

**Draft Statement and Interventions on behalf of the Group 77 and China  
United Nations Human Settlements Programme**

**20-24 November 2023**

His Excellency Mr Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives  
and Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Her Excellency Madame Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP

Distinguished Permanent Representatives,

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Assalamualaikum and habari asubuhi.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group 77 and China.

Mr Chair, the Group would like to thank you, the Bureau, the Executive Director and the Secretariat for the working documents and the hard work done for this meeting. The meeting comes at a crucial time amid the preparations for UNEA-6 in February next year, which is less than three months from today.

At the last UNEA, Member States adopted 14 resolutions, which mandated UNEP and the Executive Director with guidance on their priorities. Just last week, we had a follow up meeting for Resolution 5/14 adopted by UNEA-5.2 on the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution including in the marine environment (INC-3). The Group supports the work done thus far on this resolution, and urges the Secretariat to continue working on the equitable and balanced implementation of other resolutions. The Group thanks the Secretariat for responding to its request to establish a monitoring and reporting portal, formerly known as paper-smart portal, which helps to track progress on the implementation of all the

adopted resolutions. The Group reiterates its expectation that the secretariat will regularly provide briefings on the status of the implementation of all resolutions to allow for follow up actions, including resource mobilization to secure funding for the resolutions that lack financing and budget for their operationalisation.

The Group appreciates and welcomes the effort made by UNEP Secretariat with regards to the organisation of multiple MEAs meetings in Nairobi this year as requested by Member States. However, the Group would like to suggest that the UNEP Secretariat and different MEAs spread out the meetings across the year leaving ample time in between meetings. This will allow Member States, especially those with limited number of diplomats based in Nairobi, to better prepare for all the meetings. As observed there were fewer meetings in the first three quarters of this year as against back-to-back meetings in the last quarter. The Group believes that better organisation of work from the Secretariat side would assist Member States to better contribute in all the meetings.

### **Agenda Item 3**

The Group acknowledges the importance of both the UNEP's headquarter and its regional offices, including through regional forums for ministers responsible for environmental affairs, in implementing the mandate of UNEP. We believe that there is a need to enhance the coordination between UNEP in Nairobi and its regional offices, and the necessity of organising regular briefings for Member States on the progress of regional projects. This will increase the compliance, transparency and effectiveness level of the whole administrative and implementation process of these projects, whilst minimising the risks.

The Group highlights the need for more financial resources to implement UNEP's programme of work and support its regional offices. The Group underscores that most risks identified in the presentation are linked to inadequate funding for the implementation of MEAs in developing countries and the struggle to harness private funding. On this note, it is crucial for UNEP to prioritise its work, improve its financial allocation and mobilise

innovative sources of finance, including encouraging financial contributions from Member States that are developed countries to support the Programme.

On the Implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Group thanks the Secretariat for the presentation and analysis on the progress made. However, the Group reiterates its regret that the uptake of pollution remains low across the cooperation framework results reviewed in 2023, in comparison to climate change. On pollution, we also note the focus on waste management, at the expense of chemicals, air, water and soil quality. While the Group recognises the progress made and the focus of the cooperation frameworks on climate change and the issue of sustainable food systems, it believes that biodiversity and pollution in all its aspects should be addressed equally.

The Group would like to encourage UNEP to engage more in country delivery of actions and programs, through the UN Country Teams in order to help address climate change, biodiversity and plastic pollution challenges and to do its utmost to uptake these actions in the cooperation frameworks.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Preparations for the sixth session of the UNEA**

##### **a) Secretariat presentations of advanced versions of mandated reports to UNEA-6**

Her Excellency, President of UNEA-6 and Honourable Minister Leila Benali,  
His Excellency Chair of the CPR,

It is a great honour to have you Mme President to join us for the discussions under this agenda item.

The Group welcomes the presentation made by the Secretariat on the preparations for the sixth session of UNEA. The Group also expresses its full appreciation for the efforts made by the Kingdom of Morocco, as the President of UNEA-6 and pen holder of the draft Ministerial Declaration, and the Secretariat for starting consultations on the Ministerial Declaration early, including through paragraph-by-paragraph discussion. The Group notes with appreciations the active and positive participation of all its members in

the discussions on the draft Declaration and expresses its readiness to continue actively supporting the Presidency in completing the task.

I would like to highlight that among the priorities of this Group in the coming up with UNEA resolutions and their implementation, are the upholding of the principles of equity; just transition; diverse national circumstances and capabilities; enhanced cooperation; and the underlining of the various environmental challenges faced by developing countries. The Group recalls that Member States bear common but differentiated responsibilities, as enshrined in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration, and adds that, within our respective capabilities, we are all expected to do our utmost to achieve full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Group would also like to request all efforts by Member States and the Secretariat to ensure the support for the participation of at least two delegates from every developing country in the OECPR and UNEA. This is crucial for an inclusive and truly universal Assembly.

#### **b) UNEA sessions and related consequences for UNEP's Medium Term Strategy and Programmes of Work and Budget**

The Group takes note of UNEA resolution 2/22 on holding UNEA meetings in odd-numbered years, with the third session held in 2017. Meanwhile the Rules of Procedure require UNEA to be held biennially. However, COVID-19 has disrupted the flow of our work.

The Group is of the view that we have to work things out with minimal financial impact and least disruption while aligning the work of UNEP with the rest of UN entities. It is best for Member States and the UNEP Secretariat to think of the long-term effect of any decision in choosing the best possible option.

In this regard, the Group would like to receive more information on Option 3, especially on the effects on the work of UNEP and related financial implication, before we decide on this issue. We note that it will affect the duration of the Presidency and also the implementation timeline of the resolutions to be agreed during UNEA-6.

### **c) Announcements of possible draft resolutions and decisions for UNEA-6**

The Group anticipates that a considerable number of resolutions will eventually be tabled during UNEA-6. It is hoped that Member States will consider an agreeable number of resolutions that are implementable, considering that we still have many resolutions from past UNEA sessions that lack budgeting to permit their implementation. It is important for all draft resolutions with similar topics to be merged together in order to avoid duplications. The Group looks forward to actively engaging in the discussions leading to UNEA-6 and hopes that Member States will manage to finalise the resolutions during the Open-ended CPR (OECPR), to allow for their smooth adoption at UNEA 6.

Furthermore the Group would like to reiterate its call that contact group meetings to discuss resolutions should not exceed two at any one time, both during the OECPR and UNEA-6. This would ensure meaningful participation of small delegations. Therefore, the Group recommends that Member States and the Secretariat make full use of the intersessional period between this meeting and the next OECPR to start discussions on the tabled draft resolutions.