

**U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN in Nairobi
Jennifer Harwood's Delivery of the U.S. National Statement
at the Sixth UN Environment Assembly
March 1, 2024**

Thank you, Mr. President. Excellencies and distinguished colleagues, it is wonderful to be in Nairobi with you to realize this Assembly's vision of finding harmony between humanity and nature.

I would like to thank the entire UNEP team for the dedication that went into making UNEA-6 successful.

The United States is firmly committed to advancing global security and prosperity, which requires a dynamic science and technology community to support a healthy and resilient planet.

In particular, I want to talk about the importance of improving air quality and combating nature crimes.

We know air pollution is one of the greatest environmental risks to human health. We also know air pollution's adverse effects on our land and water ecosystems is leading to significant biodiversity loss.

That is why the United States and our co-sponsors are pleased to see a successful resolution to improve air quality.

This resolution will support regional cooperation, because air pollution does not stop at national borders. This resolution will unlock important capacity building and knowledge sharing to improve air quality for people around the world.

We are grateful to our co-proponent, Canada, as well as our additional 33 co-sponsors for their support in getting this resolution across the finish line.

We also know we cannot meet our biodiversity goals without addressing nature crimes – wildlife and timber trafficking,

illegal mining, illegal land conversion, as well as crimes associated with fishing.

These crimes destroy ecosystems and finance transnational criminal organizations that prey on the world's most vulnerable populations.

That is why we are proud to be a founding member of the Nature Crime Alliance.

We are meeting on the two-year anniversary of the start of Russia's unprovoked and illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The United States condemns Russia's senseless destruction and degradation of Ukraine's environment. It will be years before we know the full extent of the environmental damage, which reaches well beyond Ukraine's borders.

Some delegations mentioned the Israel/Hamas conflict but failed to recognize that the conflict — and its terrible

consequences for both Israelis and Palestinians — began with the barbaric terrorist attack that Hamas carried out against Israel on October 7th.

We grieve for all those who have been killed and displaced — both Israelis and Palestinians alike.

As UNEA delegates, we know that in addition to causing great human suffering, armed conflict can also have devastating impacts on the environment. This is why we are pleased to co-sponsor the resolution on environmental assistance and recovery in areas affected by armed conflict — to support UNEP’s invaluable work in this area.

In closing, the United States is firmly committed to addressing pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change to protect and conserve our planet.

Our cooperation here at UNEA-6 and elsewhere will be vital to ensure our planet and all its treasures are sustained for future generations.

The United States looks forward to addressing these challenges together with you. Thank you.

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