

QUNO Statement to Informal Working Group 1

Agenda item 2. Identification of modalities for stakeholder engagement in the context of the INC process and other documents

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

Thank you Chair, this intervention is on behalf of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)

Based on experiences felt in Uruguay, our movement feels that the following principles are essential for any future multi-stakeholder engagement under a global instrument:

1. Fair and equitable access (including translation and interpretation) by different constituencies to meetings, including funding and translation to support participants from marginalised groups most affected by plastic pollution. In order for such engagement to be more than tokenistic, there should be no sponsorship or funding from major polluting industries.
2. Funding should be channeled through a common pot, and other structural safeguards must be implemented to prevent funder agendas from shaping the framing or outcomes of any future meetings
3. Non-duplication of existing multi-stakeholder spaces on plastics given existing infrastructure and capacity/funding challenges. Concretely, the best approach would be for the GPML-PWP to jointly host future multi-stakeholder spaces on plastics.

It is worth considering whether future Multi-Stakeholder Forums are truly necessary. In particular, we request that a Multi-stakeholder Forum not be conflated with the provision in Resolution 5/14 calling for a *multi-stakeholder action agenda* that will endure beyond the work of the INC. These are two separate processes and should be treated as such.

Moreover, we are concerned that the Forum in its current format diverts scarce time and resources away from the negotiation process. For example, many delegations only had funding for one delegate while more than four hundred thousand dollars were spent on this INC's Multistakeholder Forum. Further, only 9 Civil Society representatives were funded by UNEP to attend the INC. Any available funding should be focused on travel support for participants, as well as interpretation in contact groups. Meanwhile, existing multi-stakeholder spaces which could encompass this agenda are already funded, could serve the same function as this Multistakeholder Forum, and already have structures for engagement in place.

We have heard today several concerns about the role of plastic producers in driving the plastics crisis, so we question how we can have equitable inclusion free from conflicts of interest when these stakeholders are represented in this negotiation space and potentially funding the dialogues.

Our movement's experience with the forum was that it was too broad to produce useful input by not focusing on specific sectors and value chains - so we recommend the future engagement of stakeholders be focused around specific stakeholder groups or areas of the value chain, for example, fishing gear and agricultural plastics, or on communities such as those living in heavily impacted areas or indigenous peoples.

Finally, it's essential that any stakeholder input into either the INC or the action agenda is timed to be useful to governments developing policies on plastic pollution. Therefore, it needs to be structured and have transparent mechanisms for informing the process and be conducted early enough to be useful in informing position-setting.

Thank you