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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**

**Committee of Permanent Representatives to the
United Nations Environment Programme
147th meeting**
Nairobi, 11 October 2019

**Draft minutes of the 146th meeting of the Committee of
Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment
Programme, held on 20 June 2019**

Agenda item 1

Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting was opened at 10.20 a.m. on Thursday, 20 June 2019, by Ms. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme.
2. The meeting was attended by 88 participants representing 69 members and two observer missions.
3. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair extended a warm welcome to Ms. Inger Andersen, who was attending a Committee meeting for the first time in her capacity as Executive Director of UNEP.
4. The Chair welcomed the following new members to the Committee: Mr. Aidan Regan (Australia); Mr. Duke Lephoko (Botswana); Mr. Gustavo Baptista Barbosa (Brazil); Mr. Patrick Luna (Brazil); Ms. Maria Alejandra Guerra (Chile); Mr. Wu Peng (China); Mr. Khaled Elabyad (Egypt); Mr. Meles Alem (Ethiopia); Mr. Hubertus Matheus Maria Van Megen (Holy See); Mr. Rahul Chhabra (India); Ms. Silvia Elena Alfaro Espinosa (Peru); Mr. Alex G. Chua (Philippines); Mr. Peter Joseph Francis (Sierra Leone); Mr. Mohamud Ahmed Nur (Somalia).
5. She then bade farewell to the following departing members: Mr. Pedro Escosteguy Cardoso (Brazil); Mr. Sun Baohong (China); Ms. Hussein O. Roshdy (Egypt); Mr. Dina Mufti Sid (Ethiopia); Mr. Toni Sandell (Finland); Mr. Sevastianos Efstathios Kontovounissios (Greece); Mr. Hadi Farajvand (Iran, Islamic Republic of); Mr. Luis E. Chávez (Peru); Mr. Uriel Norman R. Garibay (Philippines); Mr. Abdul Karim Kargbo (Sierra Leone); Mr. Gamal Mohamed Hassan (Somalia); and Ms. Koleka Anita Mqulwana (South Africa).

Agenda item 2

Adoption of the agenda

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CPR/146/1).

Agenda item 3

Election of officers

7. The Committee elected by acclamation the following representatives as members of its Bureau for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021:

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| Chair: | Mr. Fernando Coimbra (Brazil) |
| Vice-Chairs: | Mr. Sunil da Silva (Sri Lanka) |
| | Mr. Frans Makken (Netherlands) |
| Rapporteur: | Ms. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton (Ghana) |

8. The Chair noted that the nomination of a Vice-Chair by the Eastern European States was pending and would be finalized prior to the 147th meeting of the Committee.

Agenda item 4

Adoption of the draft minutes of 145th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

9. The Committee adopted the minutes of its 145th meeting, held on 19 February 2019, as orally amended, on the basis of the draft minutes of the meeting (UNEP/OECPR.4/2).

Agenda item 5

Adoption of the report of the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives

10. The Committee adopted the summary of the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, held from 4 to 8 March 2019, on the basis of the Chair's draft summary of the meeting (UNEP/CPR/146/3).

Agenda item 6

Report of the Executive Director

11. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a document entitled "Quarterly report to the 146th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. Fourth issue – January–March 2019." She invited the Executive Director to deliver opening remarks, and the Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Joyce Msuya, to update the Committee on activities carried out by the secretariat during the first quarter of 2019.

12. In her remarks, the Executive Director expressed appreciation to regional groups for the informal meetings she had held with them over the previous two days, and to the Deputy Executive Director for her able leadership of UNEP over the previous months. Noting that UNEP was an organization led by Member States, she said that she was committed to systematically engaging with, and listening to, Member States during her tenure as Executive Director. Since its establishment, UNEP had played a leading role in strengthening science for policymaking, supporting global governance for the environment and acting as a convener for change. She undertook to strengthen UNEP further so that it could steer the world towards sustainability, guided by the vision and the expectations of Member States as articulated in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want", and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both of which were premised on the fact that peace and prosperity could not be achieved without a healthy planet. There was a limited window of opportunity to address the enormous environmental challenges facing the planet – the scientific knowledge was definitive in that regard – but it was also clear that there was enormous human capacity for innovation and imagination towards finding the solutions that were needed.

13. The Executive Director said that she was committed to ensuring that UNEP proved its worth by improving its performance, including through the new medium-term strategy, which work would commence on during 2019, and rebuilding the confidence of Member States by systematically addressing issues of accountability, transparency and clarity around budgetary and programmatic matters. She further emphasized her commitment to ensuring an appropriate leadership team tone for the organization; to promoting, in line with the priorities of the Secretary-General, gender parity, geographical diversity and fairness of treatment across UNEP; to embedding the environment in the

work of the United Nations; and to using the delivery mechanisms of other United Nations entities to deliver on its mandate. UNEP would contribute, for instance, to the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, to be held on 23 September 2019, through its work on nature-based solutions to climate change, which would demonstrate cost-effective solutions from the natural world that not only reduced emissions but also had benefits for ecosystem restoration, livelihoods and resilience. Similarly, at the twentieth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in 2020, UNEP would work to support parties in adopting ambitious targets to arrest biodiversity loss in the post-2020 period. In closing, she suggested that success, for UNEP, meant halting the rapid loss of species, preventing premature deaths caused by air pollution, facilitating a transition by countries to sustainable consumption and production, powering the planet with renewable energy, and enabling the whole of humankind to reap the benefits of a healthy and thriving environment for centuries to come.

14. In her briefing, the Deputy Executive Director first drew attention to the celebration on 5 June 2019, in China, of World Environment Day, which had been a resounding success and had galvanized action around the world to combat air pollution. She highlighted a number of the events and activities described in the first quarterly report of 2019. One such activity had been the convening of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in March 2019, which had been attended by nearly 70 per cent of the world's ministers of the environment and whose outcomes had elevated the level of ambition of Member States to protect the environment and promote sustainable development. UNEP looked forward to working with Member States to translate the ambitious vision into concrete action and results.

