

United Nations Environment Assembly  
Bureau Meeting  
Friday, 9 December 2022  
16:00 – 18:00  
Online

### **Draft President's Summary**

#### **Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.**

1. H. E. Ms. Leila Benali, President of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of Morocco, opened and chaired the meeting.
2. The agenda was adopted.

#### **Agenda item 2: Consideration of a theme for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.**

3. The President of UNEA briefed the Bureau on the status of consultations on the theme for the sixth session of UNEA and presented the revised options paper.
4. Bureau members provided the following comments:
  - a. One Bureau member expressed concern that a topic reflecting the decision of the UN General Assembly on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right had been dropped from the revised options paper. To that effect, the Bureau member highlighted the urgent need to fight against environmental crimes that make the efforts of all States and actors ineffective to achieve permanent sustainability. The Bureau member added that UNEA-6 resolutions should be the tool to increase awareness and mobilise the international community to help increase visibility of environmental crimes.
  - b. One delegation representing GRULAC informed that the revised options paper was considered at a meeting of the Group held on 7 December. The Group welcomed the progress made so far and supported the consultation process organised by the President's team in Nairobi, which enhances the legitimacy and broadens the support for the theme. The Bureau member provided comments from his capital, stating that option A, presents interesting avenues to present views on environmental policy, international environmental governance and broader development policy; shows interlinkages to UNEP's MTS; has possible elements to address the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; inclusion of timely and predictable financing based on solidarity; access to information and justice; reshaping economic governance models; environmental education and linkages to other MEAs. The Bureau member added that option B has the advantage of being linked to the notion of the triple planetary crisis, which is the basis of the current narrative of environment governance; the drawback with option B is that other cross-cutting issues and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment are almost absent. The consolidated proposal rescues the important elements of each option, such as multilateralism, triple planetary crisis, and access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. However, this proposal is too broad or not focused enough; and has the risk of backtracking the victories achieved, such as the recognition by the UN General Assembly of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right. Therefore,

the Bureau member expressed support for option A, which would allow more innovative and results-oriented resolutions (e.g., on peace and environmental justice) without pre-empting or being constrained by the development and discussion in other forums.

- c. Another Bureau member informed that the new Government in his country will take office on 1 January 2023. While a huge change in the foreign policy on environmental matters was not foreseen, however, the Bureau member reserved his right to comment on the themes in January. The Bureau member highlighted that the expression “fit for future” does not show a sense of urgency, and the absence of reference to non-agreed terms seems like an attempt to reach a consensus. The Bureau member called for additional time for consultations.
  - d. Another Bureau member emphasised that the theme should be a guiding line and a communication tool; it should convey the needed momentum and a strong message to the general public to ensure the broader success and outreach of the Assembly. The Bureau member added that option B encompasses the necessary balance between the cross-cutting environmental issues and the required compromise and ambition to achieve tangible results. It was suggested that UNEA-6 would be taking place at a time to engage and strengthen cooperation on the protection of marine wildlife and the designation of marine protected areas and ecosystem restoration. Momentum from UN-Water Conference supports a theme highlighting water, ecosystem, climate change and pollution nexus, adding that stakeholders should participate in the discussion on the theme.
  - e. Another Bureau member called for clarity on both options A and B and suggested considering the two options at a CPR meeting.
  - f. Another Bureau member welcomed the removal of option 2 and expressed support for option B, which is concise and broad enough to cover the interests of all delegations and regional groups, UNEP’s mandate, and is easy to communicate to the public. With regard to the tentative consolidated proposal, the Bureau member found it too broad.
  - g. Another Bureau member suggested narrowing down the proposed themes even further to allow for strategic interventions and focused outcomes at UNEA-6.
5. The Legal Advisor reminded the Bureau members that pursuant to operative paragraph 9 of [UNEA decision 5/4](#), it requested the UNEA-6 bureau, in consultation with the CPR, to define a theme for UNEA-6 no later than 12 months before the sixth session commences. This means that while the consultations are conducted in close collaboration with the CPR, the final decision rests with the UNEA Bureau.
6. On the proposal of the President, the Bureau agreed on the following way forward:
- Delete option A, which reads “**Environmental multilateralism fit for the future.**”
  - Option B, which reads "**Multilateral Solutions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution**", becomes option A.
  - The President’s tentative consolidated title to read: "**Multilateral solutions fit for the future to address the triple planetary crisis: Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and to achieve sustainable environment**", becomes option B.

7. The Secretariat to revise the options paper to reflect Bureau members' comments, including comments and suggestions gathered at the subcommittee meeting of the CPR scheduled on 13 December, where the revised options, as well as the summary of the Bureau meeting, would be presented for consideration.

