

**Statement of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders to the 161<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UNEP on March 9, 2023 at Nairobi**

Thank you Chair.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Esteemed colleague-members of the Major Groups and Stakeholders,

My name is David Ngigi Munene with the Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) and I am presenting this statement on behalf of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders to the UNEP.

As this is the first time to take the floor, the African Major Groups and Stakeholders would like to congratulate Mrs. Inger Andersen for her re-election as the Executive Director to the UNEP, Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema for her appointment as the Deputy Executive Director to the UNEP, and Dr. Rose Mwebaza for her appointment as the Director of UNEP's Regional Office for Africa. The African Major Groups and Stakeholders stand behind and besides you to support your leadership, which we all strongly believe in. We also wish to extend our sincere gratitude to Mr. Frank Turyatunga - the outgoing Director of the UNEP RoA for his endearing support to the African Major Groups and Stakeholders and exemplary leadership during his tenure and wish him well in his future endeavors.

The African Major Groups and Stakeholders welcomes the consensus on the theme of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 6). We take particular note of the deliberate inclusion of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change in the theme. While pledging our commitment to ensuring that this theme lives on beyond ink into an action-oriented, results-driven reality within our times, we underscore the importance of political goodwill and intentional listening to the sufferings of the most vulnerable such as women, youth, indigenous populations, informal workers and persons living with disabilities not forgetting excluded communities who continue to live the impacts of these three planetary crises. The realization of a practical reality from this theme can only be achieved if all stakeholders – member states, UNEP Secretariat, and Major Groups and Stakeholders – work together in transparency and synergy.

The African Major Groups and Stakeholders applaud and appreciate the excellent work that the Presidency of UNEA 6 under the able leadership of Her Excellency Mrs. Leila Benali together with the UNEA Bureau, continues to put into the preparations of a successful UNEA 6. With the UNEA 6 presidency being African, we are particularly committed to supporting Morocco in delivering a successful, inclusive, and transparent

UNEA 6 for people and planet. Indeed, the African Major Groups and Stakeholders have resolved to put together a task force to support the UNEA 6 presidency and we look forward to working closely with the UNEA 6 presidency in this regard. Such a task force would need facilitation and support to engage with the UNEA 6 Presidency and the Bureau frequently and meaningfully. We call upon the UNEP Regional Office for Africa through the able leadership of Dr. Mwebaza to offer the African Major Groups and Stakeholders dedicated support to ensure our meaningful and successful engagement in and throughout the process. A specific request in this regard is to, for example, support the participation of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders at the forthcoming Joint meeting of the Bureau of UNEA-6 and of the CPR Bureau later this year.

We welcome the draft roadmap for an inclusive, participatory and transparent consultation process on the draft ministerial declaration of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. We strongly reiterate that the involvement of Major Groups and Stakeholders – and especially those from Africa – in the UNEA 6 preparatory processes is paramount to the delivery of, “a well-planned, inclusive and transparent preparatory process on the development of a draft ministerial declaration.” We are keen on setting an example of how collaboration and synergy among the member states, the UNEP Secretariat, and the major groups and stakeholders can deliver the dream envisioned in the Rio+20 convention albeit over three decades later.

The African Major Groups and Stakeholders remain at the disposal of the UNEA Presidency and Bureau, the member states, and the UNEP Secretariat to engage meaningfully towards a successful UNEA 6.

I thank you.