

**7<sup>th</sup> meeting**  
**of the Annual Subcommittee of the**  
**Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP**  
**12-16 October 2020**

- Chair, Madam Executive Director, Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen; it is my privilege to address the meeting on behalf of The Netherlands.
- Let me first of all thank the UNEP Secretariat for making the arrangements for this meeting and the assistance provided to enable colleagues from all over the world in all timezones to join our deliberations. Although being aware of the limitations of virtual platforms to truly engage, it is worthwhile to note that it has offered us with an opportunity to keep providing input and guidance to UNEPs work so far.
- I am confident that with continued efforts to improve these platforms, they will offer a lasting opportunity to reduce the carbon footprint of our future meetings and enhance inclusiveness, by offering more MS and stakeholders an alternative way to participate in the meetings.
- On content for this meeting, of course The Netherlands aligns with the European Union, but let me highlight a few remarks.
- The Netherlands is a longstanding supporter of UNEP and its work as an authoritative voice on the environment and to assist MS to enhance environmental governance. If there is one thing the pandemic has made clear, it is the relevance of both the environment and multilateralism.
- We welcome the progress made to strengthen UNEP and UNEA as an universal body and in that light we value the opportunity to collectively provide guidance

through this meeting for the implementation of the Programme of Work for next year and to take into account the lessons learned to date. In particular in light of the circumstances due to the COVID situation, we look forward to hearing from the Secretariat how the pandemic is expected to impact their work and what measures are taken to address possible risks.

- We also see this meeting as an important milestone in the development of the Medium Term Strategy (2022-2025) and the Programme of Work and Budget (2022-2023) for the coming period. We hope we will be able to agree to provide UNEP with the relevant guidance to allow them further enhanced focus and impact, making full use of UNEP's niche as the authoritative voice and its normative role on the environment as well as the opportunities offered to enhance impact by collaborating through the UN system.
- With regard to the preparations for UNEA, I note the many considerations and views on how to organize a relevant meeting under the circumstances of the pandemic. With the leadership of the UNEA President, we wish the meeting wisdom in taking decisions on preparations that provide a way forward that is inclusive, conducive with the pandemic, takes into account the limitations of virtual meetings as well as the international environmental agenda and does justice to the universal status of UNEA as the body that provides political guidance on the environment.
- Both UNEP and UNEA can only perform their roles with a strong basis in science. With the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) process as an important pillar of the Science Policy Interface, we hope the meeting can make progress in deciding the way forward in order to ensure more policy relevant outcomes and products from the future GEO process.

- Lastly, I hope this meeting will be able to conclude on the recommendations from the CPR review, which will hopefully help us all to engage in an efficient and effective manner. I will certainly try to play my part in my role as a member of the CPR Bureau in the coming period.
- I thank you.