

## **OPENING STATEMENT CHAIR INC**

Excelencias, distinguidos delegados, representantes de organizaciones observadoras, amigos todos,

Es un honor darles la bienvenida a esta esperada sesión plenaria de apertura.

En primer lugar, me gustaría expresar mi profundo agradecimiento a los miembros del INC, por haberme elegido como Presidente. Me gustaría agradecer también a mi grupo regional GRULAC por presentar la propuesta, acordada junto con el Ecuador, para ser elegido hoy como su Presidente.

Interpreto esta decisión también como una señal de confianza hacia mi país, el Perú, que ha estado plenamente comprometido con este esfuerzo multilateral desde el principio. Pueden contar con nuestra dedicación personal e institucional para promover un proceso abierto, transparente y ordenado.

Como presidente de la primera sesión del INC, deseo expresar nuestro especial agradecimiento al gobierno de Uruguay por su generosa y ejemplar labor en la organización de la sesión inaugural de tan importante e histórico proceso y al excelentísimo señor Presidente de la República Oriental del Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pau, por habernos honrado por su presencia.

También quisiera agradecer especialmente a nuestros distinguidos colegas y amigos del PNUMA: Inger Andersen, Secretaria General Adjunta de las Naciones Unidas y Directora Ejecutiva del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente; Jyoti Mathur Filipp, Secretaria Ejecutiva de la Secretaría del PNUMA para el INC, y a sus respectivos equipos, por su ardua labor previa a la sesión de hoy.

Today, we begin to negotiate what will likely be the most significant international environmental treaty in recent years.

As we know, plastic consumption and production has reached unsustainable levels in the past decades. While global plastic production has doubled from 2000 to 2019, plastic consumption has quadrupled over the past 30 years. Current projections stipulate that, left unchecked, plastic production will double again in the next 20 years, while waste leakage will triple by 2040. The world will not be able to manage the volume of plastic waste and avoid leakage. Business as usual is unacceptable. The need for an ambitious treaty is urgent, to temper plastic pollution's impact on ecosystems, biodiversity, the climate and human health.

It is no secret that this exponential growth in plastic production and waste is driven by a skyrocketing increase in the production of single-use plastics for packaging and consumer goods, which accounts for half of all plastic waste generation.

In this context, this INC process couldn't be more important and our mandate is as clear as it is ambitious.

As stipulated in UNEA resolution 5/14 entitled "Ending plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument", which provides the legal framework that defines and guides our efforts as participants of the INC process, we must endeavor to "develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment ... based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics..." that:

- Specifies objectives
- Promotes sustainable production and consumption of plastics
- Promotes national and international cooperation to reduce pollution, including existing plastic
- Develops and implements national action plans
- Promotes cooperation between relevant conventions, to avoid duplication
- Encourages action by all stakeholders
- Specifies arrangements for capacity building and technical assistance
- Promotes research and addresses compliance.

The same resolution exhorts us to not lose sight of the need for a financial mechanism, scientific realities, and existing best practices in our deliberations.

Of course, we will not resolve all of these aspects today or in this first session, or even in the second session. We are all cognizant of the reality that the establishment of a truly sustainable life cycle of plastics may require a broader shift in our economic, policy and commercial paradigms, changes that we need to be prepared and equipped to carry out.

Plastics are commonplace, a staple of modern life and, in certain sectors, arguably indispensable. They are deeply embedded in global and complex value chains, which will certainly make our work in this INC process equally complex.

Although the majority of public scrutiny has been placed on plastic waste and leakage into the environment from inadequate disposal, addressing the end-of-life aspects of plastics alone will not suffice. We need to address the problem from all angles to ensure that we produce an instrument that is effective and can adequately combat the problem in all of its dimensions.

Plastic pollution is one of the global environmental issues that demonstrates that the triple planetary crisis we are currently living through – pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change – are all in fact manifestations of the same root problem.

That is why as Chair, and as a person, I urge each of you to think about the future, the longer term health of this planet when negotiating in the coming days. Let's engage constructively, with an open mind, and geared toward finding solutions and common ground.

Our goal is clear: to end plastic pollution on our planet. Let's get to work.