

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the floor.

My name is Aseel Abo-Taleb, and I speak on behalf of the Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP. First, we are aligned with the joint statement made on behalf of the Major Groups and Stakeholders attending this meeting.

We would like to reiterate that youth have been actively engaged in the OEWG process since its inception, and we are grateful for its inclusive and participatory spirit. Acknowledging the urgency of the rising global crises of chemicals, waste, and pollution, this Panel is a necessity to uphold the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment for both present and future generations.

As young people who are agents of today and the closest to future generations, we call for **the integration of intergenerational equity into the Panel's operating principles and structure** to strengthen its legitimacy, impact, and foresight capabilities. Intergenerational equity is not only a moral imperative, but also a practical tool **to strengthen the Panel's capacity for horizon scanning**. By considering the needs of both present and future generations, the Panel can adopt a more anticipatory approach to identifying emerging trends, risks, and opportunities, *an approach that aligns closely with the UN 2.0 Action Plan*. Additionally, the recently adopted *Pact for the Future* recognizes that the decisions, actions, and inactions of today have **an intergenerational multiplier effect**, placing the responsibility on the present generations to protect the well-being of future generations.

Excellencies, in today's world, communities face intersecting vulnerabilities to exposure to chemicals, waste, and pollution, particularly in relation to health risks, conflict zones, and socioeconomic disparities. We advocate that the science-policy panel **adopt a human rights-based approach** to ensure the panel's work serves its purpose of protecting health and well-being, inclusive of those most affected and least heard.

With just a few days left here in Punta del Este, there is an opportunity to conclude the process and establish a Panel that ensures an inclusive, responsive, and intergenerational approach to managing chemicals and waste and preventing pollution.

Thank you for the floor.