

PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

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PH Underscores Just Transition and the Economy in Call to End Plastics Pollution



PH Ambassador Junever Mahilum-West (4th from left) and DENR Director Albert Maglalang (4th from right) lead the Philippine delegation to Intergovernmental Committee to End Plastic Pollution (INC2) composed of representatives from Geneva PM, Nairobi PE, Paris PE, and NY PM.

France, 04 June 2023 – In the latest meeting to end plastic pollution, the PH provided key inputs in the intergovernmental Committee (INC2) held in Paris, France from 28 May to 02 June. The representatives from PH Missions in Geneva, Nairobi and New York, DENR, and the Philembassy in Paris, led by H.E. Ambassador Junever Mahilum-West and DENR Assistant Secretary Gilbert Gonzales.

The Philippines is one of the original signatories to UNEA Resolution 5/14 in 2022 calling for an end to Plastic Pollution, including marine litter, through an international legally-binding instrument (ILBI) setting ambitious targets for approval by Parties not later than 2024. Since 2022, the first INC-1 was hosted by Uruguay where initial discussions on the elements, scope of treat and obligations were discussed.

In INC-2, DENR Assistant Secretary Gilbert Gonzales delivered the regional statement on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group. The Philippines is the incoming ASPAG coordinator after India. He underscored the diversity of the Asia Pacific which is home to 60% of the world's population and is a major producer and consumer of plastics. In terms of addressing plastics pollution, the ILBI should support the promotion of common goals and objectives for the

prevention new wastes and legacy plastics; support for adequate financial, technical and technological assistance for developing economies and economies in transition; and the adoption of the full life cycle approach to plastics, from changing product design to disposal. However, plastics plays an important role in the economy which justifies a balanced approach where safe alternatives are promoted grounded on the latest technological and scientific knowledge are applied for the use by different governments.

Delivering the National Statement, PH Deputy Permanent Representative Eric Tamayo conveyed grave concern on the escalating crisis of plastic pollution as he pointed out that the Philippines is minor producer of plastics. He pointed out that excessive production of plastics, arising from rise on production and the design of packaging materials had led to increased plastic waste, poses significant environmental and health risks.

He pointed out that PH is serious about plastic pollution and has taken steps with the enactment into law of the Extended Producer Responsibility Act (EPR) and Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, as well as addressing the full life cycle of plastics to address transboundary pollution. The PH also sees the opportunity to be a global leader in sustainable practices and innovation and supports the adoption of a Treaty that benefits developing economies through direct financial support and the adoption of a just transition to circular economy approaches in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and national circumstances.

The Philippines voted in favor of UNEA Resolution 5/14 calling for the end to Plastics Pollution in Nairobi and participated in INC1 in Uruguay last year. The country supports an end to plastic pollution, specifically calling for the ban of microplastics and harmful plastics, but urges that a scientific and evidence-based study support the INC process since plastic is part of the economy which involves the livelihood of millions of informal workers in the Philippines. Before the 3rd INC session in Nairobi later this year, DFA and DENR are proposing the establishment of a consultative mechanism aimed at inclusivity of all stakeholders and local government who will be responsible for implementing the EPR law and Ecological Solid Waste Management Act. **END**