15. Another key activity had been the release by UNEP of several flagship reports, including the sixth edition of the *Global Environment Outlook* report, *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want* and *Global Chemicals Outlook II*, as well as a report entitled "Environmental rule of law: first global report", which drew attention to the urgent need to focus on the enforcement of environmental laws to address environmental challenges ranging from climate change and habitat loss to pollution. The report's findings had been echoed by the ad hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/277, which, at its third substantive session, had agreed on 13 substantive recommendations to the General Assembly, including that there be renewed efforts to enhance the implementation of obligations and commitments under international environmental law, enhance cooperation and collaboration among multilateral environmental agreements and between such agreements and UNEP, and strengthen United Nations system-wide inter-agency coordination on environmental matters through the Environment Management Group, which was chaired by UNEP. In line with the recommendations, UNEP had developed a timeline to mobilize global action and support for environmental law and the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda more generally.

16. During the 2019 meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, she had signed agreements with the governing bodies of the three conventions on behalf of UNEP in order to strengthen collaboration between UNEP and the three conventions, while the parties to the Basel Convention had adopted an historic agreement to control transboundary movements of plastic waste. On 1 January 2019, the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer had entered into force and, were universal ratification to be achieved, its implementation would help to avoid up to 0.4 degrees Celsius of global warming by the end of the century.

17. With regard to partnerships, the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) had recently approved the largest-ever GEF work programme for UNEP, with \$119.9 million for projects and programmes covering a wide range of environmental issues, including sustainable landscapes in the Congo Basin, a 17-country project on electric mobility, and the development of alternatives to toxic chemicals in small island developing States. For its part, the Green Climate Fund had approved a grant of \$9 million for a UNEP-led project aimed at enhancing the climate resilience of rural communities in Benin. UNEP had also developed partnerships with Member States, including a partnership with the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States of America to revitalize the North American marine protected areas network, and a partnership with the Government of Japan to counter marine plastic litter in South-East Asia and India. In its role as facilitator of the Nature-Based Solutions coalition, which was co-led by the governments of China and New Zealand, UNEP was working closely with partners to develop a highly ambitious and action-oriented proposal to amplify the use of nature-based solutions to climate change.

18. With regard to resources, Ms. Msuya reported that contributions to the Environment Fund had doubled between the first and second quarter 2019 and thanked those 50 Member States that had contributed early to the Fund, in particular the 20 among them that had done so at or above their scale according to the voluntary indicative scale of contributions. She encouraged all other Member States to follow suit to enable UNEP to deliver results, and to use innovative financial mechanisms to support UNEP, such as a new fund set up by UNEP and the Government of Saudi Arabia which would enable UNEP to support that country's efforts to address national environmental priorities.

19. Lastly, she emphasized that UNEP was pursuing a culture that was more focused on results, including by empowering managers to be accountable for results, increasing the use of data for improved results delivery, and improving its communication of results in order to promote change and share its success stories with Member States and donors. The secretariat had finalized a results road map, which was being translated into unit-level workplans, and had launched an open data platform that would be used for improved results monitoring and reporting. Similarly, UNEP had developed a road map to fully align itself with the wider United Nations reform agenda. She noted that details of UNEP efforts to strengthen its operations and deliver results and to implement the United Nations reform would be provided under agenda items 7 (b) and 8, respectively.

20. In the ensuing discussion, all the representatives who spoke welcomed Ms. Andersen as the new Executive Director of UNEP, wishing her success during her tenure and expressing confidence in her ability to lead UNEP to new heights in close partnership with Member States. They also thanked the Deputy Executive Director for her oral briefing and her able leadership of UNEP during a tumultuous period, which, among other things, had contributed to the success of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

21. Many representatives thanked the secretariat for the quarterly report, which represented an improvement on previous reports and set out useful information on the performance of UNEP in the implementation of the programme of work, the medium-term strategy and the resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, asked the secretariat to ensure better alignment of the periods covered in quarterly reports with the dates of the Committee meetings at which such reports would be considered, noting that discussing in June activities carried out from January to March of the same year was less than ideal.

22. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, asked the secretariat to provide cost estimates of the activities identified in the report as requiring additional funding, including those related to the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and echoed the report's call for Member States to contribute to the Environment Fund in order to strengthen UNEP in line with paragraph 88 of "The future we want". He welcomed the overview of the ongoing and planned audits and evaluations of UNEP in the quarterly report and asked the secretariat to include in future reports weblinks to relevant audits and evaluations, and to make all existing audit and evaluation reports available on the UNEP website. He also asked the secretariat to maintain the Committee apprised of the main findings of audits and evaluation reports as well as of progress achieved in addressing the issues identified therein.

23. One representative said that her Government, which held the presidency of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, would work with the Executive Director and all Member States to facilitate an inclusive, effective and transparent preparatory process for a successful fifth session, whose main purpose should be to enhance the political influence of the Environment Assembly over all the policy processes, both within and beyond the United Nations system, that decided the fate of the environment. She commended UNEP for its role in the wider reform of the United Nations system and its emphasis on developing a stronger culture of results and good communication through the sharing of success stories. The use of simple, easy-to-understand language was vital to connect with the outside world, and in particular the private sector, which possessed critical data and innovative solutions to environmental challenges. There was a need for UNEP to develop a holistic private sector strategy that not only included due diligence procedures to vet partners and that tracked partnership agreements, but also drew from and applied normative lessons from the private sector. UNEP should develop normative advice for Member States on how they might strategically cooperate with the private sector to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in their territories.

