

## STATEMENT DELIVERED BY CHILDREN AND YOUTH ON 19 FEB 2013 IN THE MINISTERIAL PLENARY DURING THE UNEP GC/GMEF

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Thank you Madam Chair for giving me the floor,

My name is Mirna Fernandez and I am going to speak on behalf of the Major Group of Children and Youth. As children and youth we welcome the spirit and decisions from Rio+20 aiming to strengthen and upgrade UNEP. Regarding to this, and following the line of the principles for stakeholders participation developed by Major Groups Representatives here, we think that the strengthened and upgraded UNEP needs to become a greater organization than UNEP has ever been so far. UNEP needs to fully take on the challenge to deliver superior performance and make a distinctive impact with lasting endurance. UNEP's performance must be measured relative to its mission and ambitious mandate, with focus on outputs and meeting the ultimate goal of global environmental sustainability. As long as the environment is declining, UNEP must work even harder and track its trajectory with rigor. We call on UNEP to become a model organization within the UN system in terms of civil society participation. Children and youth should be involved throughout the entire organization. On the policy level, Major Groups and Stakeholders should have seats in the Committee of Permanent Representatives. On the programmatic level, all UNEP divisions and all sub-programmes should collaborate systematically with civil society, including children and youth. Also, civil society Participation should be ensured through national opened consultation processes with Major Groups representatives that would provide incomes for the regional consultations raised by UNEP. For all this, we ask UNEP and governments gathered here to work together and ensure that the Rio outcomes implementation will shape the future we really want.

Many thanks.