

# PLASTICS TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

## CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT AT INC-3

**20 NOVEMBER 2023**

Your Excellencies,

First and foremost, I would like to thank and commend the Chair and the Secretariat for their extraordinary efforts in bringing out the zero draft of the treaty within such a short timeframe and also giving consumer advocates the opportunity to contribute to these important negotiations.

We are the delegation of Consumers International, the membership organisation representing over 200 consumer groups worldwide. We are here today because consumers are one of the key stakeholders in the global plastics treaty. Every one of us is a consumer, and as consumers we are often left with responsibility for dealing with plastic towards the end of its intended use. Plastic pollution is a socioeconomic and geopolitical issue which requires sustained cooperation and resolute will of all stakeholders to end plastic pollution through an entire lifecycle approach.

At INC-3, we are currently facing a defining moment in which the zero draft options being negotiated have the potential to culminate in an effective international legally binding instrument. As representatives of the consumers' constituency, we strongly urge the INC Secretariat and Member States to give due consideration to the following priority points during the negotiations, in order to achieve an ambitious and robust treaty:

1. Adoption of mandatory, unambiguous and legally binding language to ensure that the spirit of the treaty and the UNEA Resolution 5/14 to end plastic pollution is fulfilled with genuine intentions and actions.
2. Enshrine consumers' rights in the treaty, especially access to information in order to increase transparency and accountability and enable consumers to make informed decisions. We request the negotiators to refrain from the inclusion of solutions and strategies which could lead to greenwashing of plastic products and packaging and increase the risk of false solutions flooding the market.

3. Commitment and cooperation of businesses and governments to concrete and concerted efforts in reducing plastic production, eliminating chemicals of concern and prohibiting and/or phasing out problematic plastics such as single-use and multi-layered plastics.
4. Support supply value chain redesign to minimise single-use of materials alongside the research, development, and deployment of sustainable and environmentally sound alternatives to plastic, as both a material and a product. Non-plastic substitutes need to become readily available, accessible, safe and affordable to consumers from all walks of life. Additionally, the treaty must include well defined provisions for the funding and transfer of environmentally sound technology to empower countries with limited capacity and resources.
5. Review the provision allowing for the transboundary movement of plastic waste. First and foremost, waste management solutions and efforts must strictly adhere to the zero waste hierarchy. Furthermore, developing countries, particularly, small island developing states do not possess sufficient waste management infrastructure to handle large quantities of plastic waste. Often it is citizens in these countries who suffer the most from the ill effects of plastic pollution. Any exemptions given to transport waste should be for the benefit of middle and low income countries and these need to be clearly defined so as to ensure environmentally sound practices and not allow high-income countries to delegate or transfer their plastic waste to middle and low-income countries.

As consumers, we confront the grim reality of an environment overwhelmed by plastic pollution. In light of this impending ecological crisis, we humbly place our submissions before you with the utmost hope and anticipation that consumer voices and rights will be robustly championed in the forthcoming negotiations and the treaty. Thank you for your time and attention.