

UNEP MGCY Statement at UNEA 3

Thank you honourable chair. Dear Excellencies and distinguished delegates.

I am Bunmi Obanawu, from Nigeria with my colleague Leo Verlage from Germany, speaking on behalf of the Major Group of Children and Youth. Thank you for the opportunity.

We would like to recognise the efforts of the UNEA-3 Presidency, the Member States, the Executive Director and the Secretariat on the progress made in the last several months, and this last week in Nairobi and want to address the following issues -

Firstly, we express our support for the draft resolution proposed by Iraq on “Pollution prevention and control in areas affected by terrorism and armed conflicts”. We strongly encourage the member states to seriously take into consideration the plights of countries which suffer the frontline impacts of pollution caused by conflict and terrorism. We would like to reiterate that this is a resolution about pollution, not about terrorism. We, the youth, who are rarely the sources of conflict, but suffer the most brunt of the problem, **call for solidarity on this issue and request for a consensus on the resolution.**

Secondly, we welcome the draft resolution proposed by Mexico on Pollution mitigation by mainstreaming biodiversity into key sectors and want to be seen as potential partners for the implementation of national agendas.

Thirdly, we are aware of the on-going discussions about the engagement of stakeholders who come from different financial backgrounds and interests. In the past, UNEP has set precedents for how it engages with civil society and we would encourage that we develop on the same principles of having good faith actors on board.

Fourthly, the impunity in the cases of environmentalists murdered in the world is alarming with the figures increasing every year especially in Latin America and Asia Pacific. We urge the member states to create policies for protection of environmental defenders.

Lastly, and most importantly - appreciating the hard work invested by member states in UNEA-2 on resolution 2/3 “Investing in human capacity for sustainable development through environmental education and training”, we reiterate the significance of education in ensuring informed efforts towards saving our planet.

Hence, the UNEP MGCY would like to propose having “Education” as a theme for the UNEA - 4. The UNEA-2’s resolution on Education and Training was limited to formal education, and also suffered the lack of financial capacity that was also highlighted in the report from Executive Director.

Many youth-led organizations work on education, capacity building and addressing the gaps in different education contexts. These efforts need to be supported by the national and local governments.

Therefore, we reiterate the proposal for having “Education” as a part of the thematic for UNEA - 4. Education is a long-term, indispensable pillar in ensuring effective, informed, and better solutions to the current environmental crisis. Taking this proposal would show that the next generation is

important to UNEA. As a native American proverb goes ... “We do not inherit the *Earth* from our ancestors—we *borrow* it from our children.”

Let us all move together, stronger.

Thank you dear delegates.