

**United Nations Environment Programme**  
Committee of Permanent Representatives  
8th Annual Subcommittee Meeting – 25th to 29th October 2021

**Agenda item 5**

Preparations for the Special Session in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of UNEP

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**Statements by the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)**

Madam Chair,

It is my honor to take the floor on behalf of GRULAC. Our group embraced the understanding that UNEP@50 presents itself as an opportunity to take stock of the past, reflect on the present and envision the future. As we reflect on "the UNEP we want" for the next fifty years, it emerges that we would expect UNEP to have an increased role in assisting Member States, in particular developing ones, in the implementation of their environmental commitments.

It was precisely this assessment that inspired GRULAC's suggestion for a title for the event. We were therefore delighted to hear, in the Subcommittee meeting held on October 15th under the chairmanship of the CPR Bureau's facilitator for UNEP@50, that the African Group supported it and built on it, adding a much welcomed reference to the Rio+20 Outcome Document. GRULAC agrees that the commemoration should be titled "UNEP@50: Towards the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development for The Future We Want".

In that same Subcommittee meeting, we heard from one delegation that commemorative events would not require an additional title. From GRULAC's vantage point, however, the fact that the General Assembly itself decided to add a title to the international meeting to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1972 Stockholm Conference - "a healthy planet for the prosperity of all - our responsibility, our opportunity", conveys unequivocally the point that commemorations do require a thematic approach.

Indeed, as we prepare for UNEP@50 and its outcomes, GRULAC would welcome innovative and creative thinking regarding the Programme's role in assisting Member States to "leapfrog" towards sustainable development, including through South-South and North-South cooperation, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

In this regard, one of the options that could be entertained is envisaging UNEP as a clearing for the environmental dimension of sustainable development. In the fragmented landscape of international environmental governance, UNEP could serve as a "one-stop-shop" that Member States can resort to, in line with their national priorities and policies, asking for implementation assistance. Making use of its coordination role among the MEAs, UNEP would connect the dots

between those requesting assistance, those with financial resources, those holding the technology and those who have developed the relevant capacities and knowledge.

Madam Chair,

GRULAC also sees UNEP@50 as an opportunity to make the UNEP more geographically representative. And this applies not only to the staffing of the Secretariat, but also to the participation of the academia of the Global South in all its scientific processes, in particular as we discuss the strengthening of the science-policy interface.

Thank you.

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