

**166th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives UNEP
Statement by Colombia on Agenda Item 7
Preparations for COP 16 of the United Nations Convention to Combat
Desertification.**

Colombia's Statement

We want to recall that the concept note submitted by Saudi Arabia, when presenting the draft resolution UNEA 6/14, states: "deforestation and demographic trends as the most significant drivers of land degradation. and that the Resolution acknowledges the importance of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the fight against desertification, land degradation and drought, including forest and woodlands.

In this regard, it is considered important, in addition to addressing the issues of combating desertification, restoring degraded land, and promoting land conservation, to also acknowledge that effective drought policies and actions must go beyond and address the main causes of land degradation. In this context, it is crucial to incorporate proactive measures against deforestation.

To address this concern, it could be beneficial to include an express call for collaborative efforts to tackle the main drivers of land degradation, in collaboration with other related multilateral treaties, such as the CBD and UNFCCC, as recognized in point 6 of the document presented here, which states: *"this is an opportunity to pass coherent and meaningful decisions that not only speak to the synergies between the various MEAs but that above all, address the multiple and interconnected crises the planet is currently facing."*¹

Tropical forests and forest ecosystems play an essential role in the fight against land degradation and global environmental challenges, which currently threaten biodiversity conservation, as well as the well-being and livelihoods of the communities that depend on their contributions.

¹ "The success of the COP very much depends on the participation of Member states and the ability to negotiate meaningful outcomes on land and drought. Building on the unique opportunity of having the 3 Rio Conventions COPs happen in a sequenced manner (UNCBD COP16 in October; UNFCCC COP 29 in November and UNCCD COP 16 in December), and building on priorities established by UNEA, this is an opportunity to pass coherent and meaningful decisions that not only speak to the synergies between the various MEAs but that above all, address the multiple and interconnected crisis the planet is currently facing."