



**6th Annual meeting of the Subcommittee
of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP
7-11 October 2019**

**Opening statement behalf of
the European Union and its Member States**

Chair, distinguished colleagues, it is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement. - TBC]

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Executive Director and the UNEP Secretariat and naturally also the chair for the extensive preparatory work for this important meeting ahead of us. The Annual Subcommittee meeting is a critical governance tool for the implementation and review of the Medium Term Strategy and the Programme of Work and Budget of UNEP and hence for the Members States' oversight of the work and accountability of the Secretariat.

The EU and its Member States look forward to fruitful and in-depth discussions during this week. At this stage, we would like to set out a number of key points guiding our priorities for this meeting.

Having approached the last quarter of the implementation of 2018-2019 Programme of Work and Budget, and close to the middle point of the Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021, we would like to congratulate UNEP for the good results, and note with appreciation that many targets have already been fully or partially met. We will be seeking a thorough discussion on targets that are not met

to conclude on necessary remedy actions as well as on improved measures for reporting and monitoring. This meeting is thus also instrumental for the implementation of the Programme in the next biennium and the development of the new Strategy. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ongoing UN Development System reform provide important frameworks for the work ahead. So far, we are pleased about the progress UNEP is making on implementing the reform and we look forward to discussing this process and the way forward in depth.

The EU and its Member States are concerned about the widening gap in the Environment Fund. We note that the earmarked funds, while very important, do not and will not ensure a balanced and efficient implementation of our commonly agreed Programme of Work. With only half of Member States contributing to the Environment Fund, we fall short of our joint commitment to strengthen UNEP by – amongst others – providing voluntary financial resources that would correspond to the universal membership in this organisation. The EU and its Member States would like to call on all Member States to contribute to the Environment Fund with respect naturally to their national capabilities. We would also like UNEP to expedite efforts in reaching out to all Member States and other potential donors to encourage relevant funding decisions.

The EU and its Member States would like that this meeting makes a significant progress on agreeing the reporting framework and monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget and UNEA resolutions, including necessary web-based tools. A prompt deployment of improved reporting and monitoring is urgently needed, as decided by Member States in the 4th meeting of the Environment Assembly, while at the same time integrating as far as possible the reporting with the Programme of Work and Budget to avoid unnecessary additional burdens of reporting on the Secretariat.

UNEA-4 decided on yet another important mandate that this meeting has to make good progress on, namely the review of the governing bodies of UNEP. The EU and its Member States are in favour of a thorough and solid review that would lead to adjustments improving the efficiency and effectiveness of UNEA and its governing bodies, for the benefit of us all. However, we are equally mindful of the delicate balance achieved six years ago, when the governance of UNEP was decided upon and we thus look forward to an inclusive process respectful of the mandate given by UNEA-4 and avoiding an unnecessary reopening of difficult debates that might jeopardise optimal solutions. In the first place, we would like this Subcommittee meeting to agree on and approve a roadmap with clear milestones that would guide the CPR work towards concrete improvements to be agreed by UNEA-5.

The EU and its Member States appreciate the roadmap for the development of the Medium Term Strategy 2022-2025. It will be of utmost importance that the process which we will inaugurate during this meeting is inclusive and builds on relevant lessons learnt and the recent scientific reports, mindful of developments in the international environmental governance and the opportunities of the UN reforms. We are determined to work towards a streamlined and results-oriented Strategy, responding to the challenges, which UNEP faces 50 years from its creation.

Mister Chair,

We trust in your skilful and inclusive handling of the meeting. We would like that this meeting truly makes progress on the tasks given to us by the Environment Assembly. To facilitate that, we would like to propose that the meeting takes necessary decisions that are documented and subsequently well implemented. We are fully confident that the Chair and the Bureau of the CPR will steer the discussions to concrete actionable outcomes.

Mister Chair, distinguished delegates,

Be assured of the collaborative spirit and the full support of the EU and its Member States.

I thank you.