Ad Hoc Open Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Micro-plastics

Item 4 Barriers to combating marine litter and microplastics, including challenges related to resources in developing countries

Wednesday, May 30, 2018

Intervention by David Azoulay (CIEL, Switzerland)

Thank you Mister/Madam Chair, I am from the Center of International Environmental Law and speak on behalf of 7 Major Groups: Women, NGO, Children & Youth, Farmers, Trade Union & Workers, Indigenous Peoples, and Science & Technology major groups.

As exemplified by the reports prepared for UNEA2 and 3 the issue of marine plastic litter and microplastics is a complex and very urgent issue. And that situation requires us to develop bold, and innovative approaches.

Which is why the UNEA3 resolution that created this group and gave us a mandate, highlighted that our work should be informed by, and build on, relevant resolution, decisions and reports by the UN Environment program.

In that respect, it is critical to remember that UNEA already had extensive discussions and agreements on the need to take into account the full life cycle approach (1st operative paragraph of UNEA2 resolution) when designing global solutions, that we should establish and implement measures that are consistent with the waste hierarchy (Operative paragraph 7 of UNEA2 resolution), which put the prevention of waste on top of the hierarchy, and identifies increasing plastic production and consumption as a major challenge to address marine plastic production (final preambular paragraph of UNEA3 resolution).

It is therefore critical that we avoid repeating some of the discussions to revisit the need to consider the full life cycle of plastics, including, but not limited to, waste management processes that have already been settled in previous meetings, and focus, instead, on identifying bold, innovative and efficient solutions, including considerations of limiting production and consumption of plastics, to address the urgent crisis of marine plastic pollution.