

**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE DURING THE 151ST
MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVES: 14 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Zimbabwe at the vital work of the Organisation is not adversely affected by the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. While encouraging Member States that it is imperative on each and everyone of us to ensure that we have left a significant footprint in environmental and wildlife preservation, the protection for biodiversity which is crucial for a safer planet and a thriving people, my delegation wishes to share with you one of the latest developments where my Government banned the establishment of new coal mines in all its game parks. The development highlights my Government's commitment to the Campfire Project which ensures that people continuously benefit from the environment in a mutual relationship.

Pertaining to Resolution 73/333, my delegation indeed concurs that we should come up with a Political Declaration for the UN High Level Meeting in this regard and encourages Member States to work towards a document that will strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want". However, the idea that the event should be commemorated during UNEA5 should still be subjected to further discussions.

Concerning UNEP@50 commemorations, the Zimbabwe delegation proposes the postponement of the Assembly to 2022, with the possibility that it will be combined with celebrations of the same during a substantive UNEA meeting. The unpredictability of COVID-19 on option 1 and 4, which time frame is too short, does not guarantee the viability of a successful meeting. Option 2, which would require an extended period for both the OECPR and the Assembly, apart from the already scheduled 2 weeks could present a cumbersome scenario. Further, attempting to structure balanced and inclusive negotiations on important decisions which impact on national developmental plans and livelihoods of millions of people on the virtual platform, does not provide for a level playing field. It should be acknowledged that most of the member states, especially developing countries contend with network issues, among other challenges. If we are to strengthening Head Quarter functionality, it is imperative that all Member States be on board in all substantive negotiations.

Further, my delegation welcomes and commends the work being done by the various Expert Groups, on CPR led Review, Marine litter and MicroPlastics, and UN General Assembly Resolution 73/333 to mention some of them. The work of UNEP can only progress if we all work together with a common purpose.

I thank you.