



12 February 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Please allow us to express our warmest wishes to you and your colleagues for this new year. We write today with the hope that 2019 will be a successful year towards curbing plastic pollution, one of the biggest environmental challenges of our time.

International Geneva is a key centre of multilateralism, a unique ecosystem of actors, with the presence of hundreds of intergovernmental organizations, research institutes, private companies and Member States. Geneva is also the host of the world's chemicals and waste conventions, the Geneva-based Basel Convention, that controls the transboundary movement of hazardous and other wastes and seeks to tackle the problem of plastic pollution at source through the prevention and minimization of wastes. As the UN is calling on people everywhere to take concrete steps to #BeatPlasticPollution in their own lives, we wanted to start here, in the city of peace, rights and well-being.

We believe that International Geneva has a significant role to play in fostering environmental sustainability and we invite you to join us in working on reducing plastic wastes and in promoting plastic-free meetings throughout Geneva. We have already started to change our own consumption patterns and to decrease the consumption of single-use plastics in our premises. For example, the catering company at the Palais des Nations can now offer plastic-free coffee breaks upon request when organizing meeting within our premises. Visitors, delegates and staff are also encouraged to carry a reusable water bottles that can be purchased at the Palais and to use reusable coffee cups. The takeaway food can be packaged in a reusable container called 'reBox', which can be exchanged in a network of restaurants engaged in reducing plastic. All the packaging for the takeaway food is made of bio-sourced compostable material. For any further inquiries, you can contact Mr. Mathieu Legros, Environmental Affairs Officer at UN Geneva (Tel. + 41 22 917 5812, email: mathieu.legros@un.org) or Ms. Kei Ohno, Programme Officer at the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (Tel. +41 22 917 8201, email: kei.ohno@un.org).

In 2019, we wish to lower to a strict minimum the amount of single-use plastics within our premises, and in the events organized at UN Geneva. Only our collective efforts, as well as the cooperation from visitors, delegates, staff and suppliers will enable the identification and implementation of sustainable solutions. The efforts and results that we will achieve collectively can be reported on the Greening the Blue platform (<http://www.greeningtheblue.org/>) and the Geneva Environment Network (<https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/>).

We count on your support. Together, we can make 2019 a year free of plastic during meetings and conferences at UN Geneva.

Yours sincerely,



Rolph Payet
Executive Secretary
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm
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Ms. Sylvie Motard
Acting Director
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Michael Møller
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All Heads of United Nations entities and partner organizations in Geneva