



Statement from the Children and Youth Major Group Committee of Permanent Representatives Subcommittee meeting on 18th July 2023

Agenda Item 2 : Agenda Item 2: Briefing on the 2022 UNEP Programme Performance Report.

I am Alphonse Muia from Kenya, representing the Children and Youth Major Group at UNEP. At the outset, we congratulate you Mr. Chair for taking up this new role. We would like to acknowledge the Programme Performance Report and the progress made by UNEP since UNEA 5.2.

Secondly, in this regard, while we acknowledge excellent gender representation, we would express our concern on the geographical representation of the staff at UNEP. The Children and Youth Constituency expresses discontentment to note that currently, over 38% of the overall staff and 48% in the P5 category come from Western Europe and other regions. This disparity is troubling when we consider that Asia Pacific and Africa together represent over 76% of the world's population. However, their representation in the UNEP secretariat is only 49% in the overall category and a mere 38% in the P5 category.

It is crucial to ensure fair and equitable representation within the anchor institution of the global environment striving for a more balanced and inclusive staff composition at UNEP. The voices, perspectives, skills and talents of all regions must be adequately harnessed when addressing global environmental challenges.

Thirdly, a look at the age distribution in the Secretariat, reveals a gradual decrease of young people from 31 in 2020 to less than 22 staff in 2022. We however applaud early career opportunities being created such as the Youth Talent pipeline. With approximately 18 percent of the world's population falling in the age bracket of 20 to 30 years, we think it is important for a Secretariat that is working for the healthy environment of all, including the current generations, to be reflective of it. We would also request that underrepresented regions be prioritised in this pipeline to equalise the regional balance in the staff.

We appreciate UNEP's engagement with the GEF, since its accreditation to the Fund in June 2015, continues to bring changes mostly in developing countries. While we appreciate how UNEP has made progress in providing full funding for projects with a steady growth around US\$ 256.49 million, we still need to increase youth capacities and the necessity of their



inclusion in UNEP's finance opportunities. Furthermore, we need to consider what could be the best way for countries, municipalities, and cities to mobilise funds internally to support locally-led action by youth people around the world.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, as Nairobi gears up towards hosting the inaugural Africa Climate Summit, my delegation wishes to announce to member states that the Kenyan youth constituency will also be hosting an African Youth Climate Assembly from 1st to 3rd September and among other things deliver the Africa Youth Climate Declaration.

Let us work together to promote diversity, foster inclusivity, and create a more representative UNEP that reflects the true global landscape. Only by embracing all voices can we truly achieve our shared goals of a sustainable and thriving planet.

Thank you chair for the floor.

Delivered by:

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