

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marina Fernandez; I am researcher from Argentina and member of the Endocrine Society's delegation. As this is our first intervention, I would like to thank Kenya for hosting INC3 and for the opportunity to speak today. We commend and thank the Secretariat for the development of the zero draft and appreciate the hard work that has been instrumental in bringing us to this point. As an 18,000 member scientific and medical professional society with expertise in hormone biology, our aim is to work with the Committee to ensure that the instrument achieves its public and environmental health objectives by minimizing exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (also known as EDCs), many of which are commonly used as additives in plastic products. We support the principles identified by the Scientists Coalition for an Effective Plastics Treaty, and other independent scientists groups, including the need for a clear mandate for intersessional work, and for a robust conflict of interest policy.

We highlight in this intervention certain elements that are particularly relevant to endocrine science as the Committee makes progress on the text of the treaty and establishes the contact groups for this meeting. First, decades of peer-reviewed scientific publications have established that EDCs used in plastic contribute to human health harms; however, these harms have not typically been captured by conventional regulatory assessments due to the unique features of endocrine disruption. For example, EDCs operate at extremely low levels that are biologically relevant to hormone signaling and development, and the harms may manifest years later as diabetes, metabolic disruption, and reproductive health issues. Precaution is therefore essential, and the instrument should allow only the use of chemicals and additives that have proven to be both effective and safe, with consideration for effects on endocrine systems.

With this in mind, and with relevance to contact group 3, the intersessional process should begin work towards identifying those groups of chemicals that pose the greatest hazards to human health, not just those with the greatest production volume. We commend those governments that recognize the special threat EDCs pose, having initiated programs to remove these chemicals from commerce. The instrument should build on this progress and ensure that hazardous EDCs are no longer used in plastic.

Thank you and we look forward to continued engagement with members and sharing our organization's scientific expertise.