measures, means of implementation and mechanisms for monitoring and verification.

The INC is scheduled to have five meetings with the first INC meeting having taken place on 28 November 2022 to 2 December 2022 in Uruguay. With Africa's strong representation and participation in INC-1, it was necessary and important to prepare the Africa group to effectively participate in INC-2. Africa's strong voice and common position is needed at the INC-2 where the global environmental stage will be set to discuss potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics.

## **2. Opening Remarks**

**Mr. Oliver Boachie**, Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution, Ghana, delivered the opening remarks at the 2nd Africa Regional Consultations on the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) Process Accra, Ghana. He extended a warm welcome to all participants and expressed gratitude to the organizers, as well as Konrad Adenauer and WWF for convening and sponsoring the session. Mr. Boachie emphasized the importance of the AGN's role in preparing for INC 2 and highlighted that the AGN was established by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) to ensure Africa's effective participation in the development of an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. He acknowledged the AGN's progress in fulfilling its mandate and noted that other regions are seeking Africa's collaboration on issues of common interest. Mr. Boachie emphasized the need for AGN members to acquire the necessary technical knowledge and soft skills for successful negotiations.

The Chair outlined the threefold outcomes for the consultation assembly in Accra:

- Enhancing the skills of AGN members and facilitating multilateral negotiations.
- Pursuing a common position and aligning key elements related to the options paper.
- Developing a revised version of the Africa Region's working position.

These outcomes are aimed at strengthening Africa's negotiation and advocacy efforts. Mr. Boachie mentioned that the INC Secretariat has requested submissions from countries on control measures, means of implementation, and obligations in preparation for INC 2. An options paper has been developed based on these submissions for discussion at the upcoming conference. To ensure broad participation, funding will be provided to support the attendance of a maximum of two delegates from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

In conclusion, the Chair encouraged AGN members to thoroughly understand the options paper and leverage their collective strength during the negotiation process. He highlighted Africa's focus and areas of comparative advantage, particularly in means of implementation, and urged members to give special attention to these



*Mr. Oliver Boachie, Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution*

aspects.

**Anja Casper-Berretta, Head of Regional Program for Energy Security & Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung,** stated, "According to recent reports, the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) has been actively engaged since its inaugural meeting seven months ago, which is a remarkable achievement. Although Africa's contribution to global plastic production is not significant, it serves as a major importer of plastics and plastic products. It is anticipated that plastic consumption in Africa will witness a substantial increase in the future. Therefore, it is crucial for the African region to concentrate on enhancing technical capacity, implementing regulatory measures, and promoting behavioral change to combat plastic pollution.

The treaty process provides an opportunity for the African region to express its priorities and ensure their inclusion in the final agreement. Addressing plastic pollution necessitates the development of policy and regulatory frameworks, adoption of innovative technologies, and product redesign. Moreover, creating a supportive environment to encourage private sector engagement is essential. Implementing a circular economy approach can effectively tackle plastic pollution while stimulating economic growth.

In addition to these measures, behavioral change plays a pivotal role, although it is often overlooked. A study conducted by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in a school highlighted the limited awareness among school children regarding plastic pollution. Therefore, it is crucial to consider incorporating education on plastic pollution into school curricula. This step would promote social acceptance and facilitate the transition towards sustainable practices.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) expresses its willingness and commitment to collaborating with other partners on this journey to address plastic pollution effectively."



*Ms. Anja Casper-Berretta, Head of Regional Program for Energy Security & Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*



**Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme**, stated, "The commitment shown by stakeholders in addressing plastic pollution and recognizing their role as negotiators in safeguarding the future of the planet is commendable. The scale of plastic pollution is alarming, with an annual production of 400 million tonnes, 46% of which is landfilled, 22% mismanaged, 17% incinerated, and only 15% recycled.

In Africa, with a population of 1.3 billion, constituting 16% of the global population, the continent contributes 5% to global plastic production while consuming 4%. Studies indicate that 80% of plastic waste in Africa is mismanaged. Specifically, in Ghana, approximately 1 million tonnes of plastic waste is generated annually, with a recycling rate of around 9%.

