

## The Final Hour of Action: Uphold Ambition and Accountability

Youth Statement on the Non-Paper containing the draft text of the Chair of the Committee  
(Version: 1 December 2024)

**The Chair's text, released on 1st December, presents the final opportunity to advance efforts to land on a legally binding instrument but yet regrettably lacks the level of ambition needed to effectively address the global plastics crisis and ensure a toxic-free future for current and future generations.** We can't afford to look back and tell our children that we let this critical moment slip away. We need to prevent toxic plastic production to protect human health and the environment. Member states must address the whole lifecycle of plastics by drastically reducing resource extraction and polymer production - the true source of plastic pollution. This is essential to ensure our fundamental right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Busan must result in an ambitious treaty text to save the planet and humanity from the flood of exponential plastic production and short-term fossil fuel interests.

The articles that remain in contention still contain significant gaps that must be addressed to deliver meaningful, equitable outcomes. Chief among these concerns is the marginalization of youth and children, whose roles and vulnerabilities are insufficiently recognized through the low ambition of Articles 3, 6, and 11. The full lifecycle approach should be unbracketed. A lifecycle approach ensures comprehensive regulation, including reducing production, phasing out harmful chemicals, and promoting sustainable alternatives. This holistic perspective is vital to addressing root causes and preventing shifting problems to different stages of the plastic lifecycle. This treaty is critical for safeguarding the well-being of youth and advancing intergenerational equity—a principle that must be clearly reflected in its provisions. An ambitious treaty is essential for our future, and we urge member states to stand by their progressive stances and adopt a treaty that is bold, effective, and future-oriented.

**Article 3** ([Plastic Products]) must establish non-negotiable, mandatory targets, free from conflicts of interest. It must explicitly include chemicals of concern as this directly impacts youth and children and is extremely harmful to their development. The text that includes this topic must be unbracketed and included in the treaty. We appreciate the current list of product groups, however, a more comprehensive list should be developed by the first Conference of Parties (COP) and periodically updated as scientific knowledge advances. The article must also enforce strict measures to limit plastic production to only those products deemed necessary and unavoidable.

**Article 6** ([Supply] [Sustainable Production]) has been weakened from the previous text and is not acceptable for youth and children. It is imperative to establish a global reduction target, implementable through complementary national action plans to control the production of primary plastic polymers. If the global target is to be determined through the COP process, weakening language such as [aspirational] and [as appropriate] should not be included. The title of the article itself must include the word "supply", and not simply "sustainable production", as it is integral that the plastic supply be controlled.

**Article 11** (Financial [and Resources and] Mechanism) must broaden its contributors to include every party and source of funding, ensuring comprehensive support. The polluter-pays principle

(PPP) is essential to the treaty's success. Without robust financial mechanisms and international cooperation, the treaty risks becoming an empty promise. Developing countries deserve to have proper financing. A hybrid approach to establishing a new standalone multilateral fund alongside a trust fund hosted under an existing mechanism will accelerate the financial system's effectiveness. Articles 3, 6, and 11 must drive aggressive action, creating a strong foundation to combat the plastics crisis.

**A successful treaty demands global ambition backed by strong national implementation.**

Global targets must be paired with robust national frameworks to ensure enforceable actions and tangible local results. Without clear mechanisms, the treaty risks becoming aspirational rather than impactful. Article 14 should mandate National Action Plans (NAPs) for all Parties, with regular reviews by a dedicated subsidiary body of experts to address gaps and ensure alignment with global standards. Stakeholder involvement in NAP development and implementation must be explicitly defined, ensuring the meaningful engagement of rights holders, including youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, traditional knowledge holders, and informal workers throughout planning, execution, and monitoring.

**Intergenerational, intersectional, and multilateral stakeholder engagement must be prioritized to ensure equity and legitimacy.**

The exclusion of marginalized voices, particularly youth and children, perpetuates systemic inequities and weakens the treaty's effectiveness. Under Article 20, active and meaningful participation of all relevant parties, in particular women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, traditional knowledge holders, informal workers, and other vulnerable groups, in the development and implementation of the instrument should be encouraged. The Conference of the Parties should, at its first session, adopt a multi-stakeholder action agenda. The secretariat should be tasked to draft a document in consultation with relevant groups of stakeholders for further consideration of the COP. Without a robust mechanism, the exclusion of rights holders will continue, undermining the treaty's foundation and its ability to address the needs of all affected populations. The exclusion of children and other minoritized groups from the INC process is particularly alarming and must be rectified.

**A hollow treaty will have far-reaching consequences, disproportionately burdening today's youth and future generations with the environmental, health, and economic fallout of inaction.**

The repetitive cycles of debate witnessed in INC-2, INC-3, and INC-4, with little progress toward transformative solutions, risk eroding the treaty's credibility and the urgency of confronting the plastics crisis. The treaty must rise above symbolic acknowledgments and address the substantive issues affecting youth and future generations head-on. It must include bold measures that can lead the rhetoric to action! Our future is not up for compromise. The world is watching, and we call on your courage and decisive leadership to deliver a bold, ambitious treaty that truly ends plastic pollution.

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