



## **Outcome of the Second Part of the Fifth Session Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-5.2)**

Geneva, Switzerland, 15 August 2025

### **AOSIS: Our resolve strengthened despite treaty setback**

*Geneva, 14 August 2025* – The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) expresses deep concern and disappointment that the plastics treaty negotiations have failed to deliver the binding commitments that science, justice, and island communities urgently demand to end plastic pollution.

*“This was never going to be easy - but the outcome we have today falls short of what our people, and the planet, need,”* said Surangel Whipps Jr, President of Palau, speaking as Chair of AOSIS.

*“Still, even after six rounds of negotiations, we will not walk away. The resilience of islanders has carried us through many storms, and we will persevere - because we need real solutions, and we will carve pathways to deliver them for our people and our planet.”*

Delegates faced a mandate as vast as the ocean itself: plastic production, redesigning products, improving waste management, cleaning up existing plastic pollution, securing finance, protecting health, and ensuring countries have the institutional frameworks and enable cooperation to act. But despite negotiations spanning over three years, fundamental divisions remained on core issues.

In the early hours, SIDS stressed that we have committed significant resources and personnel to this process, and we are determined not to lose the progress achieved in Geneva. In our plenary statement, we underscored that transparency, cooperation, and trust are essential to moving forward. Even among members with different views, we saw flexibility and common ground emerge when there was space for genuine engagement. Yet, in the end, broader political dynamics, a process that at times lacked necessary guardrails, and the constraints of the clock all combined to prevent us from advancing further.

The plastics crisis will not wait, and we cannot afford to remain idle. Every year, **19–23 million tonnes** of plastic waste leak into aquatic ecosystems, polluting lakes, rivers, and seas. Without meaningful action, emissions are projected to nearly triple by 2040. The volume of plastics already in the ocean is estimated at **75–199 million tonnes** - an enduring burden on our environment and communities that continues to grow.(UNEP 2023)

SIDS remain firmly committed to the international rules-based order and multilateralism as the most effective way to resolve shared global challenges. While these are undeniably challenging times for

international cooperation, we believe that trust, persistence, and genuine dialogue can prevail – just as they have in other hard-won agreements.

Our unity, persistence, and the urgency of our circumstances mean we will continue pressing, in every possible forum, for a treaty that is binding, effective, and just. As a Pacific proverb reminds us: “*A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner.*” The INC experience has strengthened our resolve and sharpened our determination to continue to find ways to fight for our people, our planet, and the future we all share.

**About AOSIS:**

Since 1990, the Alliance of Small Island States has represented the interests of the 39 small island and low-lying coastal developing states in international negotiations on climate change, sustainable development, and oceans. As a voice for the vulnerable, AOSIS is key to ensuring the United Nations mandate to “leave no one behind” is honoured. On the global stage AOSIS often punches far above its weight, negotiating historic global commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions, among other achievements.