24. A number of representatives described efforts made by their Governments to protect the environment and collaborate with UNEP, including during the 2019 celebration of World Environment Day.

25. One representative drew attention to the “G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter”, which had been adopted by the ministers of environment and energy of the Group of 20 (G20) countries at the G20 ministerial meeting on energy transition and global environment for sustainable growth, held in Karuizawa, Japan, on 15 and 16 June 2019. The framework’s actions would complement the work of UNEP on marine plastic litter.

26. Thanking representatives for their remarks and warm welcome, the Executive Director said that the secretariat had taken note of their comments, including requests for additional information on the estimated cost of activities outlined in the quarterly report. On the issue of communication, she attached great importance to communication as a tool to influence the outside world and would build on the impressive work UNEP had undertaken in recent years to further improve its efforts in that area. She also expressed support for the call for a holistic private sector engagement strategy that went beyond due diligence and served to mobilize the private sector within the normative, science-policy space that UNEP occupied. Lastly, responding to a comment from an observer, she said that she looked forward to engaging with major groups and stakeholders, whose ideas and insights contributed to enriching discussions among Member States and to her own understanding of issues.

Agenda item 7

Follow-up to the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

27. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to five issues to be considered as a follow-up to the fourth session of the Environment Assembly, namely the assessment and lessons learned and the implementation of Assembly decisions and resolutions, including decision 4/1, on the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020–2021; decision 4/2, on the provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; resolution 4/22, on the implementation and follow-up of United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions; and resolution 4/23, entitled “Keeping the world environment under review: enhancing the United Nations Environment Programme science-policy interface and endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook.”

28. The Deputy Executive Director said that the fourth session had been a resounding success, based on the secretariat’s own assessment, feedback from Member States and several surveys conducted after the session; the adoption of ambitious outcomes, including a ministerial declaration, 23 resolutions and 3 decisions; the launch of several landmark reports; and record levels of participation, with nearly 5,000 participants representing 176 Member States, 132 of them at the ministerial level, and almost 1,200 non-governmental organizations and 500 private sector entities. The true success of the session would, however, depend on the implementation of its political outcomes.

(a) Assessment of lessons learned

29. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the secretariat drew attention to a document entitled “The fourth United Nations Environment Assembly: assessment and lessons learned” (UNEP/CPR/146/8), which had been prepared by the secretariat in consultation with Member States and stakeholders and had been revised in the light of comments made by the subcommittee at its meeting of 11 June 2019. The secretariat had also prepared a document entitled “Follow-up of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly” (UNEP/CPR/146/9), which provided a summary of the resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly at its fourth session and of actions taken or planned by the secretariat to implement them, as well as table summaries of requests to the secretariat and mandates for Member States and stakeholders emanating from the resolutions.

30. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives said that the fourth session of the Environment Assembly had been a resounding success, but agreed that its true success would depend on the implementation of its outcomes.

31. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, welcomed the information provided in document UNEP/CPR/146/9 regarding actions taken or planned by the secretariat to implement the resolutions of the Environment Assembly, noting that he had repeatedly called for improved monitoring and reporting on implementation.

32. Another representative, also speaking on behalf of a group of countries, requested the secretariat to present for the consideration of the Bureau an overview of plans and timelines for important work streams for which the Committee provided oversight, including the development of the new programme of work and medium-term strategy, the follow-up to the resolution on sustainable

nitrogen management, and the future of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

33. With regard to the document on lessons learned, many representatives thanked the secretariat for updating the document and requested that it and all written inputs from Member States be circulated to inform the preparations for the fifth session of the Environment Assembly and the review process to improve its efficiency, effectiveness and working methods pursuant to Environment Assembly decision 4/2.

34. A number of representatives made specific comments on the document and its lessons learned and recommendations. With regard to the selection of the themes of future sessions of the governing body, flagship scientific reports should be considered; the themes should address global environmental issues that the Environment Assembly could contribute to solving; there should be flexibility regarding the selection of themes to enable emerging issues to be addressed; the themes should apply only to the high-level segments of sessions to facilitate the mandate of the Environment Assembly to provide overarching policy guidance on environmental matters; and, lastly, the criteria set out in recommendation one for identifying themes for sessions should apply not to the themes themselves, but rather to the draft resolutions to be presented for consideration by the Environment Assembly.

35. With regard to the organization of sessions, some representatives commented that lesson nine, on the need to create an optimal balance between political negotiations, the high-level segment and the official and non-official events of Environment Assembly sessions, should be included as a recommendation. Such balance would enable Member States to discuss issues more openly and to take full advantage of the multiple events taking place during the sessions, while ensuring that priority was given to meetings that focused on policy matters. One representative underscored that all documents, and not only those for Environment Assembly sessions, should be made available well in advance of the meetings at which they were to be considered in order to enable robust discussions. Another suggested that representatives of judiciaries and parliaments should be invited to attend the science-policy-business forum during Environment Assembly sessions so that challenges related to the adoption or enforcement of environmental laws and policies around the world could be examined. Lastly, it was suggested that efforts should be made to ensure that the dates of Assembly sessions did not coincide with major traditional holidays or festivals.

36. On financial matters, representatives commented that Member States should work to ensure that sessions of the Environment Assembly were financed through the regular budget of the United Nations. Several representatives recommended that efforts be made to ensure that funds were available to implement all Environment Assembly resolutions, including by tapping into existing resources from UNEP projects and activities related to its programme of work.

37. With regard to logistics, one representative said that serious efforts should be made to improve the stability of Wi-Fi connectivity across the United Nations Office at Nairobi compound during sessions of the Environment Assembly, while another suggested that consultations between the secretariat's logistics team and the host country should start as early as possible to enable logistical matters falling to the latter to be addressed.

