Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
Bureau meeting
Thursday, 30 October 2025
12:00 - 14:00 EAT
Online

SUMMARY AND ACTION POINTS INC BUREAU MEETING 30 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. Once the necessary quorum was verified, the INC Chair opened the meeting, at 12:02 EAT, welcoming Bureau members and thanking them for their hard work and for undertaking consultations with their respective constituencies on the way forward in the process. 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 continued commitment to the process. She remarked that a note on the 'Procedures for election to fill any vacancies for the positions of Chair or Vice-Chairs of the Committee' prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the Bureau was circulated to the Bureau on 29 October 2025.

5. The Chair then outlined the agenda, proposing that, under agenda item 2 on 'Next steps towards INC-5.3', the Bureau would first address the matter of a possible INC session for the purpose of electing a new INC Chair and filling any vacancies on the Bureau. The Bureau would then discuss interim governance arrangements for the period leading up to, and including, the elections. Under agenda item 3 on 'Other Matters', the Chair noted his intention to raise for the Bureau's consideration the participation of Ambassador Julio Cordano (Chile) as an observer for the GRULAC region commencing at the next scheduled Bureau meeting. A proposal was

also made to address, under the agenda item on ‘Other matters’, a response to a correspondence received from one of the Members. The Bureau adopted the agenda.

6. Under agenda item 2, the Chair reiterated the importance of continuing the process in a constructive manner and with sustained progress, for which it will be important to swiftly elect a new Chair to lead the INC process. He noted that, in his consultations, some Bureau members expressed support for convening a session on 13 December 2025 immediately following UNEA-7, which will take place from 8 to 12 December in Nairobi. He further noted that other Bureau members expressed a preference for convening a session on 7 February 2026, back-to-back with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP), which will take place from 2 to 6 February 2026 in Geneva.

7. As requested by the Bureau during the previous meeting, the Secretariat provided an overview of budgetary and logistical considerations of convening an INC session back-to-back with UNEA-7 as compared to a session held back-to-back with the ISP-CWP. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the cost estimate for convening an event following the ISP-CWP would be significantly higher than a session held following UNEA-7 due to higher overall costs related to the venue, security, conference services, travel support and Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for eligible delegates. She also noted that a session in Geneva would require additional time and resources compared to Nairobi regarding visa application processes and venue procurement. The Secretariat further noted the impact of the Geneva venue limitations on participation by observers.

8. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that, once the date and venue were decided upon, the Secretariat would immediately commence logistical and procurement processes required for the session, taking into account the timelines set out in the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied to the work of the INC.

9. Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for the provided logistical and financial information as well as for the information note on elections shared with the Bureau on 29 October.

10. Some Bureau members expressed the strong preference of their regions for the session to be held back-to-back with UNEA given the overall lower cost, easier logistics and the need to conduct the elections as soon as possible so that substantive preparations for the negotiations could resume. They, however, recognized the preferences of other regions for sufficient time necessary to consult on the candidates. The Bureau acknowledged the value of fostering greater mutual understanding and cooperation in any decision on the date and venue of the next session and the importance of proceeding in a manner that would maximize the likelihood of electing a new Chair by acclamation.

11. Bureau members also noted the importance of ensuring transparency and accountability in the process, emphasizing the key role played by observers. Bureau members acknowledged that opportunities for observer participation will generally be limited in a session with narrow scope convened for the purpose of elections and without substantive discussions. Bureau members proposed that the Secretariat organize an information webinar for observers in advance of the session.

12. The Bureau decided to convene a one-day INC session on 7 February 2026, back-to-back with the ISP-CWP in Geneva, Switzerland, for the purpose of electing a Chair of the INC and to fill any additional vacancies on the Bureau, in accordance with rules 9 and 45-47 of the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied. The Bureau further agreed that the session would be focused on elections and related administrative matters and that no substantive discussions would be taken up during the session. The Chair, on behalf of the Bureau, requested the Secretariat to take the necessary steps to organize the agreed-upon session.

13. On the topic of interim governance arrangements until election of a new Chair of the INC, the Chair informed that, once decisions had been taken that provide clarity for the immediate future of the process, he would formally submit his resignation, which would take effect on 31 October 2025. He recalled previous Bureau discussions on designating a Vice-Chair to preside over the Bureau pending election by the INC of a new Chair. He also recalled that the Bureau discussed that such Vice-Chair should be from a regional group that does not intend to nominate a candidate for Chair.

14. The Bureau unanimously agreed to designate Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden), Vice-Chair of the INC, to preside over the opening and agenda item on elections during the agreed-upon INC session to be held in February 2026. The Bureau further agreed that, in this capacity, Ms. Lissinger-Peitz will preside over any Bureau meetings until this session of the INC with a view to guiding preparations for this session and for elections.

15. The Bureau noted that a decision on the venue and dates of the next substantive negotiating session of the INC would have to be reached soon in order to enable sufficient time for any logistical arrangements. The Bureau agreed to discuss this matter at a subsequent meeting with a view to reaching a decision.

16. Under agenda item 3 on 'Other matters', the Bureau agreed to invite Mr. Julio Cordano (Chile), nominated by GRULAC, to represent the region on the Bureau after the resignation of Mr. Vayas Valdivieso and that Mr. Cordano would attend subsequent Bureau meetings as an observer, pending decision of the Committee on his election.

17. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to acknowledge the receipt of correspondence received from one of the Members.

18. The Bureau and the Executive Secretary, on behalf of UNEP and the INC Secretariat, expressed gratitude for the Chair's guidance and commitment over the past two years and three sessions, as well as his transparency, leadership and dedication to the process during his tenure. They also recognized the progress made during this time and conveyed appreciation to the Government of Ecuador, as well as to the Chair's team for their support, and to the family of the INC Chair.

19. In his closing remarks, the Chair expressed thanks to the Bureau members. He reiterated his gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Ecuador and to the country, highlighting their commitment to multilateralism and to the world's common goals. Finally, he expressed his deep gratitude to his team and his family, and he thanked the Secretariat and UNEP for their support during his tenure.

20. The meeting ended at 14:30 EAT with the next Bureau meeting to be scheduled at a later date.