**Agenda item 3: Outcome of the 9th meeting of the annual subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

8. The Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, in an ex-officio capacity in the Bureau of UNEA, presented the outcomes of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the annual subcommittee, held from 24 to 28 October 2022, in particular the outcomes relevant to the preparations for the sixth session of UNEA.
9. Regarding the proposal to include in the provisional agenda of UNEA-6 an additional item entitled "Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements", the Executive Director recalled that UNEA-5 Bureau, while respecting and understanding the independence of each MEA and the uniqueness of the structure and taking into account that not all Member States are parties to all MEAs, had a keen desire to enable some sort of engagement among the Presidents of the MEAs. The Executive Director also recalled that UNEA-5 Bureau had a number of discussions on whether an MEA Day could be held or a panel discussion with the participation of the Presidents of MEAs, considering that each MEA is presided over by a Minister who usually attends UNEA. She reminded that during UNEA-5.2, a dialogue was held but with the Executive Secretaries of the MEAs and suggested that UNEA-6 Bureau takes into account the previous discussions on the matter while considering the right way to engage with the MEAs.

**Agenda item 4: Organization of work.**

10. Under this agenda item, the President informed that bearing in mind the low in-person confirmed participation at the joint retreat of the Bureaus of UNEA-6 and the CPR scheduled for 30 and 31 January 2023, her proposal was to postpone the joint retreat to early July; namely, 6 and 7 July 2023 to be held fully in-person; and that an online joint meeting of the Bureaus of UNEA and CPR be held on 30 January 2023 to consider the items planned for the January retreat.
11. The Chair of the CPR expressed his support to the President's proposal pointing out that new members of the CPR Bureau will be elected in June 2023; therefore, a joint retreat in July would enable the newly elected CPR Bureau to meet the UNEA Bureau.
12. One Bureau member requested clarification on whether a Bureau member is allowed to delegate participation in the joint retreat to another representative from the Bureau member's delegation.
13. The Legal Adviser clarified that Bureau members were elected by name; as such, though participation can be delegated to a representative from the Bureau Member's delegation but in terms of decision-making, the Bureau members were expected to attend and participate in the Bureau meetings.
14. The Bureau agreed to postpone the joint retreat to 6 and 7 July 2023 to be held fully in-person. The Bureau also agreed to hold an online meeting of the Bureaus of UNEA and CPR on 30 January to consider the theme of UNEA-6 for a final decision on the theme to be taken by UNEA Bureau, to hold a preliminary discussion on the process and roadmap for consultation on the ministerial declaration for UNEA-6 as well as the provisional agenda of UNEA-6 considering the recommendations from the CPR review process,

UNEA 5.2 assessment and lessons learned and the 9th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR.

15. The Secretariat provided an update on the revised roadmap highlighting the important dates of the upcoming meetings in 2023 and pointed out that the roadmap would be further revised to reflect all changes made at the Bureau meeting. The Secretariat also stated that additional meetings might be added as needed and that agenda items for the meetings are tentative, therefore, subject to change.

#### **Agenda item 5: Other matters.**

16. The President referred to the letter received from the CPR Chair on the nomination of co-chairs of the intergovernmental regional consultations to be convened pursuant to UNEA resolution 5/12 entitled “Environmental aspects of minerals and metals management” and informed that she would send out a letter announcing the appointment of Ms. Saqlain Syedah, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UNEP, and Mrs. Martine Rohn-Brossard, Deputy Head of the International Affairs Division, Federal Office for the Environment of Switzerland, as the co-chairs.

#### **Agenda item 6: Closing of the meeting.**

17. The Executive Director, Ms. Inger Anderson, and the President thanked all Bureau members for their contributions throughout the meeting. The meeting closed at 17:30.

### **Annex 1: List of Participants**

#### **Bureau members of the UN Environment Assembly**

1. H.E. Ms. Leila Benali, President of UNEA and Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of Morocco
2. H.E. Mr. Silvio Jose Albuquerque e Silva, Vice President and Permanent Representative and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Brazil to UNEP
3. H.E. Dr. Jafar Barmaki, Vice President, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to UNEP and UN-Habitat
4. H.E. Ms. Sherry Rehman, Minister for Climate Change of Pakistan
5. H.E. Mr. Ján Budaj, Vice President of UNEA and Minister of Environment of Slovakia
6. H.E. Mr. Oleksandr Krasnolutskyi, Rapporteur of UNEA and Deputy Minister of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine

#### **Others**

1. Mr. *Sergio Salazar Alzate*, *Chargé d'affaires a.i. Embassy of Colombia en Kenya* and Mr. Miguel Angel Perez, From the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, Directorate of International Affairs, representing H.E. Sra. Susana Muhamad, Vice President and Minister of Environment of Colombia,
2. H.E Ambassador, Mrs. Ana Filomena Rocha, representing H.E. Mr. Jose Duarte Piteira Silvestre CORDEIRO, Vice President and Minister for the Environment and Climate Action of Portugal
3. Mr. Baba DRAME, Directeur de Cabinet, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, representing H.E. Mr. Alioune Ndoeye, Vice President of UNEA and Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Senegal
4. Ms. Cheryl Case, Deputy Director International Environment Negotiation, representing

the Right Honourable Lord Zac Goldsmith, Vice President of UNEA and Minister of Pacific and the Environment of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

**CPR Bureau as ex officio**

H.E. Mr. Pirkka Tapiola, Chair of the CPR, Ambassador of Finland, and Permanent Representative to UNEP

**UNEP Secretariat**

Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director

Ms. Radhika Ochalik, Secretary of Governing Bodies

Mr. Ulf Björnholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies

Ms. Stadler Tengrove, Legal Advisor