

## **Intervention by malawi at UNEP CPR Subcommittee meeting of 18 July 2023**

**1. Thank you Chair for the opportunity to take the floor.**

2. Since am taking the floor for the first time, let me congratulate you Chair for assumption of office together with other members of the Bureau, and while assuring you of my delegation's support, to further wish you the best of success during your tenure including on preparations for the Sixth Session of UNEA.

3. From the outset, I would like to thank the Secretariat for the impressive work in producing the Options Paper on the timing of future UNEA Sessions.

4. Before I proceed my delegation would like to affirm that when we took the decision at UNEA 5.2 to have UNEA 6 in 2024, we were cognizant of the need to ensure that Africa serves a two-year term, without prejudice to precedence. We strongly believe that this should also apply to future Presidencies.

**5. As such for Malawi this principle is very important in making any decision going forward on this item.**

6. By extension therefore we remain guided and supportive of UNEA Rules of Procedure, Rule 1, which states and I quote, *'The United Nations Environmental Assembly shall normally hold one regular session every two years.'* End quote.

7. In view of the foregoing points, we appreciate that the two options presented to us so far are carefully and clearly keeping in mind the two-year rule and practice.

8. Therefore, for Malawi we are flexible as to whether the UNEA regular sessions are held in odd or even years, as long as the two-year format is respected.

9. In emphasising the above, my delegation is very much aware of UNEA Resolution 2/22. While respecting the wisdom of our predecessors in putting the provisions of paragraph 1, where it was decided that regular sessions should be held in odd numbered years, such a decision perhaps was mostly restrictive voiding room for flexibility rather than being constructive and considerate of future eventualities.

10. Rule 1 of UNEA Rules of Procedures, which provides for a regular session, once every two years, is in our view adequate, without the need to qualify it with a condition that speaks to odd or even years.

11. Therefore, the issue of even or odd years, is for us at this time and going forward, is neither here nor there and does not appeal to us as a con.

12. What my delegation is interested in, at the end of the day, are these two questions;

i. What are the key strategic and programmatic challenges that would arise in deciding between options 1 and 2 or indeed any other possible option;

ii. If MTS 2022-2025 was to be extended to 2026, what are the critical implications for the well-being of our environment as well as for the delivery of the mandate of UNEP.

13. My delegation at this juncture having made these preliminary comments, is keen to engage within the confines of the African group on the two options. We are also very keen to listen to those that have very strong positions on either of the two options or again, any other option that may be presented.

14. **I thank you Chair.**