Malawi intervention during 9th Annual subcommittee meeting on Agenda item 3: UNEP’s strategic and operational engagement in the UN reform process by Mr. Mapopa C. Kaunda, Deputy Permanent Representative to UNEP;

1) My gratitude to you Chair for this opportunity to provide my delegations feedback on the agenda item under consideration.

2) From the outset, Malawi aligns itself with the statement by the African Group

3) Malawi is generally in support of reforming the way the UN, including UNEP, carries out its mandate;

4) As the President of Malawi, Dr. Lazarus Chakwera expressed during the recent 77 UNGA, the central thrust of UN reform should be to make sure that no one is left behind. In fact, we recall that there were several loud and consistent voices at UNGA 77 that the United Nations needs to do better. There was a clear call for reforms in governance. There was a strong call for reforms in service delivery.

5) In that regard, allow me to refer to the statement by the Malawi president as follows and I quote; ‘Leave no one behind! These four words are the promise at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That is the principle this UN body
committed to. But today, years after that commitment was made, smaller nations and younger democracies around the world already feel like this was an empty promise. Today, not only do smaller nations and younger democracies like Malawi still feel left behind, but feel much farther behind than before'. End of quote.

6) Mr. Chair, what response, in the context of UNEP’S own contribution to UN reforms, does UNEP give to such a clear dismay?

7) Mr. Chair, as a result of our collective negligence, the global environment is now a ship on the verge of sinking, yet we continue to use evacuation methods that rush some nations out to safety while leaving the rest behind to fend for themselves in the sinking ship. To refer to the President of Malawi again, he asks and I quote, ‘But if we are truly one UN family, then leaving no one behind has to be practiced, not just preached... If we are truly one UN family, we must get out of political posturing and welcome more helping hands in resolving the problems the permanent UN Security Council members have sometimes created and which they have failed to solve alone, [such as] the failure to stop environmental degradation ...’. End of quote;

8) Again, Mr. Chair, what answer does UNEP have to this clear disappointment from one of its members, regarding delivering in the context of the 2030 Agenda.
9) As I continue, it said that charity begins at home. Malawi has embarked on a series of national initiatives to allow for improved environmental management by setting up the Malawi Environmental Protection Authority (MEPA). Such initiatives ensure environmental protection and resilience. Additionally, Malawi has aligned itself to regional and continental efforts which allow for a healthier planet.

10) With respect to UNEP reform, it is my delegation’s view, that UNEP’s contribution to UN reform must of necessity ensure that the role and impact of Nairobi Headquarter function must not only be enhanced but must been seen to be happening as such. Actually, for us, it is no longer about the future we want; rather the now we want! Enhancing the role of Nairobi is not something that we should be reminding everyone about. It is about major environmental processes taking place in Nairobi. It is about the Secretariat of the plastics MEA having residence in Nairobi. In our view UNEP reform is also about ensuring that outreach and engagement with regional and political groups is balanced and unbiased and one that avoids dollar diplomacy;

11) UNEP reform must ensure that the relationship between UNEP and MEAs, should not be vicarious and precarious. While we recognize the independence of MEAs, we are also very aware that UNEP is the leading and accepted global authority on environmental matters.
12) We appreciate, and certainly recall with pride the CPR-led review process of UNEP’s governance bodies. While applauding the process and outcome, we believe that while it is an adequate attempt at ensuring better performance of UNEP, it can only be a stepping stone to enhanced reform.

13) Allow me to conclude that Malawi remains a partner and supporter for effective UNEP reforms.