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**Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop
an international legally binding instrument on plastic
pollution, including in the marine environment
Fifth session**

Busan, Republic of Korea, 25 November–1 December 2024 and
Geneva, Switzerland, 5–14 August 2025 and 7 February 2026

**Draft report of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to
develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic
pollution, including in the marine environment, on the work of
its fifth session**

Introduction

1. In resolution 5/14 of 2 March 2022 entitled “End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument”, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee to begin its work during the second half of 2022, with the ambition of completing that work by the end of 2024. The Environment Assembly also decided that the intergovernmental negotiating committee was to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, which could include both binding and voluntary approaches, based on a comprehensive approach that addressed the full life cycle of plastic, taking into account, among other things, the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as national circumstances and capabilities, and including provisions described in the resolution.
2. Accordingly, the first session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, was held at the Punta del Este Convention and Exhibition Centre, Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 28 November to 2 December 2022. The second session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris from 29 May to 2 June 2023. The third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the headquarters of UNEP in Nairobi from 13 to 19 November 2023. The fourth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa from 23 to 29 April 2024. The first part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the Busan Convention Centre, Busan, Republic of Korea, from 25 November to 1 December 2024. The second part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 5 to 14 August 2025. The third part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee was held at the Geneva International Conference Centre, Geneva, on 7 February 2026.

I. Opening of the session

3. The third part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, hereinafter “the committee”, was declared open by Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden), Vice-Chair presiding over the proceedings, at 10.25 a.m. on Saturday, 7 February 2026, and the 10th plenary meeting of the fifth session was called to order.

4. Opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Lissinger-Peitz and Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Executive Secretary of the committee, in which they expressed their appreciation to the former Chairs, Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez and Luis Vayas Valdivieso, for their steadfast leadership, and to Asha Challenger for her tireless work as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur as she concluded her tenure in that role. Ms. Mathur-Filipp also extended her thanks to the donors whose generous support enabled the committee to function effectively and inclusively, namely Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Monaco, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, and the European Commission. She recalled that the United Nations code of conduct applied to all United Nations meetings and was available on the committee’s website.

5. The presiding Vice-Chair informed the committee that, as outlined in the scenario note (UNEP/PP/INC.5/INF/19), no substantive discussions towards the negotiation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, would take place at the current resumed session, the sole purpose of which was the election of officers and the discussion of any related administrative matters. Specifically, the committee would not take up agenda item 3, organizational matters, or agenda item 4, preparation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. It was also not expected that any matters would be raised under agenda item 5, other matters.

II. Election of officers

6. Introducing the item, the presiding Vice-Chair recalled that, since the resignation of Mr. Valdivieso (Ecuador) on 31 October 2025, the position of Chair had remained vacant. Mr. Valdivieso’s resignation had also resulted in a vacant seat on the Bureau for a representative of the Latin American and Caribbean States. Furthermore, Asha Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda), Vice-Chair representing the small island developing States and Rapporteur of the committee, had resigned in advance of the current resumed session. The purpose of the current resumed session was therefore to elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair and to designate a rapporteur, in accordance with rule 9 of the draft rules of procedure that applied to the committee’s work on a provisional basis. In the absence of agreement on a single candidate for the position of Chair, the committee would proceed to hold the elections by secret ballot in accordance with rules 45–47 of the draft rules of procedure.

7. In the ensuing discussion, one representative, supported by many others, proposed holding further consultations with a view to reaching consensus on a single candidate for the position of Chair, thus enabling an election by acclamation. Many representatives objected to the proposal, noting that no agreement on a single candidate had been achieved after several months of consultations and further discussions at the current resumed session were unlikely to result in consensus. They said that, in the interest of saving time, the committee should move to a secret ballot in accordance with rule 45 of the draft rules of procedure, with one member calling for the committee to move immediately to elections by secret ballot.

8. In response to a point of order raised by one representative, the presiding Vice-Chair confirmed that, in accordance with rule 28 of the draft rules of procedure of the committee, the list of speakers would remain open to enable all the representatives who wished to speak to express their views on the issue.

