

UNEP Annual Subcommittee 24-28 October 2022

Opening Statement NL

Madam Executive Director, Mr Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the Netherlands,
- First of all I wish to align with the statement made by United Kingdom and of the EU.

Madam ED, Mr Chair,

- In this decade of action, we are approaching 2030 against the backdrop of an uncertain global socio-economic outlook, the ongoing pandemic, rising geopolitical tensions, conflicts and the adverse impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution and related environmental degradation, that have set us back on the development pathways to achieve our 2030 Agenda, in particular for the most vulnerable.
- While underlining the importance and urgency to deal with the immediate challenges posed by the recovery of the pandemic, conflicts and increasing geopolitical tensions, we need to remind ourselves that the 3 planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution will require long term systemic change and our sustained attention, that only can be delivered by effective multilateralism and international solidarity,
- And – while we celebrate UN-Day today – we acknowledge the indispensable role of the United Nations as a vital platform and tool to deliver impactful results and accelerate much required actions for sustainable development.
- In that context, we reemphasize the important role and contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), that has put the triple planetary crisis at the heart of its Medium Term Strategy and actions. We also appreciate and encourage the ongoing search for improvements of UNEP's delivery model, including through the UN Development System Reform, for enhanced and sustained impact.
- It is our firm believe that UNEP can and must play a critical role to assist countries and the UN System to implement the transformative pathways necessary to achieve the SDGs, including the agreed climate and environment objectives.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- Let me refer to our joint commitment (in the Political Declaration for SH+50 and the HLPF) to strengthening the role of UNEP as the leading global environmental authority, including the promotion of the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system;
- It is our role to hold UNEP to its promise and to assist UNEP to deliver on its MTS and Program of Work that we approved.

- We therefore welcome the opportunity provided by this Annual Subcommittee meeting to perform our oversight role and take a deep dive into UNEPs work, operational effectiveness and progress on the UNDS Reform and to provide useful guidance that will help UNEP to deliver effectively.
- In that regard, allow me to share a couple of reflections:
 - On the UNDS Reform and the 2030 Agenda: we are pleased that UNEP has stepped up their efforts to mainstream climate and environment in the UN system, in particular to address knowledge needs of UN country teams and to extend country delivery. We are keen to hear experiences and results achieved so far, as well as lessons learned, including UNEPs engagement in Issue Based Coalitions and bilateral agreements with UN agencies, and we welcome the opportunity to exchange with colleagues in providing further guidance to strengthen UNEPs delivery model in this regard.
 - On the implementation of the PoW and B: we welcome the informative presentation from the regional offices that provide a useful overview of the breath of activities that UNEP is engaged with. Noting that these presentations are mainly output focused, it is our wish that future presentations and reports will provide more information on outcomes and results, which will help us to assess the effective delivery and impact of UNEPs PoW.
 - We agree with previous speakers that despite different challenges, UNEA-5 has been one of the most successful UNEAs, in view of its outcomes. While it is tempting to focus our attention on the follow-up on the UNEA-5 resolutions, it is our hope that our meeting will provide a complete overview of the ongoing efforts by UNEP on the implementation of all relevant UNEAs outcomes that still require follow-up and its contribution to the PoW. Having said that, we would like to reiterate that while we acknowledge that all resolutions need to be treated equally, we recognize they are different in nature and require different types of follow up action by UNEP in order to deliver to the next UNEA and we are happy to engage with colleagues to provide further guidance where this is relevant.
 - On UNEPs organizational effectiveness: we welcome the ambition of UNEP in its new MTS, of enhanced focus and greater integration, for one UNEP to deliver, including through the UN system and better at the country level. We are interested to learn what steps are taken at an organizational level to reduce fragmentation and enhance the integration aspired, as well as on the steps taken to continuously improve its accountability, transparency and results based management, as well as the results of their implementation. It is our believe that the organization can only deliver effectively, when the house is in order and that we have an important responsibility to follow up on that.
 - On funding: we welcome the progress made with resource mobilization and we would like to thank all MS that have provided funding to the Environment Fund in line with their VISC. We also welcome the thematic funds under the Environment Fund that provide the

Secretariat with a new flexible funding modality to effectively deliver on its mandate. It is our hope that the establishment of these funds will not compete with the need for core funding, but rather reduce the amount of tightly earmarked project funding. We call on all MS to contribute to UNEP in the most flexible manner, taking into account the level of their VISC.

Executive Director, Mr. Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- We reconfirm our joint commitment to effective (environmental) multilateralism to address the challenges we face as a global community. Stalling progress now is detrimental and undermines the ambition we have all subscribed to. We need real actions and rapid progress, grounded in the fundamental principles of the multilateral system and the urgency of the triple planetary crises.
- The Netherlands remains committed to contribute to UNEP to support countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular its environmental dimension. We look forward to the discussions this week, including on the theme for the next UNEA, that we hope will provide useful input to the Summit of the Future and you can count on our active participation.

I thank you