

**OPENING SESSION OF THE SIXTH OPEN-ENDED COMMITTEE OF  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT**

**DELIVERED BY  
H.E. MAHI BOUMEDIENE,  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA**

**19 FEBRUARY, 2024  
NAIROBI**

- **Chairperson of the Committee of Permanent Representatives,**
  - **Madam Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),**
  - **Excellency Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Head of Delegations**
  - **Distinguished Participants,**
- i. It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.
  - ii. From the outset allow me to thank the host government, Kenya, for creating such a conducive environment, which have enabled member states to continue engaging on matters of environmental concern.
  - iii. Let me also take this opportunity to commend the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, under your leadership, for the tremendous work during the inter-sessional period for the preparations of the meeting of the sixth Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR 6) and the sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 6). Furthermore, I would like to thank the Executive Director and her team for making relevant information available in a timely manner and for the excellent organisational arrangements leading up to this meeting.

**Mr. Chair,**

- iv. The African Ministers of Environment held their 19<sup>th</sup> Session of AMCEN in August 2023 under the theme “*Seizing opportunities*”

*and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa*". The ministers called upon the United Nations Environment Assembly at the sixth session to strengthen the engagement of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements in promoting cooperation and coherence in, and contributions to, fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

- v. The African Group wishes to take this opportunity to register its support for the agenda and structure of this sixth Open-Ended CPR which will consider, among other issues, a draft Ministerial Declaration, draft resolutions, draft decisions and budgetary and administrative matters and UNEP's programme of work to be finalized at UNEA 6. Not only is this OECPR necessary for preparing for UNEA 6, but it is also a continuation of the oversight role that Member States exercise over the UNEP Secretariat.
- vi. On the Ministerial Declaration for UNEA 6, the Group is of the view that the declaration should recognize that countries are at different starting points, and the special situation and needs of developing countries in addressing major environmental issues shall be given the special attention they deserve.
- vii. The Group supports a Ministerial Declaration that is precise, concise, action oriented, ambitious and implementable that commits to address global environmental challenges through effective, inclusive and sustainable actions with the engagement of all relevant actors and stakeholders.

- viii. The Group wishes to express its appreciation to Morocco, in its capacity as President of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, for holding open, inclusive and transparent consultations on the draft Ministerial Declaration, and call for an ambitious and balanced Ministerial Declaration that is meaningful and impactful.
- ix. The 6th United Nations Environment Assembly is taking place at a time when we are facing critical environmental challenges, which makes the climate urgency a priority on which the international community must focus as it severely affects our living conditions and the development agendas of our respective countries.
- x. The impact of the different environmental crises is more severe when they affect the developing countries, especially African Countries, which do not have the technical and financial means to deal with them.
- xi. In this regard, the African Group also upholds and reiterates its unwavering attachment to the principles of the right of all countries to development, equity, just transition and common but differentiated responsibilities, and reaffirms that the issues of raising the ambition of the global environmental action, the urgent need for the provision of sufficient, adequate and predictable financial and technical support to developing countries to implement their environmental commitments, and the necessity to take into consideration Member States' national circumstances, and respective capabilities are all of paramount importance to African States.

**Mr. Chair,**

- xii. Regarding draft resolutions and decisions, the Group would like to highlight that African Ministers urged UNEA 6 to adopt resolutions that take into consideration, among other matters, means of implementation and the Rio Principles, including, in particular, the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities;

The Group would like to highlight that African Ministers urged UNEA 6 to adopt:

- a resolution at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly on fostering national action to address environmental challenges through increased cooperation between the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements; and
  - a resolution on strengthening the catalytic role and viability of regional forums of ministers of the environment and environmental authorities and the regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme in achieving multilateral cooperation in tackling environmental challenges.
- xiii. Furthermore, African Ministers urged all member States to support the establishment of a global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides under the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework instrument to mobilize and coordinate global action by the range of stakeholders to achieve a global phase-out of said pesticides and the adoption of sustainable alternatives, which inspired a resolution on Highly Hazardous Pesticides.

- xiv. In addition, the African Group would like to draw the attention to the other ambitious resolution submitted by African countries on the Development of Criteria, Norms, Standard and Guidelines for Supporting Sustainable Development.
- xv. The Group hopes that the Nairobi spirit of consensus will prevail during our deliberations and that the best interest of the environment and of people around the world will be our common guide.
- xvi. The Group wishes to restate the need for a more coordinated and coherent regional delivery of the Programme of Work with the view of improving the effectiveness of UNEP's support to countries in the continent. This is also in the context of previous requests by the Group on strengthening of UNEP's regional presence in Africa, including at the country level, in accordance with paragraph 88 of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 66/288 entitled the *Future we Want*. We believe such strengthening will continue to promote an efficient and effective implementation of UNEP's mandate in the region.

**Finally, Chair,**

- xvii. As I conclude, I wish to once again, express the Group's unequivocal support towards cooperating with Member States, Regional Groups and our full commitment to ensure a successful sixth session of the OECPR. It is for this reason that the Group was delighted to nominate three of its officers from Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania, to serve as co-facilitators.
- xviii. I thank you for your attention.