Given these statistics, it is evident that comprehensive policies and legal frameworks addressing plastics throughout their entire life cycle are essential at the national level. At the regional level, stakeholders are encouraged to leverage existing joint sub-regional and regional frameworks such as the Bamako Convention. Furthermore, Africa should actively participate in the Global Plastics Treaty dialogue at the global level and promote international cooperation, emphasizing the need for members to approach discussions with dedication and responsibility, seeking a common position, as collective action is vital for Africa's success in addressing plastic pollution."

In conclusion, Ms. Elizabeth Mrema extended gratitude to Ghana for hosting the regional consultation, acknowledging the importance of the event.

**Mr. Cheikh Sylla, Representative of AMCEN Presidency**, stated, "The consultations expressed a strong commitment to resolving the issue of plastic pollution. Previous meetings focused on Resolution 5/14, which mandates the drafting of a treaty on plastics management. Mr. Cheikh Sylla emphasized the importance of African unity in this endeavor and acknowledged Ghana for its commendable efforts. He also recognized the UNEP office for facilitating effective coordination among countries.

It was reported that Africa's involvement in the negotiations was briefed to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) during its last Bureau meeting. A comprehensive report highlighting the key points for INC 2 will be submitted to AMCEN at its upcoming meeting. He emphasized the widespread demand for a legally binding statement and stressed the necessity of investing in capacity building to achieve this goal. Furthermore, attention was drawn to the importance of investments and standards for chemical management and the promotion of recycling initiatives.



*Ms. Elizabeth Mrema Deputy Executive Director, UNEP*



*Mr. Cheikh Sylla, Representative of AMCEN Presidency*

In addition, the participation of the private sector in supporting collection and recycling efforts was deemed crucial. He also emphasized the need to involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the discussions and urged members to ensure that the voice of Africa is heard throughout the negotiations."

The meeting was officially opened by **H.E Mr Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation**, who applauded the AGN for advancing Africa's priorities in the development of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. He further urged them to have a critical look on Ghana's position paper on Global Extended Producer Responsibility levy and consider whether to incorporate some of the elements Africa's common position.



*H.E Mr Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation*

### 3. Substantive Discussions

#### a. Presentation by Executive Secretary, INC

Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat for the INC on Plastic Pollution, delivered a [brief presentation on the Options Paper and INC-2 Organizational Matters](#). She highlighted that the discussions in Paris would primarily focus on the Options Paper, reaching an agreement on a Zero draft, and determining the mandate for INC 3.

Ms. Mathur-Filipp informed the participants that a range of documents and pre-read materials have been made available online to assist member States in their deliberations. Additionally, she mentioned that there would be voting on the nominees for the Bureau from certain regions.

She further announced that there will be a total of five INCs, with the 3rd, 4th, and 5th INCs likely to be held in Nairobi, Canada, and Korea respectively. UNEA 6, scheduled for February 2024, will also feature the progress of the INC on its agenda.



*Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat for the INC on Plastic Pollution*

#### b. Presentation by Resource Partners

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the outcomes of INC 1 and to formulate Africa's common position for INC 2, resource partners delivered a summary presentation of the Option Paper. The presentation emphasized the priorities and interests of the Africa group and provided a synopsis of submissions from other regions such as GRULAC, EU, and Asia Pacific. The purpose of this presentation was to analyze the differences between the positions of these regions and that of Africa, enabling a comparison and evaluation of the various

perspectives. Among the resource partners presenting were.

- Anja Casper-Berretta, Head of Regional Program for Energy Security & Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa, [Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Presentation](#)
- Zaynab Sadan, Plastics Policy Regional Coordinator, [WWF presentation](#)
- Ana Alexandrina, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), [GAIA Presentation](#)

Later in the first day, a dinner reception, sponsored by WWF and Ghana, was organized, during which various civil society groups, including representatives from the informal waste sector, were invited. The gathering provided an opportunity for the representatives to emphasize the importance of incorporating informal waste pickers in the discussion and decision-making processes, considering their significant role in waste collection. It was highlighted that informal waste pickers are responsible for collecting 60% of the garbage, underscoring the necessity of recognizing and involving them in addressing plastic pollution and waste management initiatives.