9. Responding to concerns raised by some representatives, a representative of the secretariat explained that three delegations had informed the secretariat of difficulties in obtaining entry visas to attend the current resumed session. Those difficulties had been resolved. A fourth delegation had notified the secretariat the previous day of a similar issue affecting a Bureau member; however, that matter had concerned a request for an entry visa to a Schengen area country other than the country in which the current resumed session was taking place, for which reason the secretariat had been unable to assist.

10. In response to a question from one representative, the Principal Legal Officer outlined the process for selecting tellers in the event that a secret ballot was held. He confirmed that the tellers

would be committee members from those regional groups that had not nominated candidates for election as Chair.

11. At the request of the committee, the three candidates standing for election as Chair – Julio Cordano (Chile), Nazia Zaib Ali (Pakistan) and Cheikh Ndiaye Sylla (Senegal) – introduced themselves, outlining briefly their relevant experience and objectives.

12. One representative called for more time in order to pose questions to and hear further from the candidates. Several other representatives pointed out that the current resumed session was not the appropriate setting for further such discussion. They cautioned against attempts to prolong the process, emphasizing that the committee had been convened for organizational and administrative purposes, addressing the election of officers, including the position of Chair. Since time was limited, the relevant draft rules of procedure should be applied so that all members could participate in a secret ballot.

13. Following a proposal by the presiding Vice-Chair, who noted that there was a desire to elect a Chair by acclamation and that the time available to do so was limited, the committee decided to suspend the meeting to allow the three candidates a short period in which to conduct informal consultations with a view to reaching agreement on a single candidate. If they failed to do so, the committee would immediately proceed with the election of the Chair by secret ballot, in accordance with rule 45 of the draft rules of procedure. Accordingly, the 10th plenary meeting of the session was suspended at midday on 7 February 2026.

14. At the resumption of the meeting, at 2.45 p.m. on 7 February 2026, the presiding Vice-Chair informed the committee that no agreement had been reached on a single candidate for the position of Chair. Subsequently, the presiding Vice-Chair drew attention to the election process for the Chair of the committee, which would be held by secret ballot, in accordance with rules 45 and 46 of the draft rules of procedure of the committee. She then proposed that the committee proceed to the election of the Chair of the committee. The nominated candidates were:

- (a) Julio Cordano (Chile);
- (b) Nazia Zaib Ali (Pakistan);
- (c) Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla (Senegal).

15. Following a request for clarification from one representative, the Principal Legal Officer confirmed that the European Union, as a regional economic integration organization, had notified the secretariat in writing that, in the event of a secret ballot, each of the European Union's member States would exercise their individual voting rights. Accordingly, the secretariat would omit the seat of the European Union when distributing the ballots.

16. The committee decided to proceed to the election of the Chair of the committee by secret ballot, in accordance with rules 45 and 46 of the draft rules of procedure of the committee.

17. At the invitation of the presiding Vice-Chair, Toghrul Salmanzade (Azerbaijan), Cynthia Bainbridge (Canada), Gilles Realini (Monaco) and Marina Milojevic (Serbia) acted as tellers.

18. A vote was taken by secret ballot. Subsequently, the presiding Vice-Chair reported the results as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	156
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	156
Abstentions:	1
Number of members present and voting:	155
Required majority:	78
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Cordano (Chile)	73
Mr. Sylla (Senegal)	48
Ms. Zaib Ali (Pakistan)	34

19. Given that none of the candidates had received the required majority, the presiding Vice-Chair said that, pursuant to rule 46 of the draft rules of procedure of the committee, a second ballot was required, to be restricted to the two candidates with the largest number of votes.

