Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
Bureau meeting
Wednesday, 3 December 2025
15:00- 17:30 EAT
Online

SUMMARY AND ACTION POINTS INC BUREAU MEETING 3 DECEMBER 2025

Note by the Secretariat

1. The meeting was attended by the following members:

   African States: Mr. Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla (Senegal);

   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 meeting was presided over by Vice-Chair Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz, as agreed by the Bureau during its meeting held on 30 October 2025.

3. As also agreed by the Bureau during its meeting held on 30 October, the meeting was attended by Mr. Julio Cordano (Chile) in an observer capacity as the nominee of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) for the vacant position for the region.

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

5. The Vice-Chair Presiding opened the meeting and outlined the purpose of the meeting as focusing on preparations for the resumed third part of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC-5.3) as agreed at the Bureau meeting held on 30 October 2025. She emphasized that the main focus of the meeting would be to agree on the agenda for INC-5.3 and to come to a common understanding on the path forward for an annotated agenda to assist Members of the Committee in preparing for INC-5.3. She recalled that a draft document outlining possible elements of a scenario note had been shared with the Bureau members to serve as a basis for initial input during this meeting toward development of a scenario note. She then gave the floor to the Executive Secretary for her introductory remarks.

6. The Executive Secretary expressed appreciation to all Bureau members for their continued engagement, guidance and support towards preparations for INC-5.3, particularly during the

busy period between UNFCCC COP30 and UNEA-7. She emphasized that she and the Secretariat remain ready to provide information and support as required.

7. At the outset of the meeting, the Bureau member for the Small Island Developing States, Ms. Asha Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda), notified the Bureau that she would continue participating in Bureau meetings as a Vice-Chair and as Rapporteur until her successor could be elected at INC-5.3, to ensure quorum for Bureau meetings and continuity of representation of Small Island Developing States on the Bureau. She recalled that the Small Island Developing States nominated Mr. Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) as her successor for the officer representing Small Island Developing States.

8. The Vice-Chair Presiding then outlined the proposed agenda, which was adopted without comment.

9. Under agenda item 2 on ‘Adoption of reports’, the Bureau considered for adoption the draft report of the 12 November 2025 meeting of the Bureau, as shared with the Bureau and posted on the INC website. A Bureau member raised several specific textual suggestions and points for further clarification within the draft report in advance of its adoption, including reference to the possibility of having rooms available for regional consultations the day prior to INC-5.3. The Executive Secretary recalled that the venue was already booked for the first session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP P1) the day prior to INC-5.3. She further noted that the Daily Subsistence Allowance could not be extended for an additional day and added that access to the venue with an INC-5.3 badge is only possible on 7 February. The Bureau member acknowledged that it may be possible to work with regional counterparts attending the ISP-CWP P1 to convene some regional meetings in advance of 7 February. The Vice-Chair Presiding proposed that the Secretariat amend the draft report in alignment with the comments from the Bureau member, which was agreed to by the Bureau. Following this, the report was adopted.

10. On the agenda sub-item on ‘Agenda and annotated agenda for INC-5.3’, the Vice Chair Presiding proposed that, as the Committee remained in a resumed session, the Committee at INC-5.3 would continue using the agenda that was adopted at the first part of the fifth session and used at the second part of the fifth session. She invited the Bureau to consider the agenda and proposed annotated agenda documents circulated by the Secretariat on 25 November 2025, with the understanding that INC-5.3 would focus solely on election of officers and related administrative matters, as agreed by the Bureau on 30 October 2025. She noted the draft annotated agenda had been adjusted to reflect this understanding and that substantive agenda items, such as ‘Organizational matters’ and ‘Preparation of the international legally binding instrument’, would not be taken up at INC-5.3. She proposed the agenda item on ‘Other matters’ could possibly be taken up to accommodate any necessary administrative matters that may arise, including determining how to proceed in the process following INC-5.3, but that it was not expected that any further matters would be raised.

11. Before opening the discussion, the Vice-Chair Presiding reminded the Bureau of the importance of promptly finalising both documents to ensure sufficient time for official United Nations editing and translation of the documents ahead of INC-5.3.

12. On how best to reflect that some agenda items would not be taken up at INC-5.3, Bureau members raised the possibility of including an explanatory footnote in the agenda. In response to a question from the Bureau, the Secretariat noted that the footnote would be regarded as a technical revision and not as a new agenda. Another suggestion was that the Vice-Chair Presiding circulate an explanatory note together with the agenda and annotated agenda,

emphasizing that INC-5.3 would be limited to the election of officers and any related administrative matters. The Bureau was of the view that this may be the best way forward.

13. Responding to a further question from the Bureau, the Secretariat provided guidance on the distinction between closing or adjourning a session. The Secretariat informed that, if INC-5.3 is adjourned, the next meeting would be held as INC-5.4 and would continue with the same agenda used in INC-5.3, unless otherwise decided by the Committee. If closed, the next session would be held as INC-6, requiring a new agenda that would need to be approved at INC-5.3 and then forwarded to the next session for consideration and adoption, pursuant to the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied. The Bureau provided preliminary feedback favouring the adjournment of the session. The Vice Chair Presiding noted the importance of reverting to this topic in advance of INC-5.3, following engagement within the regions.

14. Bureau members supported using the agenda of the fifth session as adopted at INC-5.1. During the discussion on annotations under the INC-5.3 agenda item on ‘Other matters’, Bureau members suggested that the scenario note should emphasize that no other matters are foreseen, in recognition of the nature of the meeting.

