

**INC-3 opening remarks – Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp,  
Executive Secretary, INC-Plastics Secretariat (5 min)**

Your Excellency William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya,

Madam Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Ambassador Meza-Cuadra, Chair of the INC,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

I stand before you today with a profound sense of purpose and optimism as we convene for the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. On behalf of the Secretariat, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to this important session.

Nature is suffocating, gasping for breath. All ecosystems, terrestrial and marine, are under threat from plastic pollution. Not only vulnerable and endangered species are at risk, but the diversity of life on our planet hangs in the balance.

Our own health is at stake, too: Burning plastic waste has been linked to increased risk of heart diseases and aggravating respiratory problems, and microplastics have been found in human blood, and accumulate in our organs.

We hold in our hands the power to correct the destructive course that our actions have led us on, harming us and harming this planet we call our home. We need to plot a new course on plastics to preserve the intricate and fragile web of life that sustains us all.

Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the Government of Kenya for hosting our proceedings here in Nairobi. It was here in Nairobi that in March last year, Member States came together in a spirit of ambition, cooperation and compromise to adopt the historic United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution 5/14 that paved the way for our Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the many donors whose generous contributions have made this gathering possible. Our thanks go to the governments of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and to the European Commission.

I wish to recognize our Chair, Ambassador Meza-Cuadra, whose strong and committed leadership has been instrumental during the preparations for our third session. We are also grateful to the Members of the Bureau who provided helpful advice and guidance throughout the intersessional period.

Let me also acknowledge and thank our colleagues from the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, the Montreal Protocol, the Minamata Convention, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Once again, your experience and support have been invaluable. We are

also grateful for the amazing support provided by the Communication Division, Law Division and Governance Affairs Office of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Above all, I am deeply grateful to our INC Secretariat team who have worked tirelessly to ensure the timely preparation and release of documents for this session, who successfully managed the record number of registrations, and who are doing their utmost to ensure the smooth running of our session this week.

I am delighted with the ever-growing interest in our negotiations and I warmly welcome all stakeholders to this session. I have kept my pledge to you made at our second session in Paris, as we have managed to increase the overall capacity of our venue here in Nairobi to make sure we can accommodate everyone.

At the preparatory meeting held two days ago we had a constructive dialogue and exchange of views.

I am confident that delegates will build on this constructive spirit over the course of the next seven days to further develop the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

Distinguished delegates, this third session marks the midpoint of our process. **This is where the heavy lifting begins.**

It is up to all of us gathered here and now in Nairobi to ensure that we are on track to delivering an agreement on plastic pollution by the end of 2024 in line with the mandate we received at the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly. This is not a mere goal; it is a necessity. We must work collectively, ensuring all views are heard, so that we can build consensus and move forward swiftly to fulfil the mandate given to us by Resolution 5/14.

We hope that the zero draft text and the discussions from the preparatory meeting can support the work at this session and will help advance the negotiations on the future instrument.

Thank you.