

Dear friends,

Let me start by thanking you all for your dedication and support in the recent resumed session of the INC. It is a great honour and responsibility to have been elected Chair of the Committee. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my commitment to fulfill this role sparing no effort towards the adoption of an international legally binding instrument that delivers on our mandate under the UNEA Resolution 5/14.

The election of officers in Geneva was proof that the process is well established and has the necessary structures to carry forward its work under the existing draft Rules of Procedure, which provisionally apply to the work of the INC. As was expressed in the final plenary, the INC emerged stronger and ready to engage in a new chapter.

This letter to all Members of the Committee is intended to outline some elements of the vision that I would like to build with all of you. This is a way to start a conversation that I hope I will be able to develop with each one of the Members, as well as with Observer organizations, in this last stage of the process, that will lead us to the adoption of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

The task we have in front of us is hard and complex, but attainable as the UNEA Resolution 5/14 provides clear direction. It is not only achievable, but also urgently needed. Plastic pollution is one of the defining challenges of our time that can only be addressed through collective action and coordination. It is in our hands to make it a reality.

Plastic pollution is indeed a global challenge. With plastics deeply embedded in every aspect of modern life, scientific evidence, including assessments from UNEP, indicates that plastic pollution is projected to almost triple by 2060 unless we work together under a common vision. For this reason, we need everyone on board to turn this vision into a Treaty. Looking beyond its adoption, it is also crucial to ensure that the instrument is future-proof and effectively implemented.

Building an effective multilateral response to plastic pollution has to take into consideration many dimensions that go beyond environmental protection. These include industrial transformation, research and development, trade, technology solutions, waste management, just transition, human health, engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and intergenerational perspectives, among many others. Our collective success rests on maintaining a clear focus on our mandate while ensuring that the provisions we agree on in the instrument consider all these implications and promote positive, mutually reinforcing linkages across the broader ecosystem.

With this in mind, I cannot stress enough that achieving our goal will require the contribution of all of you. I invite all Members of the Committee to continue working with the same dedication shown so far, while keeping our eyes focused on an outcome that is both ambitious in vision and realistic in its implementation. I also encourage Observer organizations to keep providing diverse perspectives that help inform the discussions and work of the Committee.

In this letter I would like to briefly underline three elements that will be needed: inclusivity, transparency and predictability.

As expressed before, it is central to our efforts that all Members of the Committee are included in the process, and that we all actively listen to each other, in a conversation based on engagement, openness and understanding of each other's perspectives. For this reason, it is my intention to hear the views of everyone on how we can bridge differences and make progress towards common ground.

Transparency in the way the INC is conducted is key, as in any multilateral process. On this point, the Chair, the Secretariat and the Bureau have crucial roles to play. Clear and timely information will be essential to support the deliberations of the Committee. A well-functioning system in which every component performs its duties with clarity of purpose and good coordination should be one of the fundamentals of a transparent process.

Inclusivity and transparency will also be strengthened by ensuring the predictability of our work and how it is organized. I intend to communicate in the next few weeks a workplan of activities and milestones for the INC process, covering as much ground as we can foresee now, setting a pathway that has the intention to get us all closer towards our goal. In order to do this, I will be conducting extensive consultations at different levels and formats with all Members of the Committee.

It is important that we re-engage in substantive discussions as soon as possible, with a comprehensive view of the entirety of the elements of the instrument. At the same time, some key aspects where there are still divergences will require special attention and, potentially, different modes of engagement.

On this point, I would like to acknowledge and express my gratitude to those countries that have stepped forward to organize informal meetings to exchange views on substantive issues.

The contributions from Observers have always enriched our deliberations throughout this process. I'm committed to maintaining appropriate opportunities for Observer participation consistent with the draft rules of procedure provisionally applied to the work of the INC, ensuring that their voices can provide valuable insights to support this process.

The work we are undertaking is not only our collective responsibility. It also reflects the needs of individuals and communities across continents and cultures that suffer from the impacts of plastic pollution. Current and future generations can benefit enormously from our endeavours, and it is vital that we keep this in mind to motivate ourselves to work together and bridge our remaining divergences.

I look forward to working closely with each of you and to engage in fruitful discussions as we advance towards an outcome that honours both our mandate and the urgency of the challenge before us.

Julio Cordano

INC Chair