38. On the outcomes of Environment Assembly sessions, one representative said that concrete plans should be devised for the implementation of ministerial declarations and for follow-up by UNEP to assist Member States in their implementation of such declarations. It was also suggested that resolutions should be required to contribute to "tangible progress", rather than "progress on the ground", given that the latter expression had not been clearly defined and that scientific assessments and other UNEP products did not necessarily lead to progress on the ground. Deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions should be agreed and, in order to ensure that all Member States abided by such deadlines, Member States should consider changing the rules of procedure of the Assembly and establishing a working party to review the rules.

39. In order to streamline the process of dealing with draft resolutions, avoid late-night negotiations during the meetings of the open-ended Committee and sessions of the Environment Assembly, and enable all representatives to participate broadly in all of the events held during those sessions, representatives suggested requiring that resolutions be in line with session themes, be co-sponsored by Member States from at least two regional groups, and address environmental issues complementary to the UNEP programme of work. Setting up a website with information on all the resolutions that had been adopted by the Assembly would avoid the submission of draft resolutions similar to those adopted at previous sessions. The secretariat should be requested to develop a guidance document defining the roles of the Environment Assembly and Committee bureaux in dealing with draft resolutions for consideration by Member States.

40. One representative objected to requiring that all draft resolutions be co-sponsored by Member States from at least two regions, which he said would limit the right to submit draft resolutions. He also sought clarification of what was meant by “meaningful participation” of major groups in lesson learned six, remarking that it would be difficult for developing countries to include representatives of major groups and stakeholders in their national delegations.

41. On the issue of follow-up to Environment Assembly sessions, representatives commented that the secretariat should share the outcomes of sessions with the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements and of other relevant forums, such as those working on oceans, and that the secretariat should develop a toolkit or similar product to broadly disseminate the information presented during science-policy-business forums.

42. With regard to preparatory meetings, one representative suggested that members of the bureaux of the Environment Assembly and the Committee should participate in regional preparatory meetings to present updates on preparations for Environment Assembly sessions and to assist in identifying regional positions and priorities ahead of such sessions.

43. Another representative suggested that, in preparation for the fifth session of the Environment Assembly, the co-facilitators of the five clusters for the negotiations during the fourth session should brainstorm on how to improve the negotiating process before and during the fifth open-ended Committee meeting, including through more consistent working methods for all draft resolution clusters.

44. Responding to the comments, the representative of the secretariat said that the secretariat had taken note of all the proposed changes and would revise document UNEP/CPR/146/8 to incorporate them. The more substantial comments would be taken into consideration in the preparations for the fifth session of the Environment Assembly.

45. Following the discussion, the Committee took note of the document (UNEP/CPR/146/8) and agreed that the secretariat would revise it in the light of the discussion at the current meeting and circulate the revised version at a later date.

(b) Implementation of Environment Assembly decision 4/1

46. Introducing the sub-item, the Chair drew attention to a document entitled “Development of a road map for mainstreaming UNDS reforms” (UNEP/CPR/146/2), which had been prepared by the secretariat in response to Environment Assembly decision 4/1 and which set out an assessment of the internal policies, guidelines and regulations that required adjustment in order to implement General Assembly resolutions 71/243, on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and 72/279, on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The document also presented a plan with timetables for the implementation of actions identified therein.

47. The Chair’s remarks were followed by presentations via videoconference by Ms. Gunilla Olsson, Head of the United Nations Reform Transition Team, on the United Nations system reform, and Mr. Satya Tripathi, Head of the New York office of UNEP, on the implications for UNEP of that reform and on the steps to implement it.

48. In her presentation, Ms. Olsson provided an overview of measures taken and recommendations made by the Secretary-General to implement General Assembly resolutions 71/243 and 72/279 and to ensure a coherent, effective, efficient and accountable United Nations development system that could help Member States to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such measures and recommendations were described in a document entitled “Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system” (A/74/73–E/2019/14), which had been presented to the Economic and Social Council in May 2019 for its consideration and endorsement. The measures and recommendations were related to the reinvigorated United Nations resident coordinator system; the new generation of United Nations country teams; improving business operations; reviewing multi-country offices to improve resource delivery in all countries; optimizing functions and collaboration at the regional level; restructuring United Nations regional assets in support of the 2030 Agenda; improving system-wide evaluation and reporting; and reforming the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

49. Ms. Olsson said that the United Nations Secretariat would continue to work with Member States and all relevant United Nations entities to advance the reform, noting that success was their shared responsibility and depended on keeping the momentum going and, among other things, on

changing funding practices to foster collaboration between United Nations entities. In that context, she encouraged Member States to support the reform by providing clear signals and guidance for all reform efforts and all United Nations system entities, in particular by (a) ensuring that all reporting systems and country programme documents were informed by and were in line with the United Nations cooperation frameworks, the new accountability systems of United Nations country teams, and the efforts to increase the sharing of common premises and services; (b) guiding discussions on the funding compact, especially through commitments for core and pooled funding; (c) maintaining their support for sustainable cost-sharing contributions to the new resident coordinator system and for adequate collection of the 1 per cent levy set out in the reform process; and (d) encouraging all United Nations entities to nominate their best candidates for the new resident coordinator system and to review their human resources procedures to ensure that United Nations country team members had the right skillsets and incentives, taking into account the need for gender parity and geographical balance. In closing, she commended UNEP for its proactive role in the roll-out of the reforms and for developing a road map to seize the opportunities presented by the reform to deliver on its mandate and on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, including through the new generation of United Nations country teams.

