



**United Nations Environment Programme  
Committee of Permanent Representatives  
152<sup>nd</sup> Meeting**

19 November 2020

**Remarks by Brazil on item 7  
Preparation for UNEA-5**

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

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor on the debate regarding the list of expected outcomes for the first part of UNEA-5, to be prepared and held virtually. Like many others, including those of the G77+China, my delegation is concerned with the inherent limitations to multilateral diplomacy in online settings. Virtual meetings have a severe impact on transparency and inclusivity, and do not allow for all delegations to participate and on equal footing, a cornerstone of multilateralism. As stated before, the pandemic has shown that line-by-line requires face-to-face.

Mr. Chairman,

As Brazil, like others, exercised flexibility in going along with a "two-step approach" for UNEA-5, the compromise was forged on the assumption that reservations to the preparation of substantive outcomes in virtual settings would be fully taken on board. This is why Brazil considers that the first part of UNEA-5 should envisage solely the adoption of urgent administrative and budgetary matters, that is, those decisions needed to "keep the lights on". All substantive debates should be reserved for the moment when in-person conversations can be resumed, which we hope will be soon.

The first part of UNEA-5 is only three months away. It is about time we reach an understanding on the list of outcomes for the virtual segment, so that all of us - capitals, delegates, Secretariat and stakeholders - can start preparations.

My delegation thanks the Secretariat for preparing a background document for our consideration today. Having reflected on it, Brazil considers that three draft decisions could be envisaged. One on the MTS and PoW/B, another on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions and a third one, which would address procedural matters relating to the adjournment of UNEA-5 in February 2021, the reconvening of an OECPR and of UNEA-5 in early 2022, and could also provide guidance on the organization of the intra-sessional work to be conducted by the CPR.

As stated before, Brazil does not envisage substantive outcomes for the virtual part of UNEA-5. This is why we consider that the third draft decision, on procedural matters, could simply take note of all reports owed to UNEA-5 and defer their consideration to the in-person segment.

This would provide clarity on their status, which would be considered delivered. Member States could, if they so wish, task the Executive Director to prepare "addenda" for the second segment regarding the reports which fall on her authority. Further work related to reports stemming from intergovernmental and expert bodies processes - that is, the CPR-based review, the AHEG on Marine Litter and Microplastics, the Steering Committee on GEO, and the preparation of a Plan of Action for the Implementation of Paragraph 88 - could be picked up by delegations as they, in the lead-up for the second segment, start consultations on corresponding draft resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

As already stated by the G77+China, the minimalist set of outcomes envisaged for the first part of UNEA-5 will not require the appointment of co-facilitators, a practice that has been developed by the CPR to deal simultaneously with a high number of draft resolutions and decisions.

Brazil echoes the point raised by the G77+China in the sense that outcomes of the Assembly are prepared in Member-state driven processes. We support the suggestion that the CPR Bureau be tasked with preparing the zero drafts of draft decisions, based on elements to be provided by the Secretariat, and circulates these texts to all Member-states as soon as possible, to begin consultations in Subcommittee format.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to turn to the letters recently circulated by the Presidency of UNEA-5. Brazil welcomes the decision to postpone the preparation of a ministerial declaration to the second segment of the Assembly, in 2022. At the same time, we note the proposal to

adopt "a limited number of broad political messages" in 2021 which, according to the letter, would be "distinct from the usual form of a ministerial outcome document". Brazil would like to seek clarification on this proposal, since - from our vantage point - a ministerial declaration is nothing but a limited number of broad political messages signed off by "we, the Ministers". It seems also important to recall that the agreement to hold a two-step UNEA-5 entails one Assembly divided in two parts, not a scenario which could amount, in practice, to two Assemblies through two ministerial documents.

The very fact that the Ministers of the Environment will be meeting virtually in these exceptional times to exchange views on the current environmental challenges, including those associated with the recovery of the pandemic, signals *in itself* an important message.

At this stage, Brazil maintains its reservation on the preparation of any substantive outcome through virtual means, for the reasons outlined before.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.