

Intervention of the Secretariat at the Informal Open-ended Working Group meeting on 6 December 2016 on the Agenda item 3, part “Contribution of the Environment Assembly to the High Level Political Forum”

Agenda item 3: Structure and agenda of the Fourth Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, part “Contribution of the Environment Assembly to the High Level Political Forum”

Thank you, Madam Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Financial Committee, better known as the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly, is expected to adopt by consensus a draft resolution on the “Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme” (A/C.2/71/L.45 attached) this or next week, which would then be forwarded to the General Assembly for its formal adoption (usually before Christmas).

While it has been customary for the General Assembly to adopt a resolution on the report of the UNEP governing body, this year’s resolution is significant because it lays the groundwork for a strengthened relationship between United Nations Environment Assembly and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and regular inter-action.

The draft resolution recognizes the commitment of the Environment Assembly to contribute to the effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner.

The draft resolution encourages the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly to convey the main messages of UNEA sessions to the High-level Political Forum. Such direct encouragement is unprecedented for the head of an intergovernmental governing body, and is indicative of the importance that Member States attach to the environment as being a critical crosscutting and integrating factor for sustainable development.

The draft resolution also differs from its predecessors by taking note of UNEP’s contribution to addressing climate change and of the relevance of UNEP’s work to the Sustainable Development Goal 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources and to the United Nations Conference to be organized on this issue in June 2017.

The draft General Assembly resolution reciprocates the resolution 2/5 on “Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which was adopted by the second session of the Environment Assembly last May. In this context, the Environment Assembly should, moving forward, consolidate its place as the center of global environmental governance and focus on producing powerful outcomes that can resonate in the international community and mobilize people into action

for the environment.

The UN Environment will have the opportunity to influence global discourse on sustainable development regularly starting with the next session of the High-level Political Forum, taking place on 10-19 July 2017, with a ministerial segment on 17-19 July 2017, in New York on the theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

The President of the Economic and Social Council, H.E. Mr. Frederick Mussiwa Makamure Shava (Zimbabwe) has requested the President of the Environment Assembly, as well as heads of the governing bodies of major global multilateral environmental agreements and other intergovernmental bodies, to provide written inputs to the session by 28 April 2017.

The United Nations Environment secretariat wishes to facilitate Member States' consideration of the requested input to the High-level Political Forum at the annual subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment, scheduled to convene on 6 - 10 March 2017 in Nairobi.

The UN Environment, through the President of the Assembly, is expected to provide substantive inputs to the meeting. In providing these inputs, the Council President has invited UN Environment to consider the following template:

- a. An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of "ensuring that no one is left behind" at the global level
- b. The identification of gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges;
- c. Valuable lessons learned on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity;
- d. Emerging issues likely to affect the realization of poverty eradication and achieving prosperity;
- e. Areas where political guidance by HLPF is required;
- f. Policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress in poverty eradication.

The proposed agenda item, which could be discussed on Wednesday 8 March 2017, would provide an opportunity for the members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to share views on what they wish to see the UN Environment convey to the Forum, particularly in view of the fact that the next session of the Assembly which will take place in December 2017, with its outcomes feeding only into the 2018 Forum.