



Statement from the Children and Youth Major Group For the 8th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, 25th-29th October 2021

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Intervention on Agenda Item 4a) Consideration of key areas of importance in accordance with mandates from previous UNEA resolutions; 26th October 2021

Mr Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the Floor, Mr Chair.

I am Sanmi Olowosile, from Nigeria, I am part of the Environmental Law Working Group of the Children and Youth Major Group. I am speaking here on the behalf of the youth constituency. We are providing inputs here on item 4 A and will deliver inputs on 4 B and 4 C later in the afternoon.

We thank the Secretary of the governing bodies and the secretariat for their overview presentation. In preparation of the resumed session of the UNEA 5, we would like to offer the following consulted recommendations.

Regarding in person participation: At UNEA 5.2 and subcommittee meetings leading-up to it, we request that the major groups and stakeholders be granted equal access to in-person participation alongside member states.

It is crucial that the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic does not result in steps back in terms of inclusiveness and equitable participation, including at the high-level segments.

We also call for enhanced meaningful engagement of the major groups and stakeholders in the sessions of UNEA. Designated spots must be made available at the leadership dialogues for the constituencies and regional civil society groups to engage.

Furthermore we would like to emphasize the need to build capacity among children and youth to engage meaningfully before, during and after UNEA. We emphasize the need for support from the UNEP secretariat through morning briefings and preparatory material to be available in all UN languages.



We also recommend ramping up communication efforts around UNEA to happen year-round. UNEA is the highest decision-making body on the environment and still awareness about it remains low when compared to COPs or even non UN meetings. We request the Bureau to ask UNEP to amplify messaging and virtual communication around UNEA similar to UNEP campaigns, and other successful communication work.

In the lead-up to UNEA 5.1 and OECPR, the constituents of the children and youth major group had organised a 5-day long global youth environment assembly.

We are pleased to share with you that a hybrid version of the youth assembly will be taking place in February and March next year. It will be based out of Nairobi as a youth-led event. We will send out invitations to member states for intergenerational dialogues beginning in December, including a potential youth and environmental ministers dialogue during the high level segment of UNEA.

Now on specific thematic topics.

We are broadly supportive of the developments on Resolution 73/333; however we would like to present the following suggestions:

On the governance:

- We underline the importance of well-structured support for underdeveloped and developing Countries. We emphasize the needs of stakeholders in terms of transparency, accountability, engagement, and justice, affirming the rights of indigenous, marginalized and disadvantaged groups, including members of those groups who are also children and youth.
- We emphasize that the implementation of continuous accountability to pollution control should be included in the country's environmental law. This is in order to encourage private entities involved in the extractive and manufacturing industries to better give accountability to the company's environmental management.
- We emphasize the importance of the involvement of all stakeholders not only in implementation of international environmental law, but also in the preparation on the national level as well as the monitoring process.

On means of implementation,

- We recognize the role of scientific discovery as well as capacity building for member states, and call attention to the importance of education in building scientists for tomorrow and the future.



- We urge delegates to drive development using citizen-friendly technologies that promote better monitoring and evaluation.
- We wish to strengthen cooperative solutions for information sharing and member state collaboration in the enforcement of environmental law.
- Lastly, To encourage companies and organisations to volunteer for their contribution to the environment in reducing their carbon footprint.

On environmental rule of law:

- We challenge member states to take bold action as called for in multilateral environmental agreements
- We emphasize the importance of member states to integrate environmental laws to their education curriculum to further empower children and youth in their respective countries.
- We challenge member states to champion the implementation of enacted environmental policies from grassroot levels across the board.

On the draft resolutions tabled for UNEA, we remind you of the importance of taking into account inputs from the youth group, as children and youth will be most impacted by the decisions of today. We also request the secretariat to please share if any of these resolutions will be discussed during the meeting later today and tomorrow and what are the opportunities to give inputs.

In concluding my intervention, I stress the importance of taking into account the necessity to build youth's capacity and provide an enabling environment for collective participation of youth and youth-focussed organizations towards driving nature-based services at the grassroot level.

Let us do this for children and youth of the world. We will be making available this intervention in the written format as well.

Thank you

Delivered by:

Sanmi Olowosile (Nigeria) |

Environmental Law Working Group member of the Children and Youth Major Group

Submitted on behalf of the constituency by:

Teresa Oberhauser & Yugratna Srivastava

Children and Youth Major Group Focal Points

teresa.oberhauser@aegee.eu, yugratna.srivastava@plant-for-the-planet.org