**4. Discussions of the Option Paper**

The AGN reviewed the option paper on day 2 and 3 through two contact groups: Group 1 focused on core obligations and control measures, while Group 2 examined means of implementation. Both contact groups presented and discussed their positions in the plenary session. As a result, the AGN formulated recommendations that guided the drafting of the African Common Positions and engagement at INC 2.



Contact Group 1



Contact Group 2

**5. Organizational matters**

The Chair moderated the session and facilitated discussions on the areas of support for the AGN during INC-2 including Preparation of Africa’s Statement, Secretariat support in Paris, Rapporteurs, Bilingual support, Organization of morning meetings. Decisions and conclusions regarding the areas of support were reached. The specifics of the decisions and conclusions can be found in the provided table.

Agenda	Countries proposed
Preparation of Africa Group Statement	Uganda, Angola, South Africa, Mali, Egypt, Ghana, Senegal



Secretariat support in Paris; Translation and interpretation	All NGOs will check and revert on supporting two bilingual persons for the purpose of translation. Angola proposed the chair and bureau members (Senegal and Rwanda) to play the role of secretariat with the help of Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria The Ghana team will also provide additional support		
Rapporteur	Proposal of two rapporteur (English and French speaking) Uganda, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Tunisia		
Daily Group Meetings	Facilities required		
AGN Structure			
Participation in the 2 contact groups	ITEM	LEAD CO-ORDINATORS	SUPPORTING COUNTRIES
	Group 1: Core obligations and control measures  And all those who participated in group 1 in Accra meeting.	Core Obligation – Uganda (Patience)	Cameroon, Kenya , Ghana Botswana, Mali, Nigeria, Liberia, Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Eswatini, Egypt
		Control Measure- South Africa	Cameroon, Kenya, Ghana, Botswana, Mali, Nigeria, Liberia, Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Eswatini
	Group 2: Means of implementation.  And all those who participated in group 2 in Accra meeting.	Financial Mechanism	Egypt, Togo, Senegal
		Capacity Building	Ghana, Tanzania, Comoros, Ethiopia
		Technical Assistance	Somalia, Malawi, Ghana
Technology transfer		Niger, South Africa, Ghana	
	Implementation measures	Cote D'Ivoire	

## 6. Other matters arising in the discussion included.

- The need to address the issue of translation and make arrangements for bilingual support in contact groups.
- The need to discuss the issues of AGN's rules and procedures since they were not fully dealt with at the last meeting.
- The need to discuss the INC rules of procedure since they were not fully dealt with at INC 1, in terms of their status and the way forward.

## 7. Closing ceremony

In his closing statements, **Jacob Johnson Attakpah, representing the Green Africa Youth Organization**, strongly expressed alignment with the ambitious positions of the African Group in relation to reducing the trade, production, and use of plastics. He emphasized the importance of limiting the presence of toxic chemicals in plastics and prohibiting hazardous practices such as open burning, incineration firing in coal-fired power plants, waste-to-energy processes, and co-processing in cement kilns.



*Mr. Jacob Johnson Attakpah from Green Africa Youth Organization*

Furthermore, he highlighted that addressing the reduction of plastic production at its source remains a fundamental aspect of efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and establish resilience and solutions to climate change. He emphasized the significance of ensuring justice and equity for all in these endeavors.

In his additional closing remarks, **Mr. Robert Wabunoha, the Environmental Governance Regional Subprogramme Coordinator at the Africa Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, reaffirmed the commitment and preparedness of UNEP and its Regional Office for Africa to provide support to the Africa group. He emphasized UNEP's willingness to assist the Africa Group of Negotiators on plastics and ensure their effective engagement in the INC processes. This statement underscored UNEP's dedication to collaborating with the African region in addressing plastic pollution and achieving successful outcomes in the negotiations.



*UNEP Team Making Closing Remarks*

## Annex 1



Concept Note and  
Agenda-Africa Region



ATTENDANCE INC2  
GHANA DAY 1 AND 2



ATTENDANCE SHEET  
INC2 GHANA DAY3.ppt