

Resumed fifth session of negotiations on a global plastic pollution treaty opens in Geneva

The second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-5.2), opened today in Geneva. The session aims to finalize and approve the text of the agreement and forward it for consideration and adoption at a future Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries.

INC-5.2 takes place from 5 – 14 August, follows INC 5, which took place in November/December 2024 in Busan, Republic of Korea. That meeting was preceded by four previous sessions: INC-1, which took place in Punta del Este in November 2022, INC-2, which was held in Paris in June 2023, INC-3, which happened in Nairobi in November 2023, and INC-4, held in Ottawa in April 2024.

“Plastic pollution is already in nature, in our oceans and even in our bodies. If we continue as on this trajectory, the whole world will be drowning in plastic pollution – with massive consequences for our planetary, economic and human health,” said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP. “But this does not have to be our future. Together, we can solve this challenge. Agreeing a treaty text is the first step to beating plastic pollution for everyone, everywhere.”

Since Busan, in the run-up to INC-5.2, a series of informal ministerial meetings, regional consultations, and Heads of Delegations meetings have taken place.

“We are here today to fulfill an international mandate. This

is a unique and historic opportunity for the international community to bridge differences and find common ground. It is not just a test of our diplomacy—it is a test of our collective responsibility to protect the environment, safeguard human health, enable sustainable economies, and stand in solidarity with those most affected by this plastic pollution crisis,” said Luis Vayas Valdivieso, Chair of the INC.

Ahead of the opening, on 4 August, the Executive Director of UNEP, INC Chair, and INC Executive Secretary held a conversation with Observers, while the Government of Switzerland hosted a Multi-stakeholder Forum.

“Today, we stand at a critical crossroads. Plastic waste is choking our lakes, harming wildlife, and threatening human health. This is more than just an environmental issue – it is a global challenge that demands urgent and collective action. Over the coming days, we have an opportunity to make a real difference – by negotiating an effective Plastics Treaty and identifying comprehensive solutions and measures that address the full life cycle of plastic,” said Katrin Schneeberger, Director of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment.

As of the opening day, more than 3,700 participants had registered to participate in INC-5.2, representing 184 countries and over 619 Observer organizations.

“What was set in motion in Nairobi has weathered complexities, moments of challenge, and hard-won progress—and it is precisely this shared endurance that strengthens our resolve and brings us, determined and forward-looking, to this historic hall today,” said Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Executive Secretary of the INC. “Being hosted at the Palais des Nations situates INC-5.2 within a long tradition of crucial multilateral negotiations, diplomatic breakthroughs, and international legal frameworks. It is essential that this session now be part of that legacy.”