Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
Bureau meeting
Monday, 27 October 2025
15:00 - 17:00 EAT
Online

SUMMARY AND ACTION POINTS INC BUREAU MEETING 27 OCTOBER 2025

Note by the Secretariat

1. The meeting was attended by the following members:

   INC Chair: Mr. Luis Vayas Valdivieso (Ecuador);

   African States: Mr. Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla (Senegal); Ms. Juliet Kabera (Rwanda)

   Asia-Pacific States: Mr. Hiroshi Ono (Japan); Mr. Mohammed Albarrak (Saudi Arabia);

   Eastern European States: Mr. Harry Liiv (Estonia); Ms. Irma Gurguliani (Georgia)

   Latin American and Caribbean States: Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velasquez (Peru);

   Small Island Developing States: Ms. Asha Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda);

   Western European and Other States: Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden); Ms. Larke Williams (United States of America).

2. The Secretariat was represented by the Executive Secretary of the INC, Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp.

3. The INC Chair opened the meeting at 15:02 EAT, welcomed the Bureau members and thanked them for their work. He then gave the floor to the Executive Secretary for her introductory remarks.

4. The Executive Secretary expressed appreciation to the Bureau members for their time and continued commitment at this stage in the process. She referred to the process considerations note circulated to the Bureau on 9 October and to its 23 October addendum that was prepared and circulated to the Bureau on request of the Chair, stating her hope that it would be of assistance to the Bureau in its ongoing consultations. She also recalled that the draft report of the 16 October meeting had been uploaded to the INC website after taking into account comments received.

5. The Chair then outlined the agenda, proposing that, under agenda item 2 on ‘Next steps towards INC-5.3’, the Bureau should begin by addressing the matter of a possible INC session in December on the margins of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) for the purpose of electing a new INC Chair. Following this initial discussion, the Bureau would discuss interim governance arrangements for the period leading up to the

elections. Under agenda item 3 on 'Other Matters', the Chair proposed that the Bureau consider for adoption the draft Bureau reports of 7 October and 16 October, as shared with the Bureau and posted on the INC website.

6. Bureau members requested additional matters be considered under agenda item 3 'Other Matters', including the possibility for the draft meeting report of the second resumed session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5.2) to be reviewed by the Bureau ahead of its publication on the INC website. Additionally, one Bureau member requested to discuss the report of 16 October to ensure regional views were captured in the report before its adoption. The Chair acknowledged the requests, noting they would be considered under agenda item 3. Following this, the agenda was adopted by the Bureau.

7. Under agenda item 2 on 'Next steps towards INC-5.3', the Chair recalled that, during previous Bureau meetings, the possibility of convening an in-person session of the INC in December 2025 in Nairobi on the margins of, or back-to-back with, UNEA-7 had been discussed for the purpose of electing officers in accordance with rules 9 and 45-47 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied. Considering the time required for logistical arrangements, he emphasized that, if the Bureau wished to convene the meeting in December, a decision would need to be taken swiftly.

8. The Chair recalled his consultations held with Bureau members on the topic, noting that there was some support for a short INC session in December, while conveying that there were some concerns from regions around the possibility of overburdening delegations attending UNEA-7. He also acknowledged that some delegations may need financial support to ensure their attendance at the session.

9. The Executive Secretary provided an overview of the possibility of a short INC session for elections back-to-back with UNEA-7 which will be held from 8-12 December in Nairobi. She noted that such a session would be a cost-effective and logistically practical option that would allow Members to benefit from the arrangements already in place for UNEA-7. This approach would also ensure the broadest possible participation to foster inclusivity and transparency given the large representation of Members already attending UNEA-7. Finally, it would allow the Committee to have certainty and predictability on the way forward while providing sufficient time to plan for further activities in 2026.

10. The Executive Secretary acknowledged that some delegates present at UNEA-7 may not be the same individuals who participate in INC negotiations. She clarified that, should a Member of the Committee not be already represented at UNEA or be unable to entrust the responsibility of participating in an INC election to their UNEA-7 delegate or a representative of the Permanent Mission based in Nairobi, the Secretariat would make available funding for one delegate per eligible country to attend the INC session in person. She further clarified that this funding would be limited to participation in the INC session and would not extend to participation in UNEA-7.

11. The Executive Secretary informed that, to minimize any burden on delegations, the INC session could be held on 13 December, immediately after the closure of UNEA-7. This approach would allow the INC to take advantage of the logistical arrangements of UNEA-7, including interpretation services, registration services, security, and meeting room support, without overlapping with other meetings or events. She also emphasized that DSA allowance rates would be lower, with less burdensome and faster visa approval processes in Nairobi as compared to other locations.

