

Statement of the UNEP MGCY on Agenda Item 5: National, regional, and international response options, including action and innovative approaches, and voluntary and legally binding governance strategies and approaches | Wednesday May 30th 2018 | Nairobi.

Thank you Madam co-chair for the opportunity. My name is Hellen Mugo and I am presenting this statement on behalf of the Major Groups Children and Youth.

Children and youth welcome the proposal for the creation of a global architecture with a multi-layered governance approach backed by a legally binding multilateral agreement to eliminate plastic pollution in our oceans. We are grateful to member states for considering this option and building ongoing dialogue on best practices to establish national, regional, and international responses towards legally binding governance structures, strategies and approaches.

Altogether, children and youth are deeply concerned by the lack of a global governance structure concerning marine plastic pollution, as this leaves a huge gap that could allow continued marine pollution. Appreciating the existence of other multilateral agreements such as the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, we encourage the emulation of such conventions and frameworks towards developing a global and legally-binding structure for regulation of plastic pollution.

Children and Youth have serious reservations towards the apparent promotion of waste-to-energy technologies as meaningful solutions to marine litter especially when there is little regard for their inefficiency, scalability issues, and long-term negative impacts such as global persistent organic pollution. Should this continue, the children and youth of the world will suffer the longest and most severe impacts of these environmentally harmful technologies. We reiterate, they are not solutions, but the commencement of a new global problem.

The focus on waste management only is another problem especially when this is presented in the context of increased investments for end-of-pipe interventions. We urge member states to consider the zero waste option, guided by creativity, innovation, and openness towards focusing on both production and consumption. Efforts such as *disincentivization* of plastic production and redesigning of plastic products should be preferred to waste management alone. With minimal production and consumption, the issue of waste will be directly reduced. Children and youth are committed to beating marine litter and micro-plastics, but reiterate that this has to start from production.

I thank you, Madam Co-chair.