



**SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERVENTION DURING THE MEETING OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE OF PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME**

06 MAY 2021

Check against delivery

At the outset, allow me to congratulate Pakistan for hosting the World Environment Day 2021 and express my delegation's support for the theme on "ecosystems restoration". We also wish to thank the secretariat for their presentation towards the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystems Restoration 2021 – 2030.

My delegation aligns its statement with that delivered on behalf of the African Group.

We wish to thank the secretariat for the options paper. We have taken note of the interpretation of the Rules of Procedure that governs the work of UNEA and UNEP CPR Bureaux

Perhaps the cycle of term of office of the UNEP CPR Bureau should not only be approached in relation to that of the Bureau of UNEA for the reasons articulated in the secretariat's paper that UNEA-5 Bureau will serve until the new Bureau is elected based on the decision to adjourn and resume UNEA-5 in February 2022. Based on the same decision to adjourn and resume in 2022, the UNEP CPR Bureau should be necessitated space to continue the preparations for UNEA-5, to its logical conclusion in February 2022. This basis will assist us to be consistent, given the significant role played by the CPR in the preparations for the Assembly; and that we are referring to the same UNEA-5.

Therefore, it is the view of this delegation that the current UNEP CPR Bureau should finalise the preparations for UNEA-5.2. In this manner, the proposal of re-election of the current Bureau made under option B is supported. Noting that option B is in line with the Rules of Procedure as articulated in the secretariat's paper.

Nonetheless, my delegation has taken note that the three options presented by the secretariat are based on the assumption that the timetable for UNEA sessions will remain unchanged, and that UNEA-6 will take place one year after UNEA-5.2. These we believe highlight issues identified as secondary to this discussion, and these include the issue of alignment of the Bureaux and the date for UNEA-6.

Chairperson,

It may be recalled that the African Group has previously expressed its desire to serve its full term as the next President for UNEA-6. This was expressed in one of the CPR meetings last year. Based on this sentiment, could the secretariat share views including from the legal perspective and that of aligning with the budget in New York, on how the next Presidency can serve its full term and the impact thereof to the – MTS and POW&B, in order to determine the year for UNEA-6. Recalling of course that all these adjustments are considered due to the unprecedented situation of COVID 19 pandemic.

Now back to the secondary issues of alignment of the Bureaux and the date for UNEA-6, as this delegation, we believe that these require more time to be discussed, articulated and understood through information sharing – and the best place would be under the CPR-led review process that has not been concluded. However, the primary issue of enabling the current UNEP CPR Bureau to logically conclude UNEA-5.2 is time bound for June/July 2021.

Lastly chairperson,

We wish to thank all the Bureau members who have expressed their availability to continue the work, and note that for those unavailable to do so, a solution/nominee will emerge from discussions within the respective regions. Recalling that the bureau members consist of regional representatives and not necessarily member States or individual capacity.

My delegation remains committed to finalising this discussion in a consultative, transparent and inclusive manner.

I thank you!