

United Nations Environment Programme

Second informal consultative meeting on UNGA Resolution 73/333

Nairobi, 17th to 19th November 2021

Agenda item 4

General statements by regional and political groups and interested Member States and Members of Specialized agencies

Statement by the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)

[Madam Co-facilitator, / Mr. Co-Facilitator,]

Thank you for giving me the floor. It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. At the outset, GRULAC notes that this second consultative meeting on UNGA Resolution 73/333 is taking place fifteen months after the first one, held in July 2020. Now that the conditions for holding a hybrid meeting have been reached, GRULAC looks forward to examining, line-by-line and in an inclusive format, the draft political declaration prepared by the co-facilitators, for which we are grateful. GRULAC is committed to a successful UNEA-5.2 and therefore encourages the line-by-line preparation of its substantive outcomes as soon as practicable. This meeting presents itself as an opportunity for the entire membership to work on this important outcome, whose adoption is expected at UNEP@50 - a special session for which GRULAC and the African Group have jointly suggested the following theme: "Towards the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development for the future we want".

GRULAC also takes this opportunity to thank the co-facilitators, and the Secretariat, for having organized three informal online workshops in June and July 2021, which contributed to sustain momentum on this process. Our participation in those seminars renewed our conviction that the political declaration should strictly adhere to our substantive mandate, as was framed by the General Assembly in its Resolution 73/333. GRULAC is not ready to support the introduction of language that would fall beyond this mandate, such as the suggestion to establish a periodic environmental performance review mechanism, as seen in current OP13 of the draft.

[Madam Co-facilitator, / Mr. Co-Facilitator,]

GRULAC welcomes the reference to the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in PP2 of the draft, echoing the recently adopted Human Rights Council Resolution 48/13. At the same time, our group would have expected a more ambitious draft regarding the urgency of ensuring the adequate, sufficient and predictable means of implementation for developing countries to achieve their environmental obligations, as well as on the importance of developed countries fully abiding by their commitments in each MEA regarding the mobilization and the provision of such means. As the international community moves towards recognizing the right to a healthy and

sustainable environment, we should not overlook the resources needed to translate it into reality. GRULAC recalls that Member States bear common but differentiated responsibilities, as enshrined in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration and adds that, within our respective capabilities, we are all expected to do our utmost to achieve this right and implement the 2030 Agenda, in particular as we advance in the Decade of Action to Achieve the SDGs.

In this context, GRULAC wishes to recall Paragraph 2 of "The Future We Want". It reminds us that poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. This was true in 2012 and - unfortunately - remains true today, as the world grasps with the consequences of a pandemic could reverse much of the social and economic achievements of the past years, especially for those most vulnerable. The UN estimates that 71 million people were pushed back into extreme poverty last year - the first rise in global poverty since 1998.

[Madam Co-facilitator, / Mr. Co-Facilitator,]

Our group expects the political declaration to be adopted at UNEP@50 to strengthen UNEP's ability to assist Member States, in particular developing ones, to implement their environmental commitments. In addition to its important normative work, a strengthened UNEP could assist countries, in particular developing ones, to leapfrog towards sustainable development. In this regard, GRULAC has suggested that UNEP could act as a clearinghouse for the environmental dimension of sustainable development. That is, UNEP could provide a one-stop service center for developing countries to access technical and scientific cooperation, expertise, tools and other resources; facilitate the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies; share best practices and catalyze the matchmaking between Member States with specific needs and Member States or organizations in a position to provide such assistance.

[Madam Co-facilitator, / Mr. Co-Facilitator,]

As a document to be adopted at UNEP@50, the political declaration should also encourage the governing bodies of MEAs to consider convening its meetings in Nairobi more frequently, which would further reinvigorate this UN headquarter's vocation to effectively be the center of gravity for environmental multilateralism.

Thank you.