

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Executive Director

Delivered by Felix Wertli

First of all, also from our side a warm welcome to DED Joyce, we are looking forward working with you!

We thank ED Solheim for his statement and letter on the draft audit. We are concerned about the situation, the circumstances and the findings in the draft Audit report. We took note that the ED is undertaking a number of measures and will await the final report and then further analyze the confirmed findings and the suggested measures.

One element of the letter refers to the Environment Fund and mentions the continued support to it. Switzerland is concerned that the overall contributions to the Environment Fund have been reduced over the last years and hence the part of non-earmarked funds for UNEP in the overall budget is getting lower. It is our strong view that UNEP should have the ambition to increase the resources for the environment fund and expect to see a strong commitment from UNEP to achieve this objective. This includes that member states know that UNEP is fully dedicating its work along the line of UNEP's policy function and mandate and for the implementation of the programme of work adopted by UNEA - and as for sure that their funds are handled carefully.

Regarding the ED's report.

We first of all welcome the detailed quarterly report that is very comprehensive. At this stage we focus our intervention on the element of "private sector engagement". With this title, a specific group of stakeholders is highlighted. We stress the point that all stakeholders are important and can contribute that UNEP delivers on its mandate. We encourage therefore to call the chapter in future "partnerships" and to provide information on new or transformed partnerships with important actors not only the ones from the private sector.

Madame Chair,

UNEP considers partnerships in particular with the private sector, as key for their work. From the side of Switzerland, we see the potential added value in partnerships but they have to be done in a sound and sustainable manner.

We had concerns about this issue, and addressed them in a bilateral meeting with UNEP with the objective to better understand and engage in a conversation. We requested on the 1st of February a number of documents, including a list of all MoU's concluded over the last 18 months. We reiterated the request at a CPR meeting and through formal and informal communications. Still, up to today we haven't received this overview of the MoU's.

The explanation from the secretariat for the delay is that no central register of all concluded MoU's exists.

We were obviously concerned by this reason and asked for further information on the due diligence process, so the process to investigate or analyze potential partner before starting the partnership.

A desk study on the delivered documents showed that a number of important changes over the last 18 months have been undertaken. To mention a few, the private sector unit has been moved from corporate service to the Governing Affairs Office

the work flows for partnerships with the private sector have been changed fundamentally, while the ones with not-for-profit actors remained the same. previously existed one guiding document that encompassed the processes for the different partners, now exist several guiding documents. the partnership-committee that checked and approved partnerships has been dissolved for the private sector and replaced by a new process stronger emphasizes is put on “fast track processes”, for example to approve MoU’s with private sector within 7 workdays.

As mentioned, partnerships are a important tool but they have to be managed in a sound and sustainable manner and Member states have to be able to trust the secretariat that they are well handled. As MoU’s and involvement with the private sector lead to several discussions over the past months, we are requesting two actions:

First, that the secretariats provides us with the list of the MoU’s concluded over the last 18 months, the request we issued over 7 months ago.

The second ones concerns the annual sub-committee. We suggest to add the issue of partnerships and in particular on due diligence processes on the agenda of annual the sub-committee. The secretariat should provide one single comprehensive document for due diligence, including processes, guidelines and workflows for not-for profit actors as well the private sector. This document can then be presented, discussed and perhaps approved by the meeting or the CPR.

This process would provide the secretariat the chance to present their current system, allow member states to assess it and to conclude if the current system is covering all aspects, if all information’s are available or further actions or a follow-up is required.

It is also a opportunity for the secretariat to engage in a dialogue with member states on this important issue, to check if further guidance is needed and a way to show their commitment to live up on the highly valued promise of transparency.

Thank you for considering this proposals and if required we are coming back one the one on due diligence under agenda item 6. “

6. Preparations for the 5th Annual subcommittee meeting

Delivered by Florian Gubler

(...)

My delegation has very high expectations when it comes to the Annual Subcommittee. This week-long gathering is one of the most important meetings for the CPR to assume its oversight and governance role. Especially in a budget year.

So far, the rescheduling of meetings and the non-availability of crucial information about the next budget have had a negative impact on the process. We therefore invite the CPR bureau and the Secretariat to consider the following four issues:

- During the Annual Subcommittee, there should be a time slot dedicated exclusively to the discussion of horizontal issues pertaining to the programme of work as a whole, such as for example the question of partnerships as one implementation tool of the programme of work.
- We also need to have a close look at the proposed budget as a whole. We need a moment to address the budget from a bird’s eye view, to understand

the underlying assumptions of the Secretariat and assess the validity of the proposed options. Addressing the budget only from the frog's eye perspective of individual subprogrammes doesn't give us the full picture.

- In the meetings dedicated to the individual subprogrammes, the review of the current programme of work and budget as well as the implementation of UNEA resolutions are important, but should be as concise as possible. Please make sure that there is enough space to consider the next program of work and especially the link between the narrative part and the budget numbers.
- In order for the CPR members to do their work, it is imperative that the next draft of the POW/B to be published at the beginning of October contains not only the narrative part, but also the full details of the budget proposed by the Secretariat.