

Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

Bureau meeting

Thursday, 26 October 2023

15:00-18:00 (GMT+2)

Online meeting

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. The Chair of the INC, H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, welcomed the members of the INC Bureau and opened the meeting.
2. The meeting was attended by the following members:

INC Chair: Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velasquez (Perú);

African States: Ms. Juliet Kabera (Rwanda); Mr. Cheikh Ndiaye Sylla (Senegal);

Asia-Pacific States: Mr. Hiroshi Ono (Japan); Mr. Mohammad Al-Khashashneh (Jordan);

Eastern European States: Mr. Kaupo Heinma (Estonia); Ms. Irma Gurguliani (Georgia);

Latin American and Caribbean States: Ambassador Luis Vayas Valdivieso (Ecuador);

Small-Island Developing States: Ms. Asha Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda);

Western European and Other States: Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden); Ms. Larke Williams (United States of America).
3. The secretariat was represented by Mrs. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Executive Secretary, and Ms. Brenda Koekkoek, Senior Programme Officer.
4. The Executive Secretary, Mrs. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, informed the Bureau that the following regional consultations were held: regional consultations of the group of Asia Pacific States, on 2 October in Sri Lanka; regional consultations of the group of African States on 16-18 October in Uganda; regional consultations of the group of the Latin American and the Caribbean States on 16-17 October in the Dominican Republic. The meeting of the Eastern European States will take place on 27 October in Switzerland. Mrs. Mathur-Filipp further informed the Bureau that the series of technical webinars held together with the chair have been completed.
5. Regarding documentation, Mrs. Mathur-Filipp informed the Bureau that all translations of all official working documents for INC-3 are available online, and that the secretariat expects to make the information document on budget overview for the period 2023-2025 available the week of the 30 October. Regarding the preparatory meeting mandated by INC-2, she informed the Bureau that the synthesis report is available online.

6. One Bureau member requested to include an update on the dates and venues for INC-4 and on the steps taken by the host country, Canada, under AOB.
7. With that addition, the [agenda](#) was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Preparations for the preparatory meeting mandated by the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment at its second session.

8. Under this agenda item, the Chair invited the Bureau to consider the preparations for the preparatory meeting mandated by the committee at its second session, including organization of work.
9. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the [provisional agenda](#) and the [provisional annotated agenda](#) for the preparatory meeting are available on the INC webpage. The Executive Secretary further indicated that due to time constraints, the translated versions of the information document containing the [synthesis report](#) (which is available online in English) are expected to be available shortly before the preparatory meeting.
10. The Chair of the INC informed that as requested at the previous Bureau meeting, he has provided further information in a written outline of his reflection note that was shared with the Bureau ahead of this meeting. The Chair highlighted a few points: the preparatory meeting will open at 10:00 am and there will be two plenary sessions, the first from 10 am to 13 pm, and the second one from 15 pm to 18 pm. He further noted that he will open the meeting in plenary for general discussion and that he intends to invite the Executive Secretary to deliver a brief opening statement. Then, he will introduce and hand over the meeting to two co-facilitators. His proposal will be not to take general statements and move to the substance, expecting that agenda item 1 will not last longer than 30 minutes.
11. The Chair indicated that under agenda item 2 the meeting will consider the synthesis report and that his proposal is to split this agenda item into two discussion rounds in plenary, one on preamble, definitions, principles and scope; and another one on institutional arrangements, and final provisions. Regarding agenda item 3 on intersessional work, the Chair indicated that the objective of this discussion is to understand possible areas of early convergence on required intersessional work with focus on procedural considerations around the proposed priorities.
12. The Chair indicated that to connect the discussions at the preparatory meeting with the third session of the INC, the two presiding co-facilitators would be invited to prepare a summary of the discussions, which would then be presented to the Committee at INC-3 as a non-paper, which will feed into the discussions in contact group 3.
13. Regarding INC-3, the Chair informed the following:
 - a) For agenda item 4, the zero draft will be introduced in plenary followed by the co-facilitator's summary of the preparatory meeting. Under this agenda item, the Chair will

- invite interventions by groups of States, individual delegations and observers on the substantive items related to the zero draft and the preparatory meeting;
- b) Following that initial plenary meeting, and without prejudice to the discussions in the plenary, the Chair will propose the establishment of three contact groups to advance the development of the instrument, as follows: 1) contact group 1: Part I (objective) and part II of the zero draft; 2) contact group 2: Part III and IV of the zero draft; and 3) contact group 3: elements not discussed at INC-2 currently set as placeholders in parts I, V, and VI of the zero draft, as well as intersessional work. Each contact group will be invited to address the annexes of the zero draft that follow under their mandate, and to identify the needs and timing for the intersessional work. The later point will then be discussed under contact group 3, including making a recommendation for the intersessional work and its modalities;
 - c) For the final plenary session on Sunday, 19 November, the Chair's expectations are the following: the report and any outputs from the work of the contact groups, agreement on the outcomes of INC-3 and on further work; be informed by the secretariat on the progress on the organization of the upcoming INC sessions; agreement to forward the provisional agenda for INC-4; address any other matters; and to consider the election of officers.

