

**Written input regarding the Leadership Dialogues for the Special Session of UNEP@50 submitted by the Malawi Permanent Mission to UNEP**

1. The delegation of Malawi is thankful to the UNEP Secretariat for the draft concept note on the Leadership Dialogues as well as the presentation made during the CPR Subcommittee Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021.
2. The arrangement to have 15-20 Contributing Ministers, who will be identified on the basis of gender and geographical balance, making contributions after being pre-registered is most welcome. Hopefully the principle of first-come-first-served will still apply in this consideration. Further to this, while the intention is to aim for dialogues, a balance should be struck between that and the fact that participants will have come with written prepared statements. The desire to have dialogues makes it imperative for the Moderators to manage the sessions in such a way that such an environment is created.
3. We have noted that in the latest version of the concept note, the idea of Expert Invited Speakers has been replaced, seemingly, with Invited guests who will be invited by the Secretariat for their knowledge on the basis of gender and regional balance. Whether they are called Expert Invited Speakers or Invited Guests, it remains a fact that they will be identified on the basis of mainly expertise. This is where the Secretariat needs to be careful in order to avoid perceptions of bias. And as Malawi indicated during the subcommittee meeting of 7 December 2021, there is need to have proper and objective criteria for identifying these experts/invited guests, beyond gender and regional balance. In addition, Malawi requests that in addition to sharing the objective criteria that will be used to identify the experts/invited guests, the Secretariat is requested to share the list of experts/invited

guests as soon as possible to member states for their necessary reactions. The last points also apply to the issue of Moderators.

4. As regards the presentation made during the CPR Subcommittee Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021, Malawi has noted with concern the emphasis on science-policy nexus for the second dialogue session. There is no doubt that science, generated objectively by gender and regionally balanced panels, is necessary for environmental management. But it is also true that science is not always the major guide in policy and decision-making. Politics is. Therefore, an emphasis on science-policy nexus is narrow and at the exclusion of other important aspects mainly the means of implementation. Looking forward, it is important to highlight those fifty years since its founding, members of the United Nations and UNEP have developed and agreed on an array of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), resolutions and decisions to ensure regional and global cooperation in dealing with environmental challenges. Therefore, Malawi insists that moderation of the session should not emphasise on science-policy nexus to the exclusion of other equally important considerations, including means of implementation.
5. We believe that the idea of a Rapporteur would be helpful, especially since the contributions of the Leadership Dialogues will contribute to key messages that will be included in the Chairs Summary.
6. Thank you and Malawi looks forward to fruitful engagement on this subject.

**9<sup>th</sup> December 2021**