

Working title: Pollution prevention and control in areas affected by terrorist operations and armed conflicts

*The United Nations Environment Assembly,*

*Pp1 Reaffirming* its commitment to the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals listed in General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

*Pp2 Deeply concerned* about the local, regional and transboundary threats to human health and the environment from pollution caused or worsened by terrorist operations and armed conflicts,

*Pp3 Taking* note of the second and third reports of the International Law Commission's Special Rapporteur on the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts of 28 May 2015 and 3 June 2016 respectively [<sup>1</sup>], which addressed the role of natural resources in both financing terrorist activities and armed conflicts and as their victim, and the threat to human health and ecosystems posed by pollution from the toxic and hazardous remnants of war,

*Pp4 Bearing* in mind the importance of protecting the environment and natural resources in areas affected by armed conflicts and terrorist operations, and their vital role in building and consolidating peace,

*Pp5 Recognizing* that sustainable development and the protection of the environment contribute to human well-being and the enjoyment of human rights,

*Pp6 Also recognizing* the need to mitigate and minimize the specific negative effects of pollution in areas affected by armed conflicts and terrorist activities on people in vulnerable situations, including children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and internally displaced persons,

*Pp7 Further recognizing* the specific negative effects of pollution on women and girls and the need to apply a gender perspective with respect to addressing pollution resulting from armed conflicts and terrorist operations,

*Pp8 Reaffirming* its resolution 2/15, entitled "Protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict" which acknowledged *inter alia* the need to mitigate the environmental impact of activities of transnational and other organized criminal groups, including illegal armed groups, as well as the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources, in areas affected by armed conflict, and noting the role that the United Nations Environment Programme can play, within its mandate, to support Member States in addressing these challenges upon request,

*Pp9 Expressing its grave concern* about the pollution caused by deliberate scorched earth policies targeting natural resources, by damage or disruption to industrial facilities and to vital civilian infrastructure, including water filtration facilities, sanitation and electricity networks, and to residential properties and military sites as a result of terrorist operations and armed conflicts,

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<sup>1</sup>A/CN.4/685 and A/CN.4/700

*Pp10 Expressing* further its concern over the potential threat to human health and the environment that would result from the use by terrorists of radioactive materials or sources, and toxic industrial chemicals, and recalling General Assembly resolutions 65/74<sup>2</sup>, 60/73<sup>3</sup> and 59/290<sup>4</sup>, and other relevant UN resolutions, on addressing the threats posed by nuclear terrorism and the use of chemical weapons,

*Pp11 Noting* the long-term socio-economic consequences of the degradation of the environment and natural resources resulting from pollution caused by terrorist operations and armed conflicts, which includes, *inter alia*, the loss of crops or livestock, and the lack of access to clean water and agricultural land, and their impact on sustainable recovery,

*Pp12 Noting* also that the collapse of environmental governance in affected areas can lead to inadequate waste management and dumping, while the loss of economic opportunity can compel affected communities to pursue unsustainable and polluting coping strategies,

*Pp13 Taking* into consideration the potential threat from the transboundary movement of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in areas affected by armed conflicts and terrorist operations,

*Pp14 Stressing* the need for the swift identification, assessment, remediation and rehabilitation of areas affected by pollution resulting from terrorist operations and armed conflicts in order to protect human health and the environment,

*Pp15 Recognizing* the importance of UN reform, which aims to make UN agencies more able to respond effectively, efficiently and urgently to emerging environmental challenges,

*Pp16 Taking into consideration* the importance of undertaking urgent response to environmental challenges occurring during terrorist operations and armed conflicts to avoid negative long term impacts,

*Pp17 Welcoming* with appreciation UN Environment's work on the protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflicts and terrorist operations,

1. *Emphasizes* the need to raise greater international awareness of environmental damage and pollution from terrorist operations and armed conflicts, and the need to prevent and control pollution in affected areas;
2. *Urges* Member States to implement all applicable international standards and international law related to minimizing and controlling pollution in situations of armed conflict and terrorist operations;
3. *Urges* all Member States to prevent or minimize damage to potentially hazardous facilities and infrastructure during terrorist operations and armed conflicts and to cooperate closely in controlling pollution where it does occur;
4. *Urges* all Member States to ensure that communities in areas affected by pollution from armed conflicts and terrorist activities participate fully in setting the priorities for assessment and remediation projects, and that the environmental data necessary for identifying health outcomes from conflict pollution is collected and integrated into health registries and risk education programmes;

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<sup>2</sup> 65/74

<sup>3</sup> 60/73

<sup>4</sup> 59/290

5. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue undertaking field visits to affected areas upon invitation;
6. *Requests* that the Executive Director, in partnership with Governments, scientific institutions, United Nations agencies, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, and within available resources and in conformity with the Programme's mandate, strengthen its capacity to monitor and respond to pollution threats arising from armed conflicts and terrorist operations;
7. *Requests also* that the Executive Director deploy, upon a State's request urgent assistance to affected areas, in order to undertake field-based and post-crisis environmental assessments and recovery, with a view to assisting affected States in controlling pollution resulting from terrorist operations and armed conflicts, in particular those States which are in vulnerable situations due to climate change, desertification or food security;
8. *Further requests* the Executive Director to find a modality to establish a new unit dealing with pollution control in areas affected by terrorist operations and armed conflicts and to recruit qualified personnel to work within this new unit;
9. *Encourages* United Nations Offices, Funds and Programmes, Specialized Agencies and related organizations, other international organizations and relevant stakeholders to provide technical assistance to States affected by pollution resulting from armed conflicts and terrorist operations to implement international agreements on the environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes and to help build effective environmental governance;
10. *Requests also* that the Executive Director enhance cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (*OPCW*) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (*IAEA*) for the purpose of assistance and assessment missions;
11. *Also requests* that the Executive Director continue interaction with the International Law Commission, *inter alia* by providing relevant information to the Commission at its request in support of its work pertaining to pollution resulting from terrorist operations and armed conflicts;
12. *Also requests* that the Executive Director reports to the next session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, on progress towards the implementation of this resolution.

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***We welcome the cooperation and input from all delegations as we move forward to reach a consensual draft resolution.***

***Focal points,***

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