50. In his presentation, Mr. Tripathi outlined the main elements of the road map document (UNEP/CPR/146/2), which was structured around the core components of the United Nations development system reform and which described a series of measures taken or planned by UNEP to implement the reform, together with timelines for implementation. UNEP was determined to take full advantage of the tremendous opportunities to deliver on its mandate afforded by the 2030 Agenda and by the repositioning of the United Nations development system. Such opportunities stemmed from the fact that the work of UNEP touched on each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and that a repositioned system would enable UNEP to strengthen its coordination of global environmental policies and strategies. UNEP could then better deliver its expertise at the regional and national levels, as envisaged in “The future we want,” to support Member States in their efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

51. Accordingly, UNEP had developed the road map to identify specific measures to implement the reform and to achieve a nimbler, more accountable United Nations system that delivered results through complementarity, rather than competition, in line with the calls by the Secretary-General for an organizational culture that went beyond single-entity mandates and embraced an integrated approach. Measures described in the road map included the alignment of UNEP policies, guidelines and regulations, or the development of new policies or strategies to support the resident coordinator system reform, including its different sources of funding; the new generation of United Nations country teams; the reprofiling and restructuring of United Nations regional assets; and the efforts to enhance the efficiency of United Nations development system operations, including through common offices, innovation and improved business operations.

52. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives thanked the two presenters and the secretariat for the information provided and commended UNEP for its commitment to fully implementing the reform agenda of the Secretary-General. The reform offered UNEP a fantastic opportunity to mainstream the environmental dimension of sustainable development into all United Nations development activities through the country teams and resident coordinators without having to be present in the field. One representative said that the reform also afforded UNEP the opportunity to collaborate more closely with the regional economic commissions and to mainstream the environment into their work.

53. Two representatives conveyed their expectation that UNEP would continue to keep Member States apprised of steps taken to implement the United Nations system reform and would request their guidance as appropriate. One of the representatives further conveyed her expectation that UNEP would fully implement the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality. Achieving results for the poorest and most vulnerable populations required a focus on gender equality and human rights.

54. Many representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that it was vital that UNEP be actively involved in the development of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks, which were the main instruments for the strategic planning and implementation of country-level United Nations development activities. The active involvement of UNEP would help to ensure that the environment was mainstreamed in such activities and would facilitate a coherent response by the United Nations development system to Member State priorities, based on the principles of partnership, comparative advantage and the linking of results with resources.

55. Another representative said that it was important that the reform respect the wishes of Member States and resident coordinators, whose opinions should be heard. The primary focus of the reform should be on enhancing the capacities of developing countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

56. Many representatives expressed support for specific measures outlined in the road map, including the development of a menu of services that UNEP could offer to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams; a review of regional and country presence strategies; strengthening staff capacities in regard to the Sustainable Development Goals; improving data collection and monitoring, in particular regarding the integration of environmental sustainability into the operations and management of United Nations facilities; supporting all the funding modalities to finance the revitalized resident coordinator system; and supporting the system reform targets for efficiency gains to rationalize business operations.

57. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed his surprise that UNEP did not have a complete picture of current resources dedicated to United Nations joint activities, given its system-wide mandate, and queried the meaning of the term “business operations” used in part 5 of the road map. He also requested additional information on what developing a menu of services and reviewing regional and country presence strategies would mean in practice; on the open data policy, and how it related to the UNEP-Live platform; on the potential costs and savings to UNEP associated with the implementation of the reform; and on details of the timelines proposed in the road map, in particular those related to the review of the UNEP country presence, which should be finalized as soon as possible.

58. With regard to the proposed development of a new human resources strategy to secure a pool of talented senior staff to engage with the resident coordinator system, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, encouraged the secretariat to also use the human resources strategy to strengthen UNEP controls and principles for management and administration. He further suggested that the secretariat consider the recommendations contained in a 2018 report by the Joint Inspection Unit, entitled “Opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness in administrative support services by enhancing inter-agency cooperation” (JIU/REP/2018/5), when pursuing the business innovations and efficiencies outlined in part 5 of the road map.

59. Another representative suggested that in order to fully benefit from the reform opportunities, UNEP must focus on getting its normative work delivery model right, noting that UNEP could not be everywhere and should rarely assume operational roles beyond learning and pilot projects. She further suggested that there was a need for tangible mechanisms through which UNEP could exert influence both within the United Nations development system, for instance by ensuring that the proposed menu of services was strategic in nature and went beyond projects, and outside the system, by avoiding the use of acronyms and by using simple language to describe technical issues. Another representative suggested that UNEP should deliver not only through normative work but also through interventions at the regional and country levels.

60. One representative queried whether UNEP had considered specific incentives for individual staff to collaborate and partner with other United Nations entities. Another representative asked about the observed on-the-ground effects of the reforms.

61. Responding to the comments, Mr. Tripathi said that he appreciated and had taken note of all comments and would respond in writing to the specific questions raised. With regard to questions on the work of UNEP, the Programme would continue to focus on its normative mandate without losing its operational edge, especially in matters of policy and programmatic advice, by delivering on the ability to envision big ideas and supporting or working with partners that were implementing projects.

62. The Executive Director said that, being a normative agency, UNEP could not and should not have a presence in every country. However, the reforms afforded UNEP an opportunity to realize the vision of “The future we want” by fulfilling the Programme’s coordination mandate and infusing environmental action throughout the United Nations system, including through the Environment Management Group, and by ensuring that the menu of services offered and delivered was strategic and in line with its mandate and policy space. With regard to the open data policy and how it related to UNEP-Live, work was in progress, and an additional open data portal had been set up to enable Member States and the public to download information on all UNEP-led projects. With regard to the cost savings expected from the reform, it was important to bear in mind that reform-related savings often took two or three years to be realized after an initial period of cost increases. As for remarks that the reforms should respect the wishes of Member States, it was clear that they would and that the work of the United Nations would respond to Member State requests.

