Press Release for Immediate Release

SA'S PLASTICS INDUSTRY REPORTS ON PROGRESS AND ONGOING COMMITMENTS FOLLOWING FAILED INC-5 NEGOTIATIONS

Johannesburg, *11 December 2024.* Plastics SA, in collaboration with the Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA), has reaffirmed its commitment to the global fight against plastic pollution following the Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5), held from 25 November to 1 December 2024 in Busan, South Korea.

The week-long negotiations aimed to develop an international legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution, including marine environments. Despite extensive discussions and considerable efforts, consensus on a final agreement remained out of reach, necessitating the continuation of the process at INC 5.2, scheduled for 2025.

Acknowledging Complexity and Celebrating Progress

Anton Hanekom, Executive Director of Plastics SA, expressed both regret and hope following the negotiations: "While it is deeply regrettable that no legally binding agreement to end plastics pollution could be reached after two years of negotiations, it is important to recognise the significant complexity of the challenge negotiators face. We support the decision to reconvene in 2025 and remain optimistic that a deal can be achieved. We commend the progress made on critical areas such as product design and waste management and urge negotiators to maintain this momentum."

Plastics SA and CAIA, in partnership with the International Chemical Council of Associations (ICCA) and the World Plastics Council (WPC), emphasised the importance of building circularity into the plastics lifecycle.

"From design to recycling and responsible end-of-life solutions, the negotiation process highlighted the need for fit-for-purpose waste management systems and sustainable financial mechanisms," Hanekom stressed.

Key Outcomes and Strategic Focus

While negotiations were hindered by geopolitical challenges and divergent views on key articles—particularly those addressing plastic products, supply, and financial resources—there were notable advancements. Among these, discussions on product design and waste management showed promise in aligning stakeholders toward a cohesive framework.

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Plastics SA and CAIA also welcomed the launch of the ICCA Plastic Additives Database during the INC-5 session. This tool underscores industry transparency and the safe management of chemicals, reinforcing the importance of science-based solutions in tackling plastic pollution.

Call to Action

As the umbrella body representing the entire local plastics industry, Plastics SA urges governments and stakeholders to continue building on the progress achieved. It emphasises the critical role of collective action and shared responsibility in developing a Global Plastics Treaty that prioritises sustainability and circularity.

“The pathway to a binding agreement will require focus, will, and commitment from all parties. We redouble our call for collaborative efforts to address plastic pollution and promote sustainable solutions for the benefit of the environment and future generations,” Hanekom concluded.

For more information, visit www.plasticsinfo.co.za or www.caia.co.za

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