



EU & MS Opening Statement for the Third substantive session of the AHOEWG on Global Pact for the Environment

20-22 May 2019, Nairobi

We thank Co-chairs for their work on the non-paper. We believe the draft elements of recommendations form overall a good basis for our work at this session.

To summarise our key points how we see where we stand:

- Good work has been done in the AHOEWG. Substantive constructive sessions with many suggestions. This work provides a good basis for a meaningful outcome of the process and we should capture it when moving forward.
- Based on this, as said, the elements of the co-chairs on substance provide a good basis. But we feel they need to be further developed and complemented.
- Therefore, we need a further stage in this process to ensure we can get to a meaningful outcome.

Explain in more detail

- On the substantive recommendations (II), some of the proposals are quite general in scope and should therefore be further elaborated. Moreover, some important elements for which there was a lot of support in the room, e.g. mainstreaming of environmental issues at international and national levels and within the UN, as well as the importance of effectively protecting human rights defenders in environmental matters, are missing from part II. Furthermore, where action to address certain issues can be initiated swiftly by UNGA, such action should be taken immediately when this process returns to UNGA.

- [For other important elements] the co-chairs have already proposed language that covers issues in a very general manner which should be further developed. Some examples:
 - The importance of mobilizing MoI of all types and from all sources, public and private, consistent with the AAAA
 - How MS should be encouraged to strengthen national regulatory frameworks
 - The importance of Stakeholder engagement at all levels
 - The need for Improving synergies and coherence at, all levels, streamlining reporting, and availability of information.
 - Regarding the EMG, in our view the focus should be on strengthening the implementation of the existing system wide framework of strategies and of the work of the EMG.
- We have concrete proposals in writing that we are submitting.
- These are the substantive elements we consider important. We don't expect to be able to discuss all of them in detail in this session.
- Therefore, we need a further stage to finalize a meaningful outcome of the GPE process.
- In general, we support the proposal by the co-chairs of working towards a conference to adopt an instrument. We are quite open regarding the nature and form of such an instrument as the outcome of the process. In other words, the word "instrument" should not prejudice its nature. However, the conference should be at the highest political level of HoS/G in order to raise the profile of environmental protection.
- We are convinced that an ambitious but feasible outcome of this process would be for the HoS/G level conference to agree an instrument addressing elements in all areas discussed.
- As said and in view of the short time this week - We believe further work is necessary. However, in order to address concerns that others might have, the next stage should be clearly defined, including a clear timeline for the final outcome.
- We envisage that this next stage be limited to one further meeting to prepare the work for the conference and we are open to further discussing the modalities. Following the meeting, we do not see the need

to go back to UNGA for adopting the recommendations before moving to a conference.

- As mentioned earlier, in addition to the meeting and the highest-level conference for the adoption of an instrument, the AHOEWG could recommend to UNGA to take immediate action on some of the elements identified by the AHOEWG.
 - Recommendations directed at the UN system, which UNGA is best suited to address in a resolution
 - Possibility for swift action on urgent issues currently not sufficiently addressed at international level, e.g. the sound management of Chemicals and waste, marine litter and microplastics, pharmaceutical pollution.
- Turning to Part 1 of the co-chairs non-paper: in our view this sets out the parameters of our work, and the process going forward. In particular the key objective of ensuring that this process strengthens environmental protection and the implementation of international environmental law must not be lost.
- Other parameters we would like to see reflected are the importance of taking advantage of this process in the implementation of Rio+20 Outcome document, in particular para 88 and 89, as well as raising the profile and awareness of environmental issues in order to increase political will and effective action.

These parameters should be carried forward to UNGA and the next phase.

Look forward to engaging with other delegations. We are open to doing this in any format that the co-chairs consider best suited to get us to consensus, including in smaller group settings.