(c) Implementation of Environment Assembly decision 4/2

63. The representative of the secretariat drew attention to a document entitled “Implementation of decision UNEP/EA.4/2 – Provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly” (UNEP/CPR/146/3), which presented a preliminary mapping exercise aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, in line with Environment Assembly decision 4/2.

64. Representatives of the Governance Affairs Office and the Law Division delivered a presentation on the implementation by the secretariat of Environment Assembly decision 4/2. The presentation focused on the content of paragraphs 9 to 13 of that decision, which related to a review to be undertaken by the Committee for the development of proposals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Environment Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, for consideration by the Assembly at its fifth session. The presentation also outlined the content of document UNEP/CPR/146/3, which set out a preliminary mapping exercise developed by the secretariat to support the review process pursuant to paragraph 11 of decision 4/2.

65. The presenters emphasized that the mapping exercise was structured around each of the elements of paragraph 10 of decision 4/2, and that it drew from a review by the secretariat of current practices, from the rules of procedure and resolutions of the Environment Assembly and from Governing Council decisions. The document also presented guiding questions to facilitate inputs from Member States and stakeholders, to be submitted through an online template by 19 July 2019. Based on feedback and a further analysis of the practices of other intergovernmental organizations, the secretariat would produce, by 16 September 2019, an input paper for consideration by the subcommittee at its sixth annual meeting on 7 October 2017, when the Chair of the Committee was expected to propose a consensual process for the review, including timelines. Additional work would be carried out in the lead-up to the seventh annual subcommittee meeting, when there would be two days of stock-taking of the review process. Finally, the Environment Assembly would consider the matter at its fifth session, to be held from 22 to 26 February 2021.

66. In the ensuing discussion, representatives thanked the secretariat for the mapping exercise document and the presentation on the review process, which included a calendar of events that helped them understand how the process would unfold.

67. Many representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, underscored the importance of the review process, which would help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the governing bodies of UNEP and thereby strengthen UNEP and the Environment Assembly. The representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries suggested that the review process should distinguish between the two main functions of the UNEP governing bodies, namely, that of providing strategic guidance and making decisions on environmental matters, and that of overseeing the work of UNEP, in order to examine how the two functions could more effectively and efficiently be performed by the relevant governing bodies.

68. Support was expressed for a number of issues raised in the mapping exercise document, including the need to review the practices of other United Nations entities, some of which had gone through similar exercises to streamline their operations; the need to enable stakeholders to provide input to the review process; the need to take into account the work being undertaken pursuant to Environment Assembly resolution 4/22, on implementation and follow-up to Environment Assembly resolutions, when considering monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the programme of work and budget and Assembly resolutions; and the need to clearly identify the roles of the UNEP governing bodies.

69. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, suggested that the input paper to be considered by the subcommittee on 7 October 2019 should mention paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of decision 4/2, which related to the format, agenda, theme and outcomes of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly and were relevant to the review process. He further requested the secretariat to clarify how Environment Assembly resolutions could be better aligned with the preparation of the programme of work and budget and the use of the Environment Fund.

70. Another representative suggested that, in addition to addressing internal governance issues during the fifth Environment Assembly session, it was very important that Member States build on the consensus achieved by the ad hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/277 to further define the role of the Environment Assembly and UNEP and to ensure the adoption of a strong political declaration in 2022, in line with the recommendations of the ad hoc open-ended working group, in conjunction with the United Nations high-level meeting to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary and commemorate the creation of UNEP.

71. Several representatives suggested that, before devising possible solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the UNEP governing bodies, there was a need to identify the specific problems that needed to be fixed. In that context, one representative encouraged Member States to examine a 2019 independent expert report commissioned by the Nordic countries, entitled “International environmental governance: accomplishments and way forward”, which could help to enhance their understanding of the issues at stake.

72. One representative said that any review process of the governing bodies of UNEP should be based on a detailed, factual and robust assessment of such bodies, stressing that no evidence existed that the bodies were ineffective or inefficient. At the same time, she suggested that the manner in which the draft resolutions of the Environment Assembly were presented and negotiated could be improved, for instance by ensuring that the resolutions were linked to the themes of sessions and were complementary to the UNEP programme of work. Another representative noted that the Environment Assembly had already acknowledged the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness and had agreed to take specific steps in that regard. A third representative said that there was always room to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of UNEP governing bodies, in particular with regard to the strategic guidance they provided to UNEP, their influence over the international environmental agenda and their oversight role in the implementation of the UNEP programme of work and of Environment Assembly resolutions.

73. Several representatives drew attention to paragraph 14 of decision 4/2, which requested the Executive Director to develop an action plan for the implementation of paragraph 88 of “The future we want” for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its fifth session, and enquired about the timeline for the production of the plan. One representative encouraged the secretariat to promptly develop the plan and the background documentation to prepare for the commemoration of the creation of UNEP referenced in the mapping exercise document.

74. Many representatives said that they would provide comments in writing to the secretariat by the 19 July 2019 deadline. Two other representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, requested that the deadline be extended to enable further consultation on the mapping exercise document and the review process.

75. One representative cautioned against the secretariat collecting Member State inputs at such an early stage of the review process, as that could lead to a narrowing of the debate on ensuring alignment with national positions. Another representative disagreed with the view that it was too early for Member States to be involved in the process and suggested that the process should be open, inclusive and transparent.

76. Responding to the comments, the Executive Director said that the secretariat had taken note of the issues raised. The representative of the secretariat thanked representatives for their useful feedback and underscored that the secretariat was simply mapping the situation and would welcome any input from Member States, not only on the guiding questions included in the mapping exercise document, but on any other issues that they felt should be addressed in the review process. The online template would be circulated in the coming weeks to enable them to provide their inputs by 19 July 2019. The review process was very transparent and open, and the secretariat had no intention of attributing comments to specific countries or regions, but would simply reflect their ideas. With regard to the identification of issues or problems that the review process should address, she encouraged Member States to examine the related analyses and reports as appropriate. As for the implementation plan for paragraph 88 of “The future we want”, the secretariat was holding internal consultations and would update the Committee at its 147th meeting.

