

**10th Annual Subcommittee Meeting of the
Committee of Permanent Representatives**

20-24 November 2023

State of Palestine Statement

Thank you Mr. chair and I wish to commend you, madame executive director, madame deputy executive director, and members of the bureau for your efforts and the members of the secretariat for the good preparation for this meeting.

Mr. Chair,

Madame Executive Director,

Excellencies, Colleagues,

We align ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished PR of Malaysia on behalf of the G77 & China and the distinguished PR of the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group, APG.

We also commend UNEP for their work in the 13 thematic programs delivering the three strategic objectives of the Mid-Term Strategy. My delegation is also looking forward to actively engage and prepare for a successful UNEA 6.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished colleagues

As you are certainly following, there is a developing environmental catastrophe in the Gaza Strip, Palestine.

Apart from causing incomprehensible loss of civilian lives and injuring tens of thousands of others, the Israeli occupying power aggression has also inflicted massive damage to the environment in Palestine and beyond.

This man-made catastrophe is caused by the devastating Israeli military aggression that is still targeting as we are meeting now, every aspect addressed under the UNEP thematic programs and every matter that comes under the Program's mandate.

Water Security, Food Security, Coastal Economy, Health related Pollution, Waste Management, Sewage Treatment, Debris Management, Air pollution and Sea Pollution, and Biodiversity Conservation, are but a few of what this Israeli aggression destroyed or severely damaged.

Mr. Chair

I wish to reiterate the important point raised in the APG statement related to strengthening and empowering the environment domain capabilities of the Resident Coordinators, RCs, to support their responsiveness to emerging environmental challenges.

The situation in the Gaza Strip is an example of such an environmental catastrophe, which would require sufficiently empowering UNEP to exercise the needed agility in dealing with emerging environmental crises and the ability to dispatch sufficient staff, experts, and resources on the ground to consolidate the efforts of the RCs where needed.

The fact that the devastation in the Gaza Strip has targeted core environmental aspects, overwhelms without doubt the RC office's responsibilities and capabilities to sufficiently detect and assess the environmental deterioration taking place.

More so when it happens in times and areas of conflict and when the scope of devastation impacts every aspect of Human Lives and Existence.

My delegation recognizes that UNEP Secretariat is aware of these critical needs, and we kindly call upon member states to support the UNEP Secretariat in fulfilling its mandate and actively cooperate with the Secretariat in this endeavor.

Thank you, Mr. Chair