

Statement by the State of Eritrea on behalf of the African Group on the First Substantive Session of the Session of the ad-hoc Open-Ended Working Group Established Pursuant to the General Assembly Resolution 72/277 – “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”

18th January 2019

Co-Chairpersons,

Ambassadors, High Commissioners,

Distinguished Delegates, and Dear Colleagues,

1. I am honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group at this closing session.
2. Africa Group reiterates that the ongoing efforts should not undermine the existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) and instead build on them
3. The ongoing efforts should seek to strengthen UNEP as was decided in the Rio +20 outcome document, by consolidating reporting mechanism, supervision, coordination and

cooperation amongst environmental treaty instruments in UNEP so as to coordinate and ensure cooperation amongst various secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and build synergies similar to those witnessed between Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

4. The Group strongly believes that “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable

requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental.

5. In this connection, climate change, environmental degradation, desertification, natural disasters and other environmental challenges have contributed to increased levels of poverty resulting in human migration and displacement, which have in turn contributed to pressures on the recipient natural resource base thus creating a vicious cycle. Thus, it is the expectation of the Group that the coming substantive sessions refocus and reinvigorate the Environment-Poverty nexus innovatively.

6. The Group also underline the centrality of Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which

is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity.

7. The effective implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels and effective means of implementation including finance, capacity-building, mutually beneficial partnerships and the development, dissemination and diffusion and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms,

as mutually agreed continue to be Africa's standing position and the Group wishes to underscore that the upcoming sessions should not dwell on reinventing the wheel by reiterating the implementation challenges, rather by establishing a genuine link between the proposed options aimed at filling the implementation gaps with relevant provisions of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

8. I would like to use this opportunity to express the Group's appreciation of the co-chairs for their able facilitation and wish visitors a safe journey back home.

9. Thank you!