

NGO Opening Statement for OECPR-6

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On behalf of: UN Environment NGO Major Group

Thank you M. Chair, and good afternoon Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, dear Colleagues, Ladies, Gentlemen, and all Gentlepersons -

I represent COARE – The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education, and I have the honor this afternoon to address you on behalf of the NGO Major Group.

We would first like to thank the Government of Kenya for its hospitality and generosity in hosting these meetings and in welcoming their delegates.

Each meeting of the Environment Assembly is meant to build on preceding Agreements, Resolutions, work, and our own human understanding of the world we occupy and share. Our work here directly impacts the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and ALL human rights – not just the right to a healthy environment.

The last UNEA adopted the Animal welfare–environment–sustainable development nexus, noting that the health and welfare of animals, sustainable development, and the environment are connected to human health and well-being, and acknowledging the increasing need to address these connections through the One Health approach. We urge delegates to build on that resolution and reflect its content in this session's proceedings.

We will hear the term "triple planetary crisis" innumerable times over the next two weeks, as well we should. However, and unfortunately, the key words are not really hitting us as they should. Indeed, our entire planet is affected, and indeed, these effects have truly risen to the level of crises.

It is crucial that the ambition of UNEA-6 to promote effective and sustainable multilateral actions to address the triple planetary crisis includes effective policies and measures to deal with the environmental impacts of armed conflicts and military activities that significantly exacerbate these crises. Current conflicts and legacy impacts from past conflicts underscore the importance of addressing the environmental dimensions of war, and its effects on the health and livelihoods of current and future generations. We call on Member States to recognise the contributions of conflict to pressing environmental challenges in UNEA-6 discussions and decisions, and to support the draft resolution on environmental assistance and recovery in areas affected by armed conflicts.

Resolutions on the sound management of chemicals and waste and on circular economy are drafted and under consideration for UNEA-6. Both should support SDG 12 but they fail to capture the central importance of transparency for the chemical composition of materials and products, and traceability for the disclosed information in individual materials and products. Transparency and traceability of chemical composition data are foundational pillars that support informed decision-making for a circular economy free from harmful chemicals, and should be called for in both these resolutions.

We share concern about the self-serving interests and influence of industry those who profit from the status quo. Just as false solutions like chemical recycling are used to muddy conversations in the Plastics INC, Solar Radiation Modification does nothing to tackle the root causes of climate change, and brings a whole host of new environmental and social risks that are likely to impact hardest those already suffering the worst impacts of climate change.

SRM is a dangerous distraction that cannot be tested or effectively governed, and States should act decisively to prevent development and deployment of these dangerous and unnecessary technologies, by committing to Non-Use of Solar Geoengineering.

There are no short cuts, and there are no excuses for us to continue treating our planet and people so poorly.

Let us pursue our forthcoming deliberations with the right frame of mind and with the right heart. Let us make decisions in the true interest of the environment, of the planet, and for all its inhabitants.
