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**4<sup>th</sup> meeting  
of the United Nations Environment Assembly  
11-15 March 2019**

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**Closing statement  
on behalf of the EU and its MS**

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- 10 • Mister President, distinguished colleagues; it is my privilege to  
11 speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.  
12 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align  
themselves with this statement
  
  - 13 • This Assembly was overshadowed by the tragic accident of the  
14 flight carrying many of our colleagues to this meeting. And today  
15 we also extend our condolences to the New Zealand delegation and  
16 mourn with them the loss of many lives.
  
  - 17 • All of us represented at the fourth session of the UN  
18 Environmental Assembly have worked hard to achieve an  
19 ambitious and forward looking result. And we think we have  
20 succeeded . It is therefore with great pleasure that we welcome the  
21 outcome of this assembly.
  
  - 22 • We welcome the engagement of all Member States in discussing  
23 solutions for the environmental challenges that our planet is facing.

24 That proves that the highest environment authority sets the global  
25 environmental agenda and that UNEP maintains its underpinning  
26 science-policy foundation.

27 • This significant engagement and the positive results would not  
28 have been possible without the tireless efforts of the UNEA  
29 President, Mister Siim Kiisler, the chair of the Committee of the  
30 Whole Ambassador Coimbra from Brazil and the Bureau of the  
31 Assembly as well as the facilitators. We also welcome the  
32 preparatory process led by the Committee of Permanent  
33 Representatives and efficiently supported by the UNEP Secretariat.  
34 Great thanks to the Acting Executive Director, Ms Joyce Msuya.  
35 We also extend a very warm welcome to the incoming Executive  
36 Director, Ms Inger Andersen. We are looking forward to working  
37 with her.

38 • The most prominent success of UNEA-4 is the Ministerial  
39 Declaration. It presents a compromise between various levels of  
40 ambitions of Member States, nevertheless, it clearly indicates the  
41 direction in which our development needs to evolve to ensure a  
42 sustainable future. The Declaration includes very important  
43 statements and commitments that will guide our work in the  
44 multilateral system and actions at national and regional level, not  
45 least with regard to the topical issue of single use plastics.

46 • Along the same lines, we are largely happy with the overall  
47 balance of the package of resolutions we have negotiated over the

48 last days. The EU and its Member States believe that we have  
49 agreed on an important set of approaches, commitments and  
50 innovative solutions that will advance us in our work on important  
51 topics as women and the environment, sound management of  
52 chemicals and waste, sustainable consumption and production,  
53 more resource efficiency and circularity and fewer unnecessary  
54 products such as certain single use plastic products.

- 55 • We welcome the review process initiated at this UNEA and we  
56 look forward to work with other Member States to improve  
57 efficiency and effectiveness of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies.
- 58 • It will remain a major disappointment that it was impossible to  
59 agree on the resolution proposed by the EU and its Member States  
60 on Deforestation from agriculture commodity supply chains.  
61 Despite efforts and untiring engagement, it proved impossible to  
62 convince some Member States to address this burning global  
63 challenge also at this assembly. The EU and its Member States will  
64 continue engaging beyond UNEA-4 to ensure that this threat to our  
65 environment is fully addressed.
- 66 • We remain committed to 2030 Agenda, agreed multilateral  
67 cooperation and international environmental governance and will  
68 not agree to any back-sliding in this regard.
- 69 • We would like to thank all with whom we worked hand in hand for  
70 the past ten days. We have been encouraged by the tremendous  
71 opportunities to discuss and exchange views, including through

72 dialogues with political leaders and stakeholders, various side  
73 events and bilateral meetings. We invite all partners to join us to  
74 work with us to develop future initiatives and actions building on  
75 the achievements of this Assembly.

- 76 • Last but not least, the EU and its Member States would like to  
77 congratulate the newly elected President of UNEA5, Mr Ola  
78 Elvestuen and the new UNEA Bureau and we wish you every  
79 success in guiding us towards the next session of the Assembly.

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