

## **SUMMARY STATEMENT OF UNEP MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS, AFRICA TO THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF AMCEN**

Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am David Munene with the Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) and one of the two Regional Facilitators of the UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa.

I am presenting this summary statement on behalf of the UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa, as an outcome of two days of intense and collaborative work during the 2024 Regional Consultative Meeting, Africa, which concluded past 3 AM on Monday morning.

First, we register our most profound gratitude to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, UNEP, and our partners (The UNCCD African CSOs, Oxfam in Africa, the Hassan II International Center for Environmental Training, AWF, IUCN WCEL, and ANAW) for their support towards the 2024 RCM Africa. We also congratulate the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for their progressive AMCEN Presidency.

To reduce land degradation, desertification and drought in Africa, we urge Member States to strengthen institutional capacities, to urgently implement policies and frameworks such as the Drought Protocol, invest in continuous research, harness the power of technology, pay attention to nature-based solutions, support green financing for healthy people and land, and measure progress of existing programmatic interventions.

On mainstreaming land degradation neutrality targets in national policies and commitments, we urge Member States to commit to the principle of land degradation neutrality to prioritize accelerated action on ecosystem restoration and biodiversity loss.

The UNCCD COP16 provides a unique opportunity to restore human dignity by creating a legacy of a future devoid of forced displacement, food insecurity, water scarcity, and insecurity caused by land degradation, desertification, and drought.

On Climate Change, capacity development at the local level is essential to enhance community resilience and adaptive capacities. It is imperative to ensure that gender equality, youth and broader inclusivity are central to development and decision-making processes.

It is crucial to establish a robust and equitable framework that addresses the special needs and circumstances of Africa and other developing regions. The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) must set a minimum quantum of USD 5.9 trillion by 2030 reflecting the special needs and circumstances of Africa.

It is imperative to prioritize effective implementation mechanisms and ensure that resources are directed toward their intended climate action goals, particularly in areas such as loss and damage and support for National Adaptation Plans.

On biodiversity and nature loss, sustained integrated approach and substantial financial investments at regional and national levels to address ecosystem restoration we demand the resolution of the debt burden on Africa to unlock funding opportunities, including debt for nature swaps.

We applaud the member states for reinforcing the need for investing in coordinated and accessible data knowledge, and measurement systems.

We urge African member states to expedite the process of updating their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and the development of the associated National Financing Plans for Biodiversity.

Concerning Plastic Pollution, African Member States must prioritize addressing plastic pollution meaningfully, increase non-toxic circularity and fulfill the mandate of the UNEA 5/14 resolution and AMCEN Decision 19/2.

The internationally legally binding instrument must have internationally agreed targets to reduce plastic production and be matched with clear commitments to provide stable and predictable multilateral finance. We call upon African Ministers to support the adoption of the Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use of Plastics in Agriculture at the upcoming Committee of Agriculture of the FAO.

On education for sustainable development and behavior change, programs should involve raising awareness of the impact of pollution, reflect the ecological ancestral attitude and embed eco-behavioural practices in the early stages and throughout life to preserve the environment.

We support the proposed draft theme of UNEA-7 of, “Accelerating Just Transitions for People and Planet,” which adequately connects with the Sustainable Development Agenda and provides for inclusive participation, and socio-economic development.

We call upon member states to accelerate implementation measures and knowledge sharing of UNEA-6, the first African UNEA under the Presidency of the Kingdom of Morocco, and previous UNEA resolutions.

We also call upon member states to enhance implementation of global and regional environmental frameworks.

Finally, we reaffirm our commitment to working with the AMCEN for the common good of our Continent.

Excellences, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, we encourage all to engage positively in the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership and to listen to the voices of the grassroots as expressed, for example, in the drum beats of the African Climate Justice Caravan to the UNFCCC COP29.

I thank you.