

Co-Facilitators' summary for the third informal substantive consultation meeting on United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/333, entitled "Follow-up to the report of the ad hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/277"

Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 73/333 of 5 September 2019 and the agreed roadmap by the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the third informal substantive consultation was held from 16 to 18 February 2022.

The discussion was primarily focused on agenda item 5 of the meeting, entitled "Consideration of a draft political declaration pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/333 for review by the resumed 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and onward transmittal to the special session to commemorate UNEP@50, to be held in Nairobi on 3 and 4 March 2022, in line with General Assembly resolution 76/208," a document prepared by the Co-Facilitators with the purpose of supporting negotiations and eventually agreeing on a draft text toward a political declaration for a United Nations high-level this meeting.

Item 1: Opening of the meeting.

Their excellencies the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Pakistan, co-facilitators, welcomed and opened the meeting.

Item 2: Address by the Acting Deputy Executive Director.

Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Sonja Leighton-Kone delivered an introductory speech.

Item 3: Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.

Several Member States expressed concerns over the times proposed to complete the agenda, with some Member States noting that the schedule may disproportionately affect participation, especially of virtual delegations.

The Agenda was then adopted.

Item 4: General statements by regional and political groups and interested Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies.

Member States generally congratulated and thanked the co-facilitators for their leadership throughout this process. Member States further noted that the drafting of a political declaration under the scope of resolution 73/333 is a Member State driven process and called for the third substantive consultation to negotiate the draft political declaration in an open, transparent, and inclusive process, ensuring all Member States of ownership in the outcome.

Most Member States called for the promotion and strengthening of existing international platforms as well as efforts to support the implementation and fulfillment of existing commitments under international environmental law (IEL) frameworks and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Many Member States voiced their support for UNEP and UNEA as leading international environmental authorities and supported calls for strengthening UNEP and UNEA. Some Member States also called for the strengthening of UNEP headquarters in Nairobi.

Some Member States voiced their support for language which would reflect a call to closing gaps in the means of implementation, including financial, technology sharing, and capacity building assistance, and noted the importance of strengthening means of implementation and recognition of the Rio principles in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Some Member States especially noted the importance of the principles of common but differentiated responsibility and equity when strengthening the ambition for means of implementation. Other states rejected the inclusion of particular Rio principles.

Some Member States expressed varying degrees of support for referencing the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, while other states noted the need for further discussions on this topic during the consultation.

A few Member States called for specific attention to the importance of the science-policy interface in achieving strong environmental institutions.

Some Member States voiced overall caution against using the consultation process to renegotiate the recommendations contained within UN General Assembly Resolution 73/333, and further expressed concern that going beyond the scope of 73/333 could jeopardize or undermine the process to reach consensus on the political declaration prior to UNEA-5-2.

Item 5: Consideration of a draft political declaration pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/333 for review by the resumed 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and onward transmittal to the special session to commemorate UNEP@50, to be held in Nairobi on 3 and 4 March 2022, in line with General Assembly resolution 76/208.

Member States actively engaged in a complete line by line and thematic discussion on the draft political declaration, which was prepared by the co-facilitators and shared with Member States prior to the meeting. Suggestions to the text of the draft political declaration and positions expressed by delegations were maintained by the secretariat.

At the closure of the third consultation, the draft text had not been agreed ad ref for review by the resumed 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Item 6: Other matters.

The co-facilitators proposed that they submit a request to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to allow negotiations on the draft political declaration to continue prior to the special session of UNEA, with an aim for the review of the draft political declaration by the resumed 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and onward transmittal to the special session to commemorate UNEP@50.

Item 7: Closure of the third substantive consultation meeting.

The meeting closed on 19 February 2022.