20. Some representatives requested additional time for consultations among the regional groups on the election of the Chair, with a view to reaching consensus. The presiding Vice-Chair suspended the meeting at 4.15 p.m. to allow time for additional consultations.
21. Upon the resumption of the meeting at 5 p.m. on 7 February, the presiding Vice-Chair invited the committee to proceed to the second round of the secret ballot.
22. At the invitation of the presiding Vice-Chair, Toghrul Salmanzade (Azerbaijan), Cynthia Bainbridge (Canada), Gilles Realini (Monaco) and Marina Milojevic (Serbia) acted as tellers.
23. A vote was taken by secret ballot. Subsequently, the presiding Vice-Chair reported the results as follows:
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|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of ballot papers: | 151 |
| Invalid ballots: | 2 |
| Number of valid ballots: | 149 |
| Abstentions: | 4 |
| Number of members present and voting: | 145 |
| Required majority: | 73 |
| Number of votes obtained: | |
| Mr. Cordano (Chile) | 92 |
| Mr. Sylla (Senegal) | 53 |
24. Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Cordano (Chile) was elected as Chair of the committee.
25. The two other candidates who had sought election each took the floor to congratulate the new Chair and assure him of their support in steering the committee's work towards a successful outcome. Several other representatives, some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, also congratulated the new Chair and expressed optimism for the continuation of the committee's work under his guidance. One representative voiced regret that the committee had been unable to elect the new Chair by consensus and asked that the election process not be used as a precedent for interpreting rules of procedure in committee sessions, under the future instrument or in the broader context of multilateral environmental agreements. She stressed that consensus-based decisions were a fundamental feature of and sound foundation for an efficient, balanced and universal instrument and for all institutional mechanisms to be established thereunder.
26. The newly elected Chair, assuming the chairmanship of the session, delivered a brief statement in which he thanked the Vice-Chair for her clarity in conducting the session up to the point of the election and acknowledged the strong leadership qualities of his fellow candidates. He said that, having held conversations with many delegations over previous months, he was convinced that countries shared a common vision of plastic pollution as a planetary problem that affected everyone and required concerted action. A treaty was needed to bring countries together around that common task, taking into account their different starting points, needs and priorities. Noting that he had also engaged in many discussions about working methods and ways to engage in a more efficient manner, he underscored the fact that, as in any multilateral negotiation, flexibility and pragmatism would be paramount. The treaty could provide clarity, mark a pathway towards an ambitious objective and establish the appropriate tools and instruments to achieve it, but required a joint effort, led by national delegations. He undertook to play a leading role in finding the needed solutions and to continue conducting conversations that enabled delegations to test ideas and possible consensus and ensure that the text evolved with predictability as they built a common understanding of the future treaty.
27. Turning to the matter of the election of Vice-Chairs and the designation of a rapporteur, the Chair, recalling that Asha Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda) had resigned from her role as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur of the committee, said that a single candidate had been nominated for the seat of the small island developing States.
28. In accordance with rule 45 of the draft rules of procedure that applied to the work of the committee on a provisional basis, the committee elected, by acclamation, Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) as Vice-Chair of the committee.
29. The committee designated Irma Gurguliani (Georgia) as Rapporteur of the committee.

III. Organizational matters

30. The agenda item was not considered.

A. Adoption of the rules of procedure

B. Adoption of the agenda

C. Organization of work

D. Attendance

31. Representatives of the following States attended the resumed session: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas (The), Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

32. Representatives of the European Union also attended the resumed session.

33. The following intergovernmental organizations and other entities were represented as observers: International Chamber of Commerce, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

34. The following United Nations bodies, secretariat units and convention secretariats were represented as observers: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, United Nations Capital Development Fund, World Health Organization.

35. A total of 89 non-governmental organizations were also represented as observers. The list of participants is set out in document UNEP/PP/INC.5/INF/21.

IV. Preparation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

36. The agenda item was not considered.

V. Other matters

37. No other matters were raised.

VI. Adoption of the report of the session

38. Introducing the item, the Chair explained that, as indicated in the scenario note, it had not been possible to prepare a draft report for consideration and adoption under the agenda item owing to the brief duration of the current resumed session. Consequently, the Rapporteur would, together with the secretariat, prepare a draft report soon after the conclusion of the current resumed session and circulate

it to the members of the committee for review, with a view to its consideration for adoption by the committee at a later date.

39. The committee agreed to entrust the preparation of the draft report of the resumed session to the Rapporteur on the understanding that it would be circulated to the committee following its preparation and subsequently considered for adoption by the committee when it next reconvened.

VII. Closure of the session

40. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the session was adjourned at 7.10 p.m. on Saturday, 7 February 2026, to be resumed at a later date and at a venue to be determined.