15. The Bureau agreed to use the same agenda at INC-5.3 as was adopted at INC-5.1 and used at INC-5.2 The Bureau also agreed on the content of the annotations, and that the Secretariat would finalize the annotated agenda and send it, along with the agenda, for translation. It was also agreed that the annotations would be kept brief, with an explanatory note from the Vice Chair Presiding to be circulated along with the agenda and annotated agenda emphasizing that INC-5.3 would be limited to election of officers and any related administrative matters. The Vice-Chair Presiding encouraged the Bureau members to socialize the agenda and its annotations with their respective constituencies in order to ensure the approach taken in the annotated agenda was well understood ahead of INC-5.3.

16. Under agenda item 3 sub-item on ‘Scenario note for INC-5.3’, the Vice Chair Presiding referred to a draft document that was shared with the Bureau on 1 December outlining potential elements of a scenario note. She proposed that, if a scenario note were prepared for INC-5.3, it would be prudent to issue a draft version of the note in advance of informational webinars held in the lead-up to INC-5.3 to allow for more informed dialogue among Members and to clarify questions in advance of the webinars. She further proposed that an interactive webinar for Members be held on 15 January 2026, followed by an informational webinar for observers on 22 January. The final scenario note could then be issued as an INF document in all six official UN languages ahead of INC-5.3.

17. The Bureau noted that a key element in the scenario note will relate to the need for a common understanding and clarity on the sequencing of election procedures to ensure that all Members of the Committee are aware of what to expect. The Bureau welcomed the proposal that a draft scenario note be prepared by Vice Chair Presiding for the Bureau’s review in advance of the next meeting.

18. Under agenda item 3 sub-item on ‘Update on logistical arrangements’ the Executive Secretary provided an update on logistical arrangements, noting that this information would be posted on the INC website in advance of the session.

19. The Executive Secretary noted that an in-person Bureau meeting could be scheduled for the afternoon of Friday 6 February 2025 with hybrid capabilities. She further informed that there would also be an opportunity to hold an in-person Bureau meeting at lunch time on 7 February 2025.

20. The Executive Secretary made reference to the notes on cost-savings measures and on logistical arrangements circulated on 21 November 2025 and that both notes would be uploaded to the Bureau page of the INC website for ease of access and transparency. She

emphasized that the note on cost-saving measures provides an overview of the estimated costs associated with the organization of an in-person, one day resumed session in Geneva; the cost-saving measures already being undertaken; and additional options not yet explored, in an effort to maximize cost-savings across all associated components of a one-day session for the purpose of elections.

21. Some Bureau members sought clarification on further opportunities to reduce costs, with particular consideration to cost-savings associated with elections by acclamation, and costs associated with travel of delegates. Some noted that elections by acclamation, as happened in other similar processes, could facilitate a stronger start to successive steps in the process, and that one approach to moving toward elections by acclamation could be to gradually narrow the list of candidates for Chair in the lead-up to INC-5.3. The Executive Secretary noted that the total number of requests for travel support is significantly lower than for other sessions, and that this number would only increase by a marginal amount due to pending approvals for some requests for travel support. She proposed to provide the Bureau with more detailed information on savings related to travel and logistical preparations for INC-5.3 at a later date once all travel requests have been processed and tickets issued, as ticket costs are variable depending on location.

22. Under the agenda item 3 sub-item on 'Regional updates on preparations for elections', a Bureau member representing the Asia-Pacific States noted that an informal straw-poll process was undertaken on 3 December 2025 to determine a single candidate for Chair of the INC to be formally nominated from the region. The Bureau member noted that the Bureau would be informed of the outcome following internal discussion with the regional group on 4 December 2025 and thanked the Secretariat for its professional support provided during the straw-poll process.

23. The Vice-Chair Presiding recalled the Bureau's view on the importance of appointing a Chair by acclamation and invited Bureau members to continue emphasising with candidates from their regional groups the importance of consulting with other candidates and working toward a common understanding of the importance of elections by acclamation. She emphasized her availability to assist in such consultations and encouraged the Bureau members to avail themselves of any opportunity to engage on this matter within and among regional groups. She further noted the importance of ensuring adequate preparations for undertaking elections by secret ballot should elections by acclamation not be possible.

24. It was noted that Members of the INC from all constituencies would benefit from engaging directly with candidates for Chair to learn more about each candidate's proposed approach to the future of the INC. Such engagement would be essential for building trust among all Members in advance of elections.

25. It was reiterated in the discussions that election of the new Chair by acclamation was strongly desirable and therefore narrowing the options in consultations across regional groups was preferable. This would not only make for an effective session but would facilitate the starting of the work for the newly elected Chair to begin in the spirit of consensus and cooperation.

26. Before concluding discussions under the sub-item on 'Regional updates on preparations for elections,' the Vice-Chair Presiding thanked the Bureau members for their continued engagement with their regional groups and reiterated the importance of a shared understanding amongst Members of the Committee for undertaking elections by acclamation. The Vice-Chair Presiding welcomed updates from all regional groups on progress made in the consultations toward an election by acclamation at INC-5.3 at the next Bureau meeting.

27. Under the agenda item 4 on 'Other matters', the Vice-Chair Presiding proposed that the next Bureau meeting should revisit discussions on the draft scenario note. She requested the

Secretariat to circulate a draft of the scenario note one week in advance of the next Bureau meeting to allow sufficient time for the Bureau to socialize the revised draft with their respective constituencies. She reiterated the importance of continued consultations with candidates and requested Bureau members to revert at the next meeting on the outcomes of any consultations between regional groups and candidates. No other matters were raised by the Bureau for consideration.

28. In her closing remarks, the Vice-Chair Presiding thanked the Bureau members for their contributions and continued engagement in preparations for INC-5.3 and broader process.

29. The meeting closed with the next Bureau meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday 17 December 2025.