77. In closing, the Chair encouraged representatives to provide input to the mapping exercise document to the secretariat by 19 July 2019 in order to ensure a successful review process.

(d) Implementation of Environment Assembly resolution 4/22

78. The Chair drew attention to a note entitled “Options paper for an improved framework for reporting on implementation of UN Environment Assembly resolutions” (UNEP/CPR/146/4), produced by the secretariat pursuant to Environment Assembly resolution 4/22.

79. The representative of the secretariat presented the key highlights of the options paper (UNEP/CPR/146/4), which described the existing reporting regime for the implementation of Environment Assembly resolutions and presented three options for an improved and integrated reporting framework, bearing in mind that, unlike the programme of work, resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly did not incorporate metrics for progress reporting. The three options were distinct in the degree to which reporting on the resolutions was integrated into reporting on the

programme and budget; the frequency of reporting; and the reporting format used, but no additional resources would be required for the implementation of any of the options.

80. The options paper also described current practices used to monitor the implementation of the programme of work, and a preliminary proposal to develop a new monitoring mechanism to track and assess the implementation of Environment Assembly resolutions within the framework of the programme of work, which, unlike the integrated reporting framework, was expected to require additional resources.

81. With regard to next steps, he invited Member States to write to the secretariat to indicate, by 30 June 2019, which of the three integrated reporting framework options they preferred. On the basis of feedback received, the secretariat would produce a revised version of the paper, including a plan for implementation, for consideration by the Committee at its 147th meeting. At that meeting, the secretariat would also present a proposal for a monitoring mechanism to track and assess the implementation of Environment Assembly resolutions.

82. In the ensuing discussion, representatives thanked the secretariat for the mapping exercise document and welcomed the progress made in the implementation of resolution 4/22.

83. Two representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, enquired about the proposed focus of the reporting framework for resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly at its fourth session and to be adopted at future sessions, and said that resolutions adopted at previous sessions should also be covered. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, further suggested that reporting should focus not only on the implementation of resolutions by UNEP, but also by Member States and others, tracked through voluntary reporting.

84. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, agreed that it would be very useful to track the implementation of resolutions by Member States and other stakeholders, although there was a need to be realistic about reporting by actors other than UNEP. In that context, he suggested that a step-wise approach could be used, in which UNEP initially relied on information readily available from existing reporting mechanisms, such as the reporting systems for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and multilateral environmental agreements, and then moved to a more ambitious and comprehensive reporting scheme later on.

85. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for a reporting mechanism that refrained from further burdening the secretariat and that used existing data collection and reporting systems as much as possible. He suggested that the secretariat should integrate the workstreams on the monitoring mechanism and the reporting framework, and should develop a calendar to request feedback from the Committee on both workstreams. The representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries further suggested that the implementation of decision 4/2 and of resolution 4/22 should be considered in tandem, including with a view to providing further guidance for resolutions to be prepared so as to facilitate their follow-up.

86. With regard to the options for an integrated reporting framework set out in the options paper, many representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that more information was needed on how the three different options presented in the paper addressed the key challenges identified therein and how they related to the proposed monitoring mechanism. Nevertheless, one representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries voiced his tentative preference for option 2, while two others voiced their preference for options 2 and 3, respectively.

87. Two representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that the secretariat should continue to brief Member States on the implementation of the programme of work and Environment Assembly resolutions in subcommittee meetings, and suggested that such briefings, which were included only in one of the integrated reporting framework options, should be included in all options.

88. With regard to the proposed monitoring mechanism, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for the proposal to build on a reporting tool linked to the UNEP Programme Information and Management System and expressed the hope that, over time, system users could access individual activities and projects through an online browsing tool.

89. Two representatives suggested that resolution 4/22 did not call for more information but rather for information to be made more easily accessible, stressing that a key aspect of the monitoring mechanism called for in the resolution related to the development of a dedicated webpage that would enable Member States and others to easily access information on the implementation of all resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly, including through links to the resolutions and to existing

reports. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, asked the secretariat to clarify when it planned to set up the dedicated webpage.

90. One representative suggested that the monitoring mechanism, in the form of a webpage that collected updated information on every resolution adopted by the Environment Assembly, could be used as a live reporting tool on the implementation of all resolutions. Another representative suggested that the monitoring mechanism should include an online tool through which Member States could provide feedback to the secretariat on their implementation of resolutions.

91. Responding to comments, the representative of the secretariat thanked representatives for their feedback. The secretariat had taken note of their remarks and would consider them in the next iteration of the options paper, including requests for more detailed information on the implications of the three integrated reporting framework options and on questions related to the possible inclusion of all Environment Assembly resolutions in the reporting framework. He clarified that Member States would indeed be able to provide information on their implementation of resolutions through voluntary reporting, and reassured Member States that the secretariat was considering the monitoring mechanism in tandem with the reporting framework. The monitoring mechanism could be an excellent tool for the secretariat to provide updated reports and obtain feedback from Member States on the implementation of resolutions.

92. In closing, the Chair encouraged Member States to write to the secretariat by 30 June to indicate which integrated reporting framework option they preferred, as the secretariat would be preparing a final proposal for an integrated reporting framework on the basis of their inputs.

(e) Implementation of Environment Assembly resolution 4/23

93. The Chair drew attention to a document entitled “Proposed composition of a Steering Committee for the Global Environment Outlook” (UNEP/CPR/146/10), which had been prepared by the secretariat pursuant to Environment Assembly resolution 4/23.

