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

SUMMARY AND ACTION POINTS INC BUREAU MEETING 17 JUNE 2025

Note by the Secretariat

1. The meeting was attended by the following members:

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

   African States: Ms. Juliet Kabera (Rwanda); 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 INC Secretariat was represented by the Executive Secretary of the INC, Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp.

3. The INC Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Bureau and thanking them once again for their participation during the Bureau retreat. He provided an update on the recent events he attended, namely the GRULAC regional consultation in Panama, the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) in Nice, and the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) regional consultation in Bangkok. The Chair expressed appreciation to both GRULAC and APG for the invitations to participate and welcomed the opportunity to have engaged with Members and a range of observers during the meetings, emphasizing the constructive spirit that Members displayed and his hope that this willingness to build bridges is carried forward.

4. The Executive Secretary welcomed the Bureau and provided an update on a number of informal high-level events on the margins of UNOC-3, including a high-level event convened by the Executive Director of UNEP which included participation of representatives from over 70 countries, including one Head of Government, over 30 Ministers and Vice-Ministers, and a number of other officials and country representatives.

5. The Bureau considered the provisional agenda for the meeting. The Chair outlined the focus of the meeting to be planning towards INC-5.2, a briefing on the Co-Chairs meeting, and planning of the informal in-person Heads of Delegation Meeting. Regarding other matters, the Chair

invited Vice-Chairs from GRULAC and APG to share updates from the regional consultations. He informed the Bureau that under the agenda item on other matters he would provide updates on the replacement of two Co-Chairs who are no longer able to continue in the process. Under this understanding, the provisional agenda was adopted.

6. The Bureau considered and approved the summary and action points from its meeting held on 15 April 2025.

7. The Executive Secretary provided a logistical update on preparations for INC-5.2. As of the date of reporting, the total number of registered participants was 3057, comprising 834 delegates from 162 Members of the Committee and 661 observer organizations, in addition to 115 media outlets. To date, 60 high-level representatives, including 43 Ministers, from 59 countries across the UN regions have been registered for INC-5.2. The Bureau was reminded that registration for Members of the Committee had been extended until 30 June 2025. The Executive Secretary reiterated the importance of reminding delegations to initiate visa applications for Switzerland without delay. Comprehensive information on the visa application process had been shared via e-mail and was also available in the Information Note to participants.

8. Following up on a request made during the Bureau retreat for smaller-sized rooms, the Executive Secretary provided an update on the possible room configurations for INC-5.2. She noted that the smaller rooms identified have limited capacity (100–200 participants), with seating only at microphones and no space for additional chairs. She also recalled that post-session feedback from INC-5.1 emphasized the need for more spacious meeting environments.

9. The Bureau discussed the available options and agreed to retain the originally proposed Contact Group room configurations, with the two rooms accommodating 602 and 691 delegates, respectively. These arrangements would ensure adequate space for 3 delegates per Member while also allowing to accommodate some of the observers in the Contact Group rooms. In addition, two overflow rooms of 200 and 1775 person capacity will be made available enabling interested participants to follow discussions in contact groups. The Secretariat took note of the Bureau's decision and will share the room capacity figures with the Bureau in writing.

10. The Bureau discussed the revised elements of the Scenario Note for INC-5.2. The Chair reiterated that the Scenario Note would be finalized following the upcoming HODs meeting. Bureau members suggested providing further clarity on any modifications in mandates of contact groups and some guidance on the sequencing of discussions in contact groups, illustrative examples of possible additional working modalities that could be used, if necessary, and a clarification that, while the review by the legal drafting group was desirable, not all text may go through such review, subject to availability of time.

11. The Bureau discussed the potential inclusion of a half or full day of unscheduled work midway through the session to allow time for informal coordination and rest. While the Chair noted the importance of utilizing all the time available as efficiently as possible and acknowledged the costs associated with such an adjustment, he emphasized that the decision rested with the Bureau. Members expressed divergent views regarding the inclusion of unscheduled time and its length. The Bureau agreed that one day would be allocated to unscheduled work midway through the session. The Chair emphasized that he would be utilizing that time to continue informal consultations with Members.

12. The Bureau requested that a revised version of the elements of the Scenario Note be circulated to it ahead of the HODs meeting reflecting the discussion in the Bureau meeting.

13. Bureau members requested greater clarity regarding ministerial participation, per the invitation circulated by Executive Director. The Chair emphasized that ministerial engagement should be carried out with transparency and inclusivity in support of the negotiations, indicating that such participation would be decided with the Bureau, as this is a Member driven process. He noted that the arrangements for ministerial participation would be further discussed with the Secretariat and the Executive Director of UNEP.

14. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that, with reference to the invitation letter issued by the Executive Director, an initial concept note outlining the arrangements for ministerial-level participation at the resumed session of INC-5.2 was circulated on 8 June 2025. A proposed ministerial roundtable was scheduled to take place during the lunch break, so as not to coincide with other formal meetings. Delegations whose Ministers may be unable to attend were also invited to participate. She noted that adjustments to the proposed arrangements, or additional options, may be considered as negotiations evolve. Any such changes would be made in consultation with the Chair and the Bureau.

