ES Closing remarks, INC-2 Closing Plenary (Friday, 2 June 2023)

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Government of France for hosting the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop an International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the marine environment.

I am deeply grateful to UNESCO for providing us with this venue and for their support and facilities extended to us throughout this session. Our process has grown significantly since Punta del Este and I am humbled by the immense interest from Members and stakeholders to participate in our deliberations here in Paris.

We had over 1656 delegates participating at this session, representing 169 Members including the European Union and over 300 observer organizations including UN entities, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

Let me express my deepest appreciation to *you,* the delegates for your hard work and unwavering dedication to advance our work at this session.

I am very pleased that we now have a Bureau and Rapporteur and once more wish to congratulate the Vice-Chairs on their election.

After addressing matters of procedure we managed to reach the substance of our work and made some progress towards our mandate.

My appeal to you at the beginning of this session was that you make Paris count. You have done so, by providing us with a mandate for a zero draft and intersessional work.

Much work remains ahead but I am confident that Members will show determination to forge ahead in a spirit of cooperation as we transition from Paris to Nairobi.

Let me also recognize and thank all observer organizations who have come to this meeting in such great numbers, for your strong interest in our process.

I am also very pleased that the Committee has agreed on the dates and venues for its subsequent sessions. The Secretariat will work in close coordination with the host country of each session to secure an appropriate venue that can accommodate a larger number of participants, and to complete preparations in a timely manner.

As you all know, a lot of work goes into organizing and running a meeting such as this.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I would like to express my deep gratitude to everyone who has helped to prepare and run our second session, from the meeting room attendants, the local staff, registration team, interns, security, conference services, to the editorial and translation team – Everybody, thank you so much. A special thank you to the interpreters for your flexibility and for working tirelessly to enable us to understand each other.

I am immensely grateful to the support we received by colleagues from the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, and Montreal Protocol as well as by my former colleagues from

the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme. I would also like to thank the Law Division and the Governance Affairs Office of the United Nations Environment Programme for providing their excellent legal and governance support during this session. My thanks go to the Communications Division of UNEP for their great support in raising the profile of our process.

To my staff from the Secretariat – I extend a warm and sincere thank you.
I commend you on your hard work and commitment especially given the long hours you have put in to ensure the success of our session.

Finally, let me thank you, Ambassador Meza-Cuadra, for your leadership here in Paris and your devotion to our process.

Distinguished delegates,

The momentum you have built up here in Paris will guide our work in the intersessional period and at our future sessions. I look forward to continuing our important work together and to welcoming you all to Nairobi for our third session in November.

Thank you.