

**REGIONAL STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN STATES**

Madam President,

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC).

At the outset, the Group congratulates the Presidency of Morocco for its leadership in framing the ambition of this session of UNEA, and for its coordination with the CPR Bureau for the successful organisation of this meeting.

GRULAC also expresses its gratitude to the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, as well as to the Secretariat of Governing Bodies, for their support and responsiveness to Member States leading up to, and throughout this process. Similarly, we congratulate the Government of Kenya for its excellent facilitation and hospitality as host of UNEA.

We also recognize Mr. Alejandro Montero from the Chilean delegation, for his excellent job as a co-facilitator in this process.

Madam President,

This Assembly continues to reaffirm its indispensable role within the United Nations System as the intergovernmental decision-making body with universal membership, for enhancing progress in the comprehensive implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development. GRULAC commits itself to engaging constructively with the resolutions presented before this UNEA for a successful outcome.

We underscore the call of Madame Executive Director that this Assembly should focus on the urgent, the unexplored, and the critical. To this end, we hope that the Nairobi Spirit that endured at UNEA 5 will prevail through flexibility and compromises to achieve the many ambitious mandates put before this Assembly.

Madam President,

At this critical juncture for the global environment, GRULAC is committed to seeing the fulfilment of mandates agreed at UNEA-5, and to ensuring that the mandates before us today meet the scale to adequately address global environmental challenges.

We celebrate that a country from our region, Colombia, will lead one of the most important meetings this year to unlock the benefits of biodiversity for supporting sustainable development and halt and reverse biodiversity loss

We are actively working towards to the deadline set out in resolution UNEA 5/14, to finish the negotiations of an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic -- which was one of our key regional priorities from UNEA 5.2. GRULAC continues to support an ambitious outcome in this process, and we are committed to maintaining the momentum with the goal of ending plastic pollution in a decisive way, taking into account national circumstances and capabilities of developing countries, and be supported by robust means of implementation.

GRULAC also highlights the importance for all humanity of having healthy oceans and marine and coastal ecosystems, and recognizes the vulnerability of these ecosystems to environmental impacts. In this regard, GRULAC advocates for the adoption of concrete actions to protect, conserve and sustainably use our oceans, its biodiversity and ecosystems.

We welcome the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), and look forward to its swift ratification. We also note with appreciation Chile's offer to host its Secretariat.

We also underscore the need to strengthen regional cooperation to improve the monitoring of and the capacity to address air, soil and water quality; as well as to mobilise resources toward this end.

Madam President,

GRULAC, in line with UNEA Resolution 5/8, further supports the ongoing efforts of the ad hoc Open-Ended Working Group to establish a Science-Policy Panel to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste, noting that developing countries face the greatest challenges in terms of developing effective policies to tackle chemicals, waste and pollution.

Our region welcomes the adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste. This is the result of many stakeholders working to achieve a positive outcome on an instrument that meets the aspiration for a post-2020 framework on chemicals and waste. We hope the framework set for renewed multi-stakeholder collaboration at all levels addresses these challenges and UNEA recognizes this important achievement and call for securing resources from all stakeholders to ensure its effective implementation.

We also observe with concern the adoption of commercial measures to protect the environment, including unilateral ones, which constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination, or a disguised restriction on international trade, that does not take into account the challenges of developing countries, and the impact of these measures on the income of small producers and traditional communities.

All of the above emphasizes the need for the developed countries to provide developing countries with adequate, predictable, timely and additional means of implementation; to development aid, including financial resources from all sources, national and international, public, private and alternative; capacity development; technology transfer, technical and scientific cooperation, including exchange of best practices and techniques.

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.

Madam President,

Our region has a historic commitment to the environment. Since 1982, the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean has been operating as the oldest and most relevant space of cooperation for environmental authorities in our region. In that sense, we reaffirm the role of regional forums of environment ministers in tackling environmental challenges, including biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, land degradation and water scarcity.

We once again commit to a successful outcome of UNEA-6, and we assure you, and the Member States gathered in this hall, of our cooperative and constructive support.

I thank you.