

- Thank you, madam Chair,
- The contact group on scope and functions met 3 times since it was constituted, and held a small informal group to discuss some specific issues.
- Our task as mandated by the Chair of the working group was to the objective, scope and functions of the panel as well as to consider elements of possible intersessional work.
- We started with the discussion on the proposal for the objective of the panel and had an initial round of discussion to gain a deeper understanding of the views in the room. This was followed by a discussion on the proposal for the scope of the panel.
- While there were many areas of common understanding the discussion also brought to light areas where there were conceptual differences on a way forward. However, there was a welcome spirit of cooperation in the room and a rich exchange of views and ideas.
- Following the discussion, the co-chairs were entrusted with developing a co-chairs proposal that brought together the scope and function for further consideration by the group. The text was posted on the meeting website last night.
- The group resumed its discussion on this topic today and agreed that the co-chairs proposal formed a good basis for further discussion. We then proceeded to refine the text to further capture any views that may have been missed. While now have a heavily bracketed text, I am confident that we will make good progress as we continue to meet over the next few days.
  
- Madam Chair - With regards to proposals for the functions of the panel, the group had a useful discussion last night which culminated in an agreement that the functions as listed in the UNEA resolution 5/8 will be included among the proposals for the establishment of the Panel.
- The group also discussed the inclusion of a fifth function on capacity building. There were diverging views on this matter.
- The group therefore decided that an informal drafting group, that was open to all interested parties, be formed to consider proposals on capacity building that were put forward by Nigeria on behalf of the Africa Group and Brazil on behalf of GRULAC.

- The group met for an hour this morning and had a very productive and rich exchange of views that saw many areas of convergence on the importance of capacity building to the work of the panel. However further discussion was needed to further define capacity building in the context of the panel and to ensure that the inclusion of related activities do not duplicate efforts under other bodies. Furthermore, there was some discussion on the importance of collaboration with stakeholders when it comes to capacity building and the need to ensure that any proposals do not preempt activities that may be decided on at a later time.
- In closing, madam chair, my co-chair and I would like to thank all the participants who took part in this contact group. Their expertise and professionalism made for a pleasant working atmosphere, and I am grateful for the spirit of compromise they showed at the meeting. Madam chair I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their support during this contact group.
- Madam chair I also humbly request additional time to be allotted to this contact group with the view to completing its mandate.
- Thank you, Madam Chair.