

16 March 2026

Second letter from the Chair of the INC on Plastic Pollution

Dear friends,

On 19 February 2026, I had the honor of addressing all Members of the Committee in [my first letter](#), in which I provided general reflections on the INC process. In particular, I highlighted the principles of transparency, inclusivity and predictability as crucial pillars of the work that lies ahead of us.

The urgency of our task remains. Plastic pollution continues to affect ecosystems, and the livelihoods of communities across the world, from fishing communities to urban populations, from the highest mountains to the deepest oceans. Addressing this challenge will require solutions that are both effective and respectful of the different circumstances and capacities of the Members of the Committee. It is precisely this reality that gives meaning to the work ahead and that must remain our common point of reference as we move towards a legally binding agreement.

I would like to put special emphasis on the importance of having a predictable pathway that offers opportunities to exchange views and increase our common understanding in an inclusive and transparent manner. The availability of a well-structured programme of work is essential for all Members of the Committee to prepare adequately and plan their participation effectively, particularly in a busy year with many multilateral commitments.

In light of the above, and as anticipated, this letter outlines a roadmap for the work of the Committee in the lead-up to the fourth part of its fifth session (INC-5.4).

This roadmap comprises a series of activities and meetings, some of them with indicative dates, which will be confirmed as we make progress throughout the year.

Before addressing the details of the roadmap, I would like to express that I see with great interest the efforts of individual Members to engage in self-organized informal discussions, especially with those Members that hold divergent positions. I welcome and encourage all delegations to reach out to each other, with the aim of advancing common understandings. I commend those governments that have shown leadership in this regard and encourage them to share relevant outcomes and reflections with the broader Committee, in a manner consistent with the inclusive nature of this process. This is not only a good practice, but a needed step, as ultimately it will be the prerogative of the Committee to consider any proposals that could become potential solutions in our negotiations.

As they consist of Member-led initiatives, these informal interactions are not part of this roadmap.

With these considerations in mind, I would like to highlight the following elements:

- **Informal virtual meetings of Heads of Delegation (HODs).** These meetings will be a recurring space that I intend to convene every 4-6 weeks, to ensure that all Members of the Committee remain well informed and that we move together in addressing the different elements under discussion. The first of these virtual HODs meetings took place on the 12th of March, which served as a consultation about this roadmap, as well as to have a first interaction about priority areas and modes of work. Each meeting will continue to follow the “HOD+2” format and will cover different relevant topics, which will be communicated well in advance. I expect to convene an additional virtual meeting in late April and potentially, a further one in late May or early June. Details of these additional virtual meetings, including topics and guiding questions, will be circulated by the Secretariat in a timely manner.
- **Informal in-person Heads of Delegation meeting.** This meeting is scheduled to take place in Nairobi, 30 June to 3 July, with 29 June reserved for regional meetings and coordination. The in-person meeting will use a “HOD+2” format and include both joint sessions and breakout groups. I have requested the Secretariat to circulate more information on this HODs meeting shortly. Further details, including topics to be covered and modalities of the meeting, will be communicated in due course.
- **Possible informal in-person meeting in the second semester of 2026.** Although the organization of this meeting remains to be confirmed, depending on availability of financial resources, I would like to register this possibility, to take place in early October. Such a meeting could provide additional opportunities to engage in a solution-seeking exercise, explore options and continue the consideration of the interaction between different elements of the Agreement.
- **INC-5.4 should take place at the end of 2026 or early 2027.** As indicated by many in consultations of the roadmap, I am working with the Secretariat to identify a concrete date for INC-5.4 as soon as possible. In my assessment, INC-5.4 will be better positioned to make decisive progress if organized as a ten-day meeting, including one rest day during the meeting.

Special consideration should be given to the fact that, at the moment, the INC does not have a **single draft text to work on**, as a common reference for discussing the different elements of our negotiations. In my view, this represents a significant limitation that we will need to address in a timely manner.

I envisage that the informal in-person HODs meeting on 30 June to 3 July will offer an opportunity to complete a review of all the components in the negotiations, after which an informal reference document could be developed, under my authority, with the assistance of the Secretariat, and after consultations with the Committee and the Bureau. The purpose of this working document will be simply to reflect our level of progress, with options or brackets clearly expressed when there are divergent views, and without venturing yet on possible solutions, new ideas or bridging proposals.

In other words, it should be a “no surprises” document, easy to navigate and conceived to facilitate discussions among delegations, as a tool to allow more productive conversations.

The **Bureau** represents an invaluable resource for the INC process. It is my intention to ensure that the Bureau provides its guidance throughout the implementation of the roadmap, assisting in its execution and serving as a communication channel with Regional Groups and constituencies. With this in mind, the Bureau will meet frequently to provide timely advice and convey updates to respective groups.

I also look forward to hearing from **Regional Groups** and constituencies about their plans to meet and coordinate. Although these are self-organized spaces, I consider their contribution essential to the preparation of the Committee’s work. I have had the chance to participate in virtual interactions with some of the Regional Groups, and I intend to reach out to all remaining groups shortly. I would like to reaffirm my availability to engage in that interaction and to actively hear the views and proposals that may emerge from them.

I plan to continue consultations with all groups and Members of the Committee, as well as with Observers, both virtually and by making the most of all opportunities to have in-person discussions as the agenda allows.

Regarding **modes of work**, pragmatic and flexible modalities of work will need to be fit for purpose, in full alignment with transparent and inclusive approaches. I want to thank everyone for your comments in our last virtual HODs meeting. As we are entering this final stage of the INC, it is critical that we use types of engagement that are well designed for the objective we are pursuing. In this regard, in addition to the standard organization of our work, as we have had in previous sessions, we will need to use a variety of resources to advance our discussions. These may include, as needed, modalities such as shuttle diplomacy, focused solutions-oriented consultations, and friends of the Chair, among others.

Capturing progress in our discussions will also be a key aspect of our efforts. As we move closer to INC-5.4, it will be important to do so towards better refinement of what is needed for our negotiations to succeed. This is ultimately something that Members themselves will be assessing. However, in my view it will be very beneficial to have moments to take stock of our progress throughout the year. Informal meetings of

HODs, both virtual and in-person, can offer opportunities to reflect collectively on the direction of travel. I intend to convene these stocktaking moments, which will also be useful for me as guidance from the Membership of the Committee.

I also have the intention to continue communicating my own thoughts through letters or reflections notes, so I can provide in full transparency my own reading of where things are at different stages of the process. Hopefully this can also be useful for your reflections and understanding of the progress we are making, but also where we should put more focus and effort.

Observers also play a very important role in this roadmap. The perspectives and active contributions of all those whose health, lives and livelihoods are directly affected by plastic pollution, as well as those whose knowledge, innovation and engagement are essential to solving it, represent a crucial element for advancing towards a successful outcome. I will be meeting with Observers and consulting with them as we implement this roadmap, to ensure that we all remain aligned in our discussions, and to benefit from their experience and vision.

I would like to thank everyone for your commitment to our work. I am encouraged by the many expressions of willingness to achieve a meaningful and ambitious outcome in this process. The shared recognition of the challenges posed by plastic pollution is what brought us together. This remains as relevant today as it was when this process began. I look forward to the conversations ahead, and to working with each of you towards an outcome that honors our mandate and benefits our societies, that are counting on us to deliver.

Julio Cordano

INC Chair

To: INC National Focal Points