



Statements by Switzerland at the 155th Meeting of the CPR of UNEP

Agenda item 4: report of the Executive Director

Madame Chair

This is the first CPR meeting under your chairmanship and I would like to congratulate you, Madame Chair, and the other distinguished members of the new Bureau on their election. It is encouraging to see that the new Bureau has assumed its work in an engaged, constructive and inclusive way. This is important as we're starting the important preparations of UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50. We encourage all delegations to engage constructively in these preparatory processes.

My delegation is also very pleased about the imminent re-opening of the Conference facilities at UNON. Personal contacts are indispensable for successful multilateralism and we very much look forward to a hybrid form of the Annual Sub-Committee with significant in-person presence. We call on UNON and UNEP to provide clarity, in particular on the size of delegations and the safety protocol that will have to be followed to ensure everybody's health. Switzerland firmly believes that it should be at the discretion of every delegation to nominate its members, who must meet with all protocols. This would allow for participation of Capital based representatives at the Annual Sub-Committee. The Annual Sub-Committee at the end of October is an important milestone in the run-up to UNEA 5.2. Yet, my delegation would like to underline that early discussions on thematic resolutions should not take place at the expense of the important oversight function of this Committee during the Programme Performance Review.

My delegation is pleased to see that the important topic of marine litter & plastics gathers political momentum. The Ministerial Conference in September – in hybrid format - was a success. We welcome that the African Groups supports this issue – expressed at the recent Amcen meeting. As initial co-sponsor of the draft resolution, Switzerland calls on all delegations to engage in these important discussions and to make sure that UNEA 5.2 will adopt mandate for an inter-governmental negotiation committee towards establishing a legally-binding agreement.

We're also making progress in the preparations of UNEP@50. Switzerland concurs with the priorities identified by UNEP. We also have high expectations, that the co-facilitators of the 73/333 process will soon present a concise draft of a political declaration. And we truly hope that this political declaration, once agreed upon, will be the outcome document of UNEP@50.

It is my honor to announce the participation of the French-Swiss artist Saype at UNEP@50. Saype surprises with giant, ecofriendly frescos painted on meadows such as the one that he did last week at the lawn of the UN Headquarters in New York. His ephemeral art works leave a lasting impression with the broad public and I have no doubts that this will be a special contribution to UNEP@50.

Agenda item 5: Preparations for the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50)

Switzerland supports the proposed three priorities for the strengthening of UNEP through UNEP@50, namely digitalization, strengthening of science policy interface and of funding. Yet, we would like to have more detailed information on respective plans of UNEP, in particular on the upgrading of the World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and how this relates to the current WESR, on ways to strengthen science policy as well as on the proposed trust funds. My delegation would expect that precautionary measures are taken that these new trust funds attract new funding and do not cannibalize on the Environment Fund.

Switzerland is surprised that the Secretariat proposes a Chairman's summary or a political declaration as an outcome of UNEP@50 and asks the question whether a political declaration should also address 73/333. My delegation is of the firm opinion that the political declaration resulting from 73/333 must be the outcome document of UNEP@50 and Switzerland will constructively engage in this process.

Agenda item 6: Preparation for the 8th Annual Sub-Committee Meeting

The Annual Sub-Committee is an important milestone in the preparation of UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50 AND traditionally it is an important moment to provide oversight to UNEP, a core mandate of this Committee.

Adequate time should be dedicated to both priorities and in the current draft agenda, which is not the case in the current draft with the current distribution of 20% for oversight and 80% for preparations of preparation works. Half of the Annual Sub-Committee is currently dedicated to consideration of any remaining open issues and informal working groups. We would like to have more information what is going to happen in these informal working groups and on how logistics will be organized in smaller parallel working groups in a hybrid setting.

In addition, we regret that contrary to the UNEA 5.1 decision (specifically decision 5/3, para 4) the reports of the Executive Director on the implementation of UNEA resolutions are not on the agenda of the Annual Sub-Committee nor are there included in the list of documents that has been shared with this Committee.

My delegation is of the firm opinion that UNEA decisions must be respected, furthermore as these reports provide valuable information on accomplishments in the implementation of UNEA resolutions and more importantly on gaps and necessary follow-up activities to be considered in the preparation of UNEA 5.2.

My delegation would like to make the following proposal, which combines the programme performance review and part of the preparation of UNEA5.2, namely the consideration of the mentioned ED's reports.

Concretely, the presentation of the programme performance review by each sub-programme should be combined with a presentation of the highlights of relevant ED reports, followed by a discussion on both issues, which would also leave room to mention ideas for possible new and/or follow-up resolutions on these specific topics. Of course, this would require the necessary time, which could be re-allocated from the 2,5 days dedicated to remaining open issues that are currently poorly defined.

Finally, my delegation is in favor of a hybrid format of the Annual Sub-Committee. We expect guidance of UNON and UNEP on the size of delegations and the health and safety/protection protocol applicable to all participants. Switzerland insists that the composition of each delegation be determined by each delegation, respecting, of course, all protocols and providing evidence such as proof of vaccination, where needed. This would allow for Capital participation of those delegation that wish to do so.