14. Members of the Bureau provided the following comments on the preparatory meeting and INC-3:

- a) Members welcomed the publication of the synthesis report two weeks before the meeting;
- b) Members recommended flexibility with the timeframe provided to discuss each agenda item, especially the substantive topics;
- c) Members suggested to indicate in the Chair's reflection note when the Co-Facilitators summary will be available. The secretariat clarified that it will be available on Monday, 13 November;
- d) One member indicated that the preparatory meeting cannot make decisions, and indicated that the discussions would need to be reflected accordingly in the Co-Facilitators' summary;
- e) One Member suggested to invite the Co-Facilitators to the Bureau meeting scheduled to take place on 10 November;
- f) Members suggested to focus the discussion on intersessional work on which areas should be prioritized, and on the different components of the possible intersessional work that the committee will need to decide on, i.e., the scope, modalities (e.g., limited participation or open-ended; opened or closed to observers, in-person or online), timeframe and mandate.
- g) Members of the Bureau reiterated that all different elements of the future instrument should have adequate time for discussion and emphasized that sufficient time should be allocated to the discussions on scope, principles and definitions.

15. The Chair thanked the Bureau for this information and indicated that he will consider it when he finalizes his reflection note.

Agenda item 3: Preparations for the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-3).

16. Upon invitation of the Chair, the Executive Secretary provided an update on the preparations for the third session of the INC, including on the registration numbers and provision of travel support to eligible delegates. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that there will be no limits on access of approved participants to the UN compound in Gigiri. However, due to space limitations in the plenary room, the Secretariat will issue secondary access cards to access Conference room 2, where the plenary will be held. In this regard, she added that Member States delegations will be provided with a maximum of four (4) secondary access cards marked "INC-3 Plenary", observers from intergovernmental organizations and UN system entities will be provided with a maximum of 2 secondary access cards, and observers from NGOs will be given 1 secondary access card for organization. A notification on the secondary access cards will be circulated to all delegations.
17. At the previous Bureau meeting, the Bureau requested the secretariat to provide a timeline of potential decisions needed up to the first meeting of the governing body for the purposes of the organization of the intersessional work. Ms. Brenda Koekkoek, Senior Programme Officer, provided an oral presentation on a timeline of potential decisions needed up to the first meeting of the governing body for the purposes of the organization of intersessional work. She also provided some secretariat reflections on possible intersessional work based on the outcomes of contact group 1 and contact group 2 at INC-2 and the submissions received on this matter.
18. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that a notification on the thematic side events was sent out on 5 October, providing information on the modalities and practical arrangements. The announcement of the selected co-organizers will be done this week through a notification.
19. Members of the Bureau provided the following comments on the preparatory meeting and INC-3:
 - a. The Chair's reflection note should follow the language from the scenario note and build on it;
 - b. Noted that balance will be needed when scheduling the meetings of the contact groups and requested to further discuss timeline for contact groups at the next Bureau meeting;
 - c. Welcomed the proposal not to have more than 2 contact groups meeting at the same time
 - d. Suggested to provide a platform for delegations to share written text proposals;
 - e. One Bureau Member noted the relevance of slides from the previous Bureau meeting on intersessional work and that these could be presented at the preparatory day to bring clarity to possible timing and modalities for intersessional work;
 - f. Avoid referring to 'required' intersessional work so as not to prejudge INC discussions;
 - g. The role of CGs 1 and 2 in identifying possible areas for intersessional work were highlighted and how it would inform CG3 discussions.
20. The Chair of the INC took note of the recommendations and informed that these will be taken into consideration in his note to the contact groups co-facilitators as well as in his reflection's note.

21. The Executive Secretary took note of the suggestion to provide a platform for delegations to share written text proposals, noting that for INC-3 the secretariat will work with an interim solution as this will require some time operationalize until INC-3.
22. The Chair informed the Bureau that he expects to make available his reflection's note on the preparatory meeting and INC-3 next week.

Agenda item 4: Any other matters

23. The Executive Secretary updated the Bureau on the steps taken for the preparations for INC-4. The secretariat sent out the invitation letters for INC-4 and opened registration on 23 October, as discussed at the previous Bureau meeting. The length of the fourth session is to be decided by the committee based on the offer by the host country that has a venue reserved for the period within 21 to 30 April 2024. Further, she informed that the deadline for registration for INC-4 is 26 February 2024, and that the deadline for applications for delegates eligible for travel support is 8 December 2023. A webpage for INC-4 is now available, as well as the information note to participants with practical and logistical details about the session.
24. The Executive Secretary reminded the Bureau that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on 10 November in-person at the UNON compound in Nairobi. During INC-3, the Bureau meetings will take place in the evening, as was the practice at INC-2.
25. One Bureau member provided information on some of the actions that Canada as host country has taken to facilitate the visa application process for participants for INC-4.
26. No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 6: Closing of the meeting

27. The Executive Secretary reminded the Bureau that she will be hosting a heads of delegation reception in the evening of Saturday, 11 November and requested the Bureau members to rsvp via the link provided.
28. The meeting closed at 18:00.

Annex: Action points.

Action Points

Meeting of the Bureau of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

26 October 2023

Issue	Action Point	Responsibility
Preparatory meeting	Explore the possibility to enable flexible time allocation to accommodate, in particular, the significant interest in discussions on principles and scope	Chair and INC Secretariat
Intersessional work	Provide relevant slides from the last Bureau meeting on intersessional work to the preparatory day to bring clarity to possible timing and modalities for intersessional work	Chair and INC Secretariat
Reflection note	Align language between the scenario note and the reflection's note	Chair and INC Secretariat
	Identify a space for delegates to submit text proposals to be posted online (e.g. via email and timely upload)	INC Secretariat
Preparations for INC-3	Provide a tentative schedule for contact group meetings, ensuring balanced allocation of time slots	Chair and INC Secretariat

Next meeting: 10 November 2023, 16:00 -19:00 (GMT+2), Conference Room 8, UNON (in-person)