



**162nd meeting
of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP
16 June 2023**

**Intervention on behalf of the European Union
and its Member States**

Madam Executive Director, Mister Chair, Excellences, colleagues. Good afternoon.

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Ukraine aligns with this statement.

Mr. Chair, we thank you for your leadership this morning taking us through the elections of the CPR Bureau. We are pleased that the CPR was able to elect the full Bureau and we congratulate the new Bureau, its Chair, the Ambassador of Jordan, the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur. The European Union and its MS look forward to working with the new Bureau, and wish them most of success, in particular in the next busy months ahead of the UNEA 6.

We note with regret that one Member State at the meeting departed from the long-standing tradition and established practice of accepting unanimous nominations put forward by a regional group.

Responsibility for this development rests solely with the delegation that has decided to deliberately break with decades of precedent in environmental multilateralism for its own political purposes.

Requesting a plenary vote on a candidate that has been unanimously nominated by a regional group undermines the Nairobi spirit of multilateralism that Parties have forged through decades of dedication to compromise.

Madam Executive Director, I would like to thank you, on behalf of the EU and its Member States for your report, which comprehensively covers the global, regional and programmatic activities of UNEP and we appreciate the dense information that is provided to us through this report.

Allow me to highlight just a couple of landmark events, that UNEP contributed to. The first one is the UN Water Conference that took place in March 2023. On behalf of the EU and its MS, I would like to applaud UNEP for the leadership demonstrated at the UN Water Conference, especially in preparing the Interactive Dialogue 3 and in actively engaging with Member States in several activities and side events.

The EU is pleased with the outcomes of the Conference – in particular the Water Action Agenda. Now it is time to ensure that these commitments are implemented without delay, as we also stressed at the Side Event on the Water Action Agenda, organised by UN Habitat during the second UN Habitat Assembly.

Indeed, the 2023 UN Water Conference clearly demonstrated the critical role of water as an enabler to achieving most SDGs. We see a need for water to be given adequate attention in the UN system at large, because it is a cross-cutting issue relevant for so many UN agencies. In this regard, we welcome your intention to bring together UNEPs expertise on water to strengthen support to the Water

Action Agenda and we see merit in addressing the critical role of water at UNEA-6.

Second, allow me to mention the adoption of the Treaty of the High Seas, to protect the ocean, tackle environmental degradation, fight climate change and prevent biodiversity loss. It is truly remarkable and the EU and its MS will work to ratify it swiftly. UNEP can play an instrumental role in its implementation through its Regional Seas Programme, and we welcome your action. The EU will help developing countries to prepare for the implementation of the new treaty and for this we have pledged 40 million EURO as part of a Global Ocean Programme.

Third, we are happy to see the progress on GEO7, where the first draft is now being developed. The EU and its MS would like to underline the importance of the support services and capacity building of GEO on monitoring, data management and the translation of scientific information in policy information and policy development. We encourage UNEP to develop and implement this work on an equal footing with the production of the GEO7 report.

We also thank UNEP for its contributions to the second Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment Report for Ukraine, launched by multiple partners. The EU and its 27 Member States reiterate our commitment to uphold the rules-based international order, with the UN at its core. In this respect, we condemn the violation of the UN charter and express our unwavering support to Ukraine, its independence and its full territorial sovereignty.

Finally, I would like to thank UNEP for the updated recommendations to improve the oversight function of the CPR and for sharing a report on the funding situation of UNEP. The EU and its Member States welcome the increasing number of full share contributors to the Environment Fund, but we reiterate the need for a more strategic approach to expanding the donor base for

UNEP in order to fulfil its mandate, taking into account the useful suggestions made in the Annual Subcommittee. We look forward to engage on this at the relevant agenda item.

I thank you.