

**Joint Statement of like-minded countries during
the 6th Session of the UN Environment Assembly**
(26.02.2024, UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya)

Madam President, I am honored to deliver this Statement of behalf of Australia, Canada, Chile, Georgia, Japan, Moldova, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the European Union and its member states, and the United States of America.

The last two years since UNEA5.2 were not easy. Climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution put the wellbeing of current and future generations at unprecedented risk. Moreover, many countries suffered the environmental consequences of conflict and disasters. We are deeply grateful to UNEP for its efforts in that regard.

On February 24, 2024 – just two days ago - we marked another sad anniversary – two years since the beginning of the unprovoked and unjustified full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

For two years the people of Ukraine have suffered from the barbaric actions of Russia, which are destroying this beautiful and prosperous country and causing unprecedented damage to the environment of Ukraine, including the Black and Azov Seas region.

The ongoing hostilities and damage caused by the Russian Federation's missiles and bombs pose a serious threat to the biodiversity of Ukraine. Dangerous chemical releases as well as pollution from industrial sites; burned forests and devastated towns and cities have a direct effect on human lives and livelihoods.

Russia's widespread use of both sea and land-based mines has caused a serious threat, not only to Ukraine, but to the environment of the region that could have impacts on ecosystems and human health.

We welcome the activities of UNEP in Ukraine and call for further UNEP assessments in Ukraine, including in the Black and Azov Seas region, to identify and respond to the environmental consequences of Russian aggression against Ukraine.

As stated by the UNEP Executive Director: "The first priority is for this senseless destruction to end now. The environment is about people: it's about livelihoods, public health, clean air and water, and basic food systems. It's about a safe future for Ukrainians and their neighbors, and further damage must not be done."

We call upon the Russian Federation to immediately cease its hostilities and withdraw all its troops from the territory of Ukraine.

Thank you, Madam President.