



Committee of Permanent Representatives 7th Annual Subcommittee Meeting

15 October 2020

Remarks by Brazil on item 5(iv) Preparations for UNEP@50

as delivered by Mr. Patrick Luna,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to UNEP

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor, as we continue our discussions on the preparation of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of UNEP, as mandated by Decision 4/2. Brazil notes that no new background document has been made available by the Secretariat following our most recent debate in this issue.

Let me first focus on substance. Brazil continues to uphold that UNEP@50 should lead to the strengthening of the Programme by drawing more attention and resources to its role in assisting member States, in particular developing ones, in translating their environmental commitments into reality. Implementation is the name of the game. There is a strong correlation between our efforts to prepare a Plan of Action to achieve the implementation of Paragraph 88 of "The Future we Want" and UNEP@50. This is why we could consider that UNEA-5 decides to forward the adoption of the Action Plan to the commemorative event of UNEP@50.

Mr. Chairman,

Earlier today, the delegation of Sweden took the floor to provide additional information on their proposal to host a high-level meeting in 2022, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Stockholm conference. We note that this offer was announced a year ago in the 6th Annual Subcommittee Meeting since then delegations have been consistently seeking additional information from the proponents. Understandably, delegations were waiting for such information to form a position on the contours of UNEP@50. The fact that we had

to wait for one year for a "working draft non-paper" unfortunately had an impact on our debates on the preparation of UNEP@50.

We have been informed that a draft enabling resolution would be proposed in the General Assembly in early 2021. Brazil stands ready to examine this issue further in that forum. At this stage, and after careful consideration of the "working draft non-paper" in Brasília, Brazil wishes to offer some preliminary thoughts.

For the first semester of 2022, we already envisage adopting a ministerial declaration at the resumed UNEA-5, the political declaration mandated by UNGA Resolution 73/333 and an outcome for UNEP@50, which might include the Plan of Action to Implement Paragraph 88. That, of course, will come soon after important expected milestones in CBD COP-15 and UNFCCC COP-26. For this reason, it would be counterproductive to envisage any other environmental high-level document at that point in time. Should a proper mandate be attained at the General Assembly, Stockholm+50 should be a purely ceremonial event, commemorating the anniversary of the conference.

The "working draft non-paper" presents the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development as conditioned to the environmental one, an understanding that tilts towards the late doctrine of planetary boundaries - which was indeed floated around in the 1970s, but was consensually put aside as the international community forged - in Rio -, its understanding of sustainable development. It is also disconcerting that the text deals with the issue of sustainable consumption and production as if dissociated from the other SDGs, and that it envisages a roadmap towards 2030, as if ignoring the goals and indicators we have consensually agreed towards that year. The 2030 Agenda is our only roadmap, and we do not need another.

As it proposes "redefining our relationship with nature", the "working draft non-paper" steers away from the indispensable recognition to ensure mechanisms to promote the three objectives of CBD, in particular through benefit sharing arrangements and payment for ecosystem services.

The "working draft non-paper" makes use of expressions such as "green jobs" and "sustainable lifestyles" which, in addition of not having been multilaterally agreed-upon, carry in themselves the risk of imposing allegedly uniform and objective production and consumption patterns, irrespective of local realities and of different levels of socio-economic development. The text also alludes to "environmental commons", an expression that also lacks a consensual definition and could be hard to reconcile with the principle of national sovereignty over natural resources.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding, let me stress that Brazil holds firmly that UNEP@50 should be celebrated in Nairobi. Doing otherwise would run counter to the mandate to progressively consolidate Nairobi as UNEP's headquarters, as contained in Paragraph 88.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
