

Your Excellencies, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor to be with you sharing the same values, visions, objectives and goals, to find solution for the global challenges raised from plastic pollution in our planet and for the protection of our environment and public health.

I would like to thank the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and INC Secretariat for the efforts and work dedicated for saving and protection of environment;

I would like to thank the government of France for hosting the second meeting of INC process.

Georgia is among the countries which is cosponsor of the UNEA resolution 5.2 and we joined High Ambition Coalition (HAC) to end plastic pollution. We believe that our active involvement in the work of the Intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) for the development of internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment will create new opportunities to threat plastic pollution in the planet.

We recognize the importance of actions again plastic pollution and in this regard, Georgia has taken effective steps towards prevention of plastic waste. Since 2018, we banned the use of plastic carrying bags and replaced with the biodegradable ones; the “national plastic prevention program” was developed and the one of major goal - „plastic waste management“ was integrated to the national waste management strategy and waste management action plan.

Over the years, we have developed a National Legislative Framework for Waste Management according to the EU legislation, a National Waste Management Strategy (2016-2030) and a National Action Plan (2016-2020) to facilitate the introduction of circular economy principles and sound waste management technologies in the country. For the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility Government of Georgia has adopted respective legislation and in this year producer responsibility organizations have started actions to achieve legally binding national recycling targets for different specific waste streams.

The newly established waste management system in the country with support of EU and other donors gives us opportunity to get reasonable results and contribute to the circular economy development. Considering the significant fact of signing the EU Association Agreement including the harmonization of the national legislation with the EU regulations and governance in sectoral cooperation, waste management is among the priority issues.

We believe that one key upstream measure to encourage sustainable production is the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme. Thereby it should be incorporated in the legally binding document which will bring producers, distributors, manufacturers, importers and other stakeholders (Governments, private and scientific sector, NGOs, customers) on board to refuse, reduce, reuse, redesign and recycle products at end-of-life. Georgia as a

country of economy in transition strongly supports to have clear financial mechanisms in the legally binding document to support the countries in the implementation and enforcement of the requirements and obligations of the new treaty on plastic pollution. With the creation of the effective monitoring and reporting obligations, we will develop relevant measures to stop plastic release in the environment and set recycling targets.

We expect that the treaty would support the sharing of science-based knowledge, and experience between the countries and ensure transparency at all level. We believe that environmentally sound management system for plastic will become accessible for our recycling industry and for the new developments. We have to bear in mind the chemicals of concern and bring relevant measures in to the actions to protect environment and public health. The provisions of the legally binding agreement should include the obligation to develop national action plans on plastic and the clear financial support mechanism for the developing countries and countries with economy in transition to ensure the successful implementation of the treaty. We believe that new legally binding document will have synergies with the other international instruments on chemicals and waste, such as BRS conventions and others.

Georgia expresses its interest and readiness to cooperate at national, regional and global levels for building sound and effective system to stop plastic pollution by 2040. Georgia strongly supports enhanced coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders to protect human health and the environment.

I believe supporting and acting together will allow us to achieve tangible results in the future in our region and in the world.

Thank you for your kind attention!