

**International Chamber of Commerce
Towards a Global Pact for the Environment
20 May 2019
Nairobi, Kenya**

Opening Statement

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen – ICC would once more like to express appreciation to the Co-Chairs for their deft guiding of the process of the ad hoc open-ended working group.

These discussions are an opportunity to consider how best we can advance international environmental law. We hope the outcomes of our third and final discussions will reflect the commitment shown by Member States in 2015 to tackle environmental challenges, and ensure supportive global environmental governance frameworks to achieve the 2030 Agenda, advance multilateral environment agreements (**MEAs**) and strengthen national implementation and the effectiveness of environmental law.

Business sees the need for this session to result in constructive, productive and actionable recommendations to the General Assembly,

in line with the GA Resolution “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”.

During the recently concluded UNEA4, Member States repeatedly put forward the need for a more robust environmental framework to respond to the growing environmental challenges the world is facing, and we commend the Assembly’s efforts.

Within ICC’s membership there is universal support for enhancing environmental governance. While there are differing views within our global membership on the appropriate legal form and effect of any future instrument, as ICC’s Secretary-General recently communicated to Member States, a Global Pact for the Environment, if properly designed, could play a valuable role in providing greater certainty and clarity as regards international environmental law.

In general terms, ICC sees a number of potential benefits that could result from a properly designed instrument. Some of these benefits could include:

- enhanced environmental protection;
- creation of a level playing field by increasing the degree of uniformity of environmental law across jurisdictions; and
- increased foreseeability through the clarification of the scope and content of principles of international environmental law.

With regard to the non-paper of the Co-Chairs, setting out draft elements of recommendations to the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, ICC considers that they include elements related to both the objectives and substantive recommendations which are helpful.

In particular, business sees real value in the draft recommendations,

- to promote further work on principles of international environmental law with a view to strengthening their implementation;
- to invite the identification by MEA bodies and secretariats of the implementation challenges in their regimes and to foster

increased cooperation and coordination among them and with scientific bodies;

- to encourage increased ratification and effective implementation of MEAs by Member States that have not done so
- to promote increased efforts to streamline the reporting and/or monitoring processes of MEAs and scientific bodies and, when appropriate, join reporting across MEAs and scientific bodies; and
- to promote active and meaningful stakeholder engagement in the different *fora* related to the implementation of international and environment law and environment-related instruments.

As to the process moving forward, we call on all delegations to act with determination, courage and vigour in this third substantive session, to ensure we bring bold, forward-looking and actionable recommendations back to the General Assembly in New York.

Given the scale of the environmental challenges confronting us all, we need urgent, ambitious, and practical action, with the widest possible

cooperation. We urge delegations to act on that basis and, through this process, demonstrate clear and definitive political leadership for the environment and include business as a vital stakeholder in this process.

We wish to thank you all for the inclusive manner with which these discussions have been conducted, and look forward to continuing our engagement in and support for this process.