12. To ensure the Secretariat will have sufficient time to make any necessary arrangements, the Secretariat would need to urgently know whether to convene a session to be able to send out

invitation letters, in accordance with rule 2 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied, and open the process for registration and travel support as soon as possible.

13. Following the background information provided by the Executive Secretary, there was a discussion among Bureau members on the possibility of convening a session back-to-back with UNEA-7, with Bureau members also stressing the importance of ensuring clarity on the election process before committing to the proposed session in December.

14. Bureau members noted the desirability of electing a new Chair by acclamation. While election by acclamation at a session on the margins of UNEA-7 would be most desirable, some Bureau members emphasized the importance of considering whether this would be feasible given the short timeframe.

15. Some Bureau members cited concerns regarding possible budget implications for the process if the elections are significantly postponed and held at a different location. Other Bureau members emphasized that budgetary concerns should not be the sole consideration when determining an appropriate date and venue for the next session, noting the importance of ensuring sufficient time to first find a suitable candidate for Chair that could be agreed upon by all regions.

16. Responding to questions from the Bureau, the Secretariat clarified that, under rule 9 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied, the Chair is elected from among the representatives of Members of the INC and that there are no further limitations on the candidates related to their membership on the Bureau. There is also no requirement or expectation that every regional group would make nominations. The Secretariat noted that, while it is the prerogative of any Member to make a nomination, in the United Nations practice, regional groups who wish to nominate will usually endorse a single candidate from the regional group. Should any regional group have several potential candidates, an internal agreement could be sought in the regional group through consultations and, if necessary, procedures such as a straw poll to select one commonly agreed regional nominee. The Secretariat also clarified that the standard practice in the United Nations processes is to first hold elections of the Chair/President, before proceeding with elections for any vacancies for Vice-Chairs/Vice-Presidents.

17. Some Bureau members had different interpretations of rule 9, including on whether candidacy for INC Chair should be limited to existing members of the Bureau or open to all Members of the INC. Some Bureau members had questions on the point at which an existing Bureau member must resign in a situation where a regional group already has full representation on the Bureau under rule 9 and a Chair is elected as an additional representative of that regional group.

18. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a note clarifying some of the process aspects of elections additional to those addressed in the note circulated to the Bureau on 9 October.

19. Responding to a question from a Bureau member, the Secretariat informed that, in accordance with rule 2 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied, the Secretariat has to convey to Members the date, venue and provisional agenda of each session no less than six weeks in advance of that session. Accordingly, the Bureau would be required to decide on whether to convene an INC session on 13 December no later than 30 October to enable to Secretariat to send invitation letters by 31 October.

20. The Bureau also discussed the possibility of organizing such one-day INC session back-to-back with the first session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP P1) scheduled to take place in early February in Geneva, Switzerland.

21. To ensure the most appropriate decision on the date and venue of the next session, the Bureau requested information from the Secretariat on the financial and logistical implications of convening a one-day INC session back-to-back with UNEA or the ISP-CWP.

22. The Bureau agreed that, regardless of the date or venue of the next session, the agenda should be limited to election of officers and related administrative matters as any inclusion of substantive discussion in the agenda would likely require the full presence of all delegates as well as sufficient time to adequately engage in discussions. Bureau members further noted that the newly elected Chair should have ample time to prepare for any substantive discussions and should not be required to lead such discussions immediately after election.

23. Bureau members agreed to consult with their respective regional groups on the possibility of convening an INC session in December, noting the deadline set out in rule 2 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied. The Bureau agreed to reconvene on 30 October to discuss the date and venue of the next INC session. Due to time constraints, the Chair proposed to take up the matter of designating a Vice-Chair at the next Bureau meeting to preside over the Bureau pending election of a new Chair.

24. Before closing discussions under agenda item 2, the Chair stated his intention to submit the letter of resignation effective 31 October 2025.

25. Under agenda item 3 on 'Other Matters', the Bureau adopted the reports of the Bureau meetings of 7 October and 16 October 2025.

26. Also under agenda item 3, the Chair recalled previous requests from Bureau members that the draft meeting report of INC-5.2 be reviewed by the Bureau ahead of its publication on the INC website. Several Bureau members noted that the standard practice in UN processes was for the Rapporteur to finalize the report. The Secretariat confirmed this understanding and also noted that the Committee requested the Rapporteur to do so. The Vice-Chair acting as Rapporteur expressed her willingness to discuss any issues related to the report with the interested Bureau members.

27. Before closing the meeting, the Chair recalled the outcomes of the meeting, including:

    a. The request to the Secretariat to provide information on the budgetary and logistical considerations for hosting INC-5.3 on the margins of UNEA, ISP-CWP, or other forums; and

    b. The request to the Secretariat to prepare an information note on the election process for a new Chair.

28. The meeting ended at 18:19 EAT with the next Bureau meeting scheduled for 30 October 2025.