

Dear Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

First of all, I would like to thank the Government and the people of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay for organizing and hosting this large-scale event.

The Russian Federation welcomes the decision of the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) enshrined in its Resolution 5/14 of March 2nd 2022, on convening the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. We consider it timely to organize and hold the first meeting of the INC.

The destructive consequences of plastic pollution for the environmental, social and economic components of sustainable development have been scientifically proved. The humanity has reached the point, when finding solution for this issue requires a deeper and broader cooperation between states, international and environmental organizations, private industries and the civil society.

Let me emphasize just a few key indicators. To date, the products of plastic degradation account for up to 80% of the terrestrial and up to 90% of marine litter. Decomposing for centuries, they lead to the gradual and inevitable loss by the ecosystems of their ability of self-purification and maintaining the balance. According to the Russian Academy of Sciences, the humankind has already produced around 8,5 billion tonnes of plastic waste, and this figure continues to grow.

The products of plastic splitting poison the world's ocean ecosystems, and in some cases are a threat to human health.

It is important to mention that currently the humanity applies a sectoral approach to this problem. For example, we have a number of international legal instruments adopted and implemented by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and dealing with plastic pollution in the marine environment. However, we believe that a comprehensive approach is needed and therefore we support the efforts of the international community to develop a universal international legal instrument that would allow countries to gradually shift through joint efforts to a circular economy.

In this regard, the Russian Federation pays great attention to the work of the INC and is ready to actively participate in this process.

We proceed from the fact that the new document should be well-balanced and should take into consideration the interests and capacity of various individual states, providing the latter with maximum flexibility in defining their national indicators and forms of reporting.

We hope that the negotiations will be held in a constructive manner and will not be politicized.