15. The Executive Secretary reiterated that dedicated, earmarked financial support has been made available to facilitate the participation of Ministers or ministerial-level representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This earmarked support is provided in addition to the funding made available for two delegates per eligible Member.

16. The Bureau discussed the scheduling of in-session Bureau meetings. Following the input from the Bureau, the Chair and Secretariat will consider organizing meetings in the afternoon during the lunch break and/or evenings and can be supplemented with a morning meeting, when necessary. It was noted that Bureau meetings should be held after the meetings of Co-Chairs to enable the Bureau to take the necessary informed decisions and that flexibility for scheduling would remain central as negotiations evolve.

17. The Executive Secretary provided a summary of the Contact Group Co-Chairs meeting in Geneva on 28 and 29 May. The Co-Chairs identified several key aspects for consideration in preparation for the resumed session of INC-5.2:

    - The importance of the Chair's support in reinforcing the role of the Contact Groups as the central space for negotiations, the development of clean text, and the promotion of shared ownership of the outcome;
    - A strong preference to maintain continuity by retaining the same Contact Group structure and topic allocation used during INC-5.1, with further clarifications to be provided as needed regarding the expected outcomes of the groups' work;
    - Support for including elements in the Scenario Note to clarify the operational modalities of the Contact Groups, including the use of different modalities as required;
    - Support for predictable scheduling of Contact Group sessions, with flexibility to adjust as necessary; and
    - The need to ensure transparency and coordination throughout the session.

18. The Co-Chairs will meet with the Chair the following week to discuss session planning for INC-5.2. They will also meet in person on 3 July 2025 immediately after the HODs meeting in Nairobi. The Secretariat is currently preparing a range of support materials to assist the Co-Chairs and will continue to liaise with them in the lead-up to the session.

19. Regarding the HODs meeting, the Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that 305 delegates from 138 Members of the Committee registered for the meeting. In line with earlier agreements by the Bureau, a maximum of three delegates per Member of the Committee, including representatives from permanent missions in Nairobi, if designated as part of the delegation of three, have been approved for registration. Bureau Members and Co-Chairs

have been registered as additional participants, in accordance with established practice. Financial support was provided for up to two participants per eligible Member. Due to ongoing construction and renovations, the number of bilateral meeting rooms would be limited, however the Secretariat will make its best efforts to provide such space for informal meetings of delegations. A small number of such rooms has been reserved for Members wishing to hold bilateral discussions. The procedure for reserving these rooms was included in the information note to participants, circulated with the notification dated 9 May 2025. A reception is to be held on the evening of 30 June at 18:15 at the UNON Event and Wellness Centre.

20. The Chair provided additional updates on the planning for the HODs meeting. The revised document on the approach to the HODs meeting, circulated on 30 May, incorporates feedback from the Bureau retreat. The purpose of the meeting is to facilitate informal, forward-looking exchanges among delegations in preparation for INC-5.2. He emphasized that the informal meeting is not intended for text drafting, or reiteration of national, regional or group positions, but rather to identify solutions and explore landing zones and possible pathways for the finalization of the international legally binding instrument. Discussions will be organized through plenary and two breakout groups with discussions clustered into thematic areas broadly aligned with the structure of the Contact Groups, though not identical. Two Contact Group Co-Chairs, Ms. Kate Lynch and Ms. Maria Angelica Ikeda, have been invited to facilitate the breakout group discussions.

21. The Chair encouraged Members to take full advantage of the meeting, including through informal consultations. Bureau members noted that while the thematic clusters addressed many issues, the facilitators can use tools such as time allocation and management to provide for balance between issues on which there are divergent views and those where there were more commonalities. The Bureau addressed how participation of ministers in INC-5.2 would be discussed during the HODs meeting, including options of addressing this matter under an appropriate agenda item of the meeting and holding informal consultations. The Chair confirmed that he will seek to consult with delegations informally, in a transparent and inclusive manner, and would inform of these discussions on day 3 of the HODs under agenda item on organization of work. Building on the discussion by the Bureau, the Chair proposed that after the HODs meeting, if deemed necessary, he would produce a reflections note in consultation with the facilitators and with the support from other Co-Chairs and the secretariat.

22. Under other matters, Bureau members provided brief updates on recent regional consultations. It was noted that discussions were constructive and provided space for article-by-article exchanges, helping to identify potential areas of convergence and allowing time for informal engagement, including bilateral and group-level discussions, as well as informal discussions between regions. The Chair commended the organization of the regional consultations and noted the value of engaging with Members and observers during these consultations.

23. The Chair informed the Bureau of ongoing consultations to replace the two Contact Group Co-Chairs who are unable to continue in the process. The Chair confirmed the nomination of Mr. Go Kobayashi from Japan to fill one vacant Co-Chair position and will continue to undertake consultations to fill the other vacant Co-Chair position, taking into consideration the proposals received, including from the African Group.

24. The next Bureau meeting was scheduled for 8am on Monday, 30 June, immediately before the start of the HODs meeting at the UN premises in Nairobi, to be resumed at 18:00 on Wednesday 3 July 2025, immediately following the closure of the HODs meeting.