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OHCHR Statement to UNEP@50



Statement by Amanda Kron

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Thank you Chair.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, I congratulate UNEP on 50 years of critical work to protect our environment.

In recent years, OHCHR and UNEP have increasingly worked together to advance the human right to a healthy environment – a right which brings together core elements of our respective mandates. We formalized this partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding in 2019 which outlines common priorities such as protection of environmental human rights defenders, strengthened support for effective implementation of human rights-based environmental policies, and the promotion and protection of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

OHCHR also works closely with UNEP, UNDP and others to operationalize the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights by advancing rights-based environmental action throughout the UN system, supporting National Human Rights Institutions engaging on environment and climate change and promoting the rights to participation, access to information and access to justice in environmental matters. Together with UNEP and UNDP, we co-lead the UN Environment Management Group's dedicated issue management group on human rights and environment.

These partnerships promote coherence across the UN system in furtherance of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Looking back at 50 years of UNEP, the first principle of the Stockholm Declaration stands out. We all have the *“fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being”* and a corresponding *“solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations”*.

Fifty years later, the work to guarantee a healthy environment for all continues and the commitments in the Stockholm Declaration are more critical than ever - as recently affirmed by Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 recognizing the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

As the world faces the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and nature loss, ambitious and effective measures are needed to guarantee the right to a healthy environment for all. OHCHR looks forward to continuing to work with UNEP and other partners to support rights-based environmental action for people and planet.

Thank you.

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