

EU Intervention on UNEP@50 preparations, made at the CPR Subcommittee meeting of 15 October

The EU+MS thank the Secretariat for providing a detailed update on the preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP and therefore welcome the Secretariat's note on the preparations for the Special Session, to be held on 3-4 March 2022 in Nairobi.

The EU+MS commend UNEP for its efforts to work towards a successful and meaningful Special Session and overall commemorative activities in the framework of the UNEP@50.

The EU+MS agree with the idea that the special session should have a theme which the celebration will revolve around. Therefore we support the approach to focus on the strengthening of UNEP's role, which has been identified by the Secretariat as the main objective of UNEP@50.

In this regard, the theme should reflect the need to further strengthen environmental dimension of SDGs and the global environmental governance. This should encompass strengthening of UNEP, the role of UNEA and the implementation of international environmental law.

The EU+MS welcome the successful launch of the commemorations of the 50th anniversary of UNEP during the online session of UNEA-5 in February 2021, including the launch of the first UNEP Global Assessments Synthesis Report entitled "Making Peace with Nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies".

The EU+MS support the focus on UNEP's core mandate, including on the strengthening of the environmental science-policy interface, which should build on the experience and work performed by the GEO process. This mission is indeed at the core of UNEP's function along with the governance of the global environmental agenda.

The EU+MS welcome the proposal by the Secretariat to organize two Leadership Dialogues. While the first one will enable Environmental Ministers to reflect on the 50 past years of UNEP, the second one will be a good way to look forward and to stimulate countries' commitments to the 2030 Agenda and its environmental dimension.

The EU+MS see UNEP@50 as a way of raising awareness on UNEP's capability to drive the international environmental agenda and environmental and sustainability governance and take note of the proposal by the Secretariat to adopt two outcome documents at UNEP@50.

While the EU+MS strongly support the adoption of a Chair's summary outlining discussion points and key actions and priorities resulting from UNEP@50, we would like to have some more information about the proposal to adopt a political declaration that could be adopted "*in support of a modernized and adequately resourced UNEP for the next 50 years, to be adopted at the closing high-level ceremony*".

The EU+MS would like to recall the Decision 5/3 of UNEA-5.1 inviting UNGA to consider the appropriate event "*in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*" for the adoption of the Political Declaration negotiated in the follow-up of the UNGA 73/333 process. Considering the synergies between the objectives of UNEP@50 outlined in the document and those of the political declaration to be prepared in follow-up to UNGA resolution 73/333, we remain convinced that such political declaration would constitute the

most adequate outcome for UNEP@50, as a way to strengthening international environmental law and governance and the role of UNEP.

The EU+MS would also like to recall that a Ministerial Declaration will be adopted at UNEA-5.2.

However, the EU+MS would like to seek clarification from the Secretariat on the potential synergies but also on the potential complementarities and overlaps between the UNEP@50 outcome document and the 73/333 Political Declaration, emphasizing the importance not to disseminate the messages in too many political outcomes.

The EU+MS reaffirm that the two commemorating events of UNEP and of the United Nations conference on the Human Environment, which are UNEP@50 and Stockholm+50, should complement each other, contributing to increase visibility of the environmental agenda and consistency and coherence of political messages, thus avoiding unnecessary duplications.

The EU+MS reiterate the importance of Major Groups and stakeholders' active engagement in the context of UNEP@50, in order to facilitate broad participation and ownership of the commemorations.

The EU+MS take note the three identified means of strengthening UNEP's capacity for implementation and welcome the proposition to produce a science-policy report reviewing 50 years of action at the science-policy interface.

The EU+MS also recognize that one of the core mandates of UNEP is to disseminate knowledge and facilitate information sharing among countries on environmental issues. The idea of the establishment of a global environmental data centre for Nairobi sounds interesting, but the EU+MS would appreciate receiving complementary information on the proposed centre and would welcome a concept note from the Secretariat.

Regarding the proposition of a “renewed financial commitment to UNEP”, the EU+MS would like to highlight the need to ensure secure, stable and adequate financial resources for UNEP, especially for the Environment Fund. We consider that all UNEA members need to provide resources to achieve our ambitious goals and we encourage all Member States to contribute the Environment Fund, taking into account their national capacities and “fair share” that each MS is encouraged to contribute by the Voluntary indicative Scale of contributions (VISC). As has been shown in a number of reports, it is necessary to broaden the pool of contributors and ensure a more balanced sharing of the burden by Member States for the Environment Fund based on ability to pay.

However, the EU+MS would like to receive further analysis on the proposal to create three thematic funds for Climate, Nature, Chemical and Pollution Action, including how they would articulate with the Environment fund and existing earmarked funds, and how they will help implementing the program of work and would like to know if there are any risks related to the establishment of such funds for the implementation of other areas of UNEP’s core work.

The EU+MS thank the Secretariat for sharing with Member States the communications and side events plan for UNEP@50, which we find interesting.