94. Two representatives of the secretariat made a presentation on the implementation of resolution 4/23, which related to the approval by the Committee of the members of a steering committee that would prepare a document outlining options for the future of the Global Environment Outlook process for consideration by the Environment Assembly at its fifth session, in line with paragraph 6 of resolution 4/23. They presented the list of the proposed members and the tentative work programme of the steering committee, clarifying that the name of one expert from the German Environmental Assessment Agency should have been added to the list of proposed experts (UNEP/CPR/146/10), as she had been nominated before the deadline of 30 May 2019.

95. In the ensuing discussion, representatives thanked the nominees for making themselves available and thanked the secretariat for the information presented. Several representatives had no objection to the proposed list of experts, but inquired about the criteria used to select them and the efforts made to ensure gender and geographical balance in the steering committee.

96. One representative said that it would have been helpful to know the sectors and organizations of all nominees to ensure the appropriate range of experience in the steering committee, and wondered whether alternates, or more than one member per country, could be selected in the event of any member’s inability to attend a given meeting. Another representative asked the secretariat to specify in the list of proposed experts that one of the experts had been nominated by the European Union.

97. Several representatives expressed support for extending the steering committee nomination period to achieve a better gender and geographical balance. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, suggested that a cut-off date for additional nominations should be set and that the work of the steering committee should not be delayed pending confirmation of additional nominations.

98. With regard to the Global Environment Outlook reports, two representatives said that much greater public visibility should be given to the reports and suggested enhancing the format of future reports to improve their attractiveness and readability, including through the production of easy-to-read versions for students and the general public and through multi-media products such as cartoons and animated films.

99. Responding to comments, the representative of the secretariat said that the latter had followed the nomination process mandated in the annex to resolution 4/23 and had selected the 25 proposed experts from 40 nominations received by 30 May 2019, the deadline set out in the annex, taking into account the need for gender and geographical balance. The annex to resolution 4/23 provided an opportunity for the secretariat to accept late nominations at the discretion of the steering committee, however, and since many more nominations had been received after 30 May 2019, including from

females and underrepresented regions, the secretariat would seek to achieve greater geographical and gender balance at the first call of the steering committee, scheduled for July 2019.

100. Following the discussion, the Committee approved the list of 25 steering committee members set out in document UNEP/CPR/146/10, as orally amended, on the understanding that at its first call, the steering committee would consider additional nominations submitted after 30 May 2019 with a view to achieving greater gender and geographical balance.

Agenda item 8

Back to basics: a road map for strengthened foundational controls and principles for management and administration

101. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a road map document entitled “Back to basics: a road map for strengthened foundational controls and principles for management and administration” (UNEP/CPR/146/5), which described steps taken by the secretariat to strengthen the management of UNEP in response to the audit of its official travel by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

102. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on efforts undertaken by UNEP to strengthen its internal management capacities, policies and processes following an OIOS audit of its official travel, which had affected the image of UNEP and brought to light inefficiencies in some of the organization’s internal systems. In response to the audit report, UNEP had engaged in pragmatic interventions, informed by well-known management principles, to ensure that clear and solid systems and frameworks were in place and adhered to by all staff, with a view to improving results delivery. The back-to-basics model reflected in the road map would create scope for establishing best practices, reinforcing the role of corporate services, and improving transparency, accountability and credibility. The model encompassed five lines of defence, namely (a) re-establishing the right tone at the top to create a culture of accountability and transparency, including through increased communication on management issues; (b) re-training and re-sensitizing staff on their roles as gatekeepers and custodians of UNEP policies; (c) developing new policies and guidelines and, with the help of a consultant, benchmarking best practices across United Nations entities and public sector partners to learn from them; (d) partnering with auditors and the Evaluation Office to benefit from external reviews; and (e) improving communication and reporting of results, including through a new peer-review mechanism for the assessment of UNEP projects globally.

103. With regard to the implementation of the 14 recommendations contained in the OIOS audit report on the official travel of UNEP, further progress had been made, including through the issuance of a new travel policy, a policy on anti-fraud and anti-corruption, and a newsletter on creating a culture of results; the achievement of a 40 per cent reduction in senior management travel costs in the first quarter of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018; the clearing of 99.5 per cent of the outstanding balances on conferences with the United Nations Office at Nairobi; and the settling of 98 per cent of open travel advances.

104. In the ensuing discussion, representatives thanked the secretariat for the information provided and commended UNEP for the road map (UNEP/CPR/146/5) and for the progress achieved in addressing the issues identified by the auditors. They requested the secretariat to continue to brief Member States on past and ongoing audits and evaluations and on UNEP responses to them.

105. One representative welcomed the engagement with auditors and the new peer review mechanism to prevent a recurrence of the issues identified in the official travel audit, suggesting that there was a need for UNEP to re-focus on its core mandate by ensuring that all activities, including travel, were connected to its programme of work. Another representative asked whether the secretariat had engaged a consultant to undertake the benchmarking set out in the road map, stressing that it was important to make use of external advice on management issues.

106. Responding to comments, the representative of the secretariat said that the hiring of a consultant to conduct benchmarking had been delayed owing to resource constraints, the need to prioritize the private sector strategy, and changes resulting from the United Nations system reform. The situation had, however, been stabilized and the secretariat hoped to develop terms of reference for the consultant in July and August of 2019 and to finalize the work on benchmarking by the end of the year. She also reassured representatives that the secretariat would continue to brief Member States on audit-related issues and management processes.

Agenda item 9**Report of the subcommittee**

107. The Committee took note of a document entitled “Chair’s report of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives” (UNEP/CPR/146/6).

Agenda item 10**Other matters**

108. No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 11**Closure of the meeting**

109. The meeting was declared closed at 5.25 p.m. on Thursday, 20 June 2019.
