

**Draft Outline Document for the Ministerial Outcome Document of the 2017 UN
Environment Assembly
Towards a Pollution-Free Planet- Comments from Argentina**

General Comments.-

Argentina would like to thank Costa Rica and UNEP for the elaboration of the present document. We appreciate efforts to make this negotiation as transparent and inclusive as possible.

With regard to the text, we believe that there should be a reference to the "common but differentiated responsibilities principle" in the final Declaration. It is a fact that levels of development and of capabilities to working for reducing pollution are different worldwide, and we believe this is something that should be captured. Since this affects a number of issues related to pollution and how to combat it, the reference should be made in the opening paragraphs of the text, so as to cover all of its contents.

Because of the same reason stated above, Argentina believes that committing to exact dates for addressing different pollution-related issues (marine litter, sound management of wastes, among others) are difficult to accept and may imply unachievable objectives for some parties.

Furthermore, elements of cooperation could be included, with a view to enhancing efforts to reduce pollution in all the forms addressed by the text.

We also suggest incorporating (under the title "Challenges and Opportunities") a reference to climate change and elements of Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration, under the following rationale:

Climate change and pollution

Climate change is related to pollution in different aspects. In many cases, a common origin can be identified: the current energy model based on fossil fuels and extreme weather events have a direct effect on the quality of the air and in particular of the water. Therefore, we believe that the Declaration should reaffirm the fight against global warming, adaptation and mitigation policies as essential elements to improve the planet's environmental situation and, reduce pollution.

Access to information, participation and justice

When aiming for sustainable development, it is essential to promote the full implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, ensuring that information regarding the environmental quality of any activity should be provided, that individuals should have due access to public environmental information, while having the opportunity of participating in decision-making processes.

Please find specific comments to the text below:

- Specific Comments and suggestions of change in wording of the draft -

Introduction:

- ℞ As the world's Ministers of Environment we must be determined to address pollution at every level in order to protect the health and lives of all people on this planet, the developmental aspirations of current and future generations, and the immeasurable wealth of the environment and the natural resources upon which we all depend;
- ℞ The UN Environment Programme is the leading global environmental authority that serves governments to coordinate the global environmental agenda. The UN Environment Assembly is the main body on global environmental issues. Both are key in keeping the state of the environment under review and in addressing the vital environmental challenges of global and regional significance, which we are facing today, such as pollution;
- ℞ We recognize that neither the UN Environment Assembly nor the UN Environment Programme will be able to tackle the challenge of pollution on their own and in this regard, we urge the other inter-governmental bodies, UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and all other stakeholders, including business leaders, to contribute towards our effort;
- ℞ We invite all governments, businesses, communities and people, and all other stakeholders to work towards a pollution-free planet by determining their own contributions and commitments to achieve our vision.

Vision:

- ℞ Our goal, collectively, must be a pollution-free planet. Urgent action is our responsibility;
- ℞ Reducing pollution means positively transforming our world. It will help ensure that we, as humanity, make a leap towards a healthier, safer, brighter, more sustainable future, with benefits for all;
- ℞ More people will be able to leave poverty behind;
- ℞ We will protect the health of everyone on this planet, today and in the future;
- ℞ Safer and cleaner technologies will drive our economies;
- ℞ We will transform our societies to become sustainable, resource efficient and able to support the needs of present and future generations;
- ℞ Peace, security and stability will help us promote inclusive societies, which respect human rights and gender empowerment, as well as the environment. . *Working towards an environment free of pollution will help us promote inclusive societies, with respect to human rights and gender empowerment.*
- ℞ We will increase global, regional and national knowledge, awareness and education around pollution sources, impacts, and solutions.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- ℞ Pollution affects everybody. It is a massive global challenge with consequences reaching far beyond the environment;
- ℞ The increasing pollution of our air, water, land and seas is a major obstacle towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set by our leaders in 2015;
- ℞ Pollution is destroying our ecosystems, affecting human health, hampering long-term economic growth and exacerbating social inequalities;
- ℞ Pollution is an individual and collective concern the world over, threatening the health and well-being of all of us;
- ℞ We welcome the many pledges and voluntary commitments being made by Governments, business and civil society as actions towards the achievement of our vision in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, and commit to take the following steps/actions;
- ℞ The solutions to reduce and eliminate pollution are available and moving onto a more sustainable path lies in our hands.
- ℞ [Strengthening multilateral agreements on chemicals and waste management such as Basilea, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, is a key factor.](#)

Transformative Steps and Actions:

- ℞ Reduce all waste, through increased reuse and recycling of materials, innovation, and improved transfer of and access to clean technologies;
- ℞ Promote sustainable use of natural resource and efficiency through technologies that aim at decoupling economic growth from environment degradation;
- ℞ Improve transfer of and access to clean technologies;
- ℞ Work with the private sector to identify and implement market based solutions and alternatives to end all forms of pollution;
- ℞ Improve the health of the environment and ecosystems, and the health of people everywhere, including through stronger, integrated, and coherent policies and laws to reduce pollution, including standards for air, land and water quality based on scientific evidence and data;
- ℞ Strengthen the implementation and enforcement of environmental laws and policies through capacity building and institutional strengthening, including monitoring systems;
- ℞ Reduce major sources of marine litter, such as microplastics and the excessive, wasteful usage of single-use plastic;
- ℞ Accelerate efforts to achieve the sound management of chemicals and wastes,;
- ℞ Reduce, by half, the amount of untreated wastewater entering water bodies ;
- ℞ Substantially improve air quality in cities to within healthy levels for human consumption;
- ℞ Work with the local governments of the world towards promoting sustainable models of urban development that address, in an integrated manner, cleaner and livable cities;
- ℞ Significantly expand the application and distribution in all countries of the best available science and technologies to combat the threat of pollution in all its forms;
- ℞ Expand existing and create new multi-stakeholder partnerships, bringing together Governments, the private sector, the civil society, the United Nations system and the people of the world.

We understand that this is not a "vision" element, but rather an "action" element. For this reason, we suggest to move this to the "Transformative steps and actions" section, if the subtitles are kept.

This item should be reformulated in order to stress the environmental dimension that UNEP Works within.

References to peace, security and stability exceed its mandate.

Technologies are not always available, especially for developing countries.

. This is related to our general comment on common but differentiated responsibilities. The possibility of moving to more sustainable paths is not equally under every country's reach.

New wording suggested to stress the importance of policies and law when addressing pollution.

We suggest avoiding making reference to concrete dates for this actions.

In line with our previous comment, Argentina prefers not to mention specific dates or quantifiable objectives under committing language.