

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Dmitry Maksimychev,
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the International Organizations in Nairobi
at the meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
of UNEP**

Honorable Chairman, Honorable Madam Executive Director,

Dear Colleagues!

Russia attaches great importance to the global achievement of sustainable development as the fundamental concept of development of mankind. Over the last thirty years, Russia has consistently supported the efforts of the international community towards sustainable development.

Our efforts and achievements at the national level in the pursuit of all the Sustainable Development Goals approved by the 2015 Global Summit within all the three pillars of sustainable development are well known.

Moreover, we continuously expand and enhance our role of donor of international development assistance steadily increasing the resources allocated for that purpose.

Within the environmental dimension of sustainable development, we actively and responsibly participate in all the major multilateral environmental instruments and honour in good faith the commitments and obligations we have taken.

We support UNEP and UNEA as the “leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment” as defined in the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference “The Future We Want”.

We recognize the importance of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on Human Environment, which decided to establish UNEP. Therefore, we also support the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference as mandated

in UN GA resolution 73/333 in the form of a “high-level UN meeting” to be funded from extrabudgetary sources. We appreciate the offer of Sweden to host the commemorative high-level UN meeting in Stockholm and provide the required extrabudgetary funding.

UNEA-5 is clearly directed by the UN General Assembly to prepare a “political declaration” which will serve as the outcome of the Stockholm+50 commemoration. This task is to be carried out by the CPR as the intersessional governing body of UNEP in the lead up to UNEA-5 in accordance with the Road Map, adopted at its 149th session.

As to the scope of the political declaration, we strongly favour a concise political document of a broad nature reaffirming the commitment of the international community to timely implementation of the environment-related goals of the global agenda and expressing its desire to continue to work together to address the new challenges. If we go into excessive details on certain issues, we may duplicate the work of the existing legal instruments (climate, biodiversity, etc.) thus creating parallel tracks of negotiations, which is impractical and politically wrong.

Since the proponents of the Stockholm commemorative meeting insist that it is supposed to be devoted solely to environmental issues, UNEP/UNEA as the highest global environmental body (as described by Rio+20), is the only organ that can mandate it. It is the responsibility of UNEP as the “leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda”. Therefore, no decision by the UN General Assembly is required.

In fact, UNEA itself may take the shape of Stockholm+50 commemorative meeting if its membership so desires. This, however, will require a decision of UNEA-5. That option would greatly simplify the organization of the meeting since all the rules of UNEA will automatically apply.

The commemoration of Stockholm+50 in the form of UNEA will also clearly define the place of the meeting within the existing structure of a broader

sustainable development process without disturbing the balance among its three pillars.

We do not support the idea of having a full-fledged UN conference on environment as proposed by some partners because, conceptually, this will distort the philosophy of sustainable development and take us back 50 years to the pre-Rio situation of silo approach to environment. The entire thirty-year-long Rio process has proven beyond any doubt that sustainable development must be addressed comprehensively, as a whole, without artificial and arbitrary prioritization of any of the three legs on which it stands.

Neither do we support the idea of having a “UN conference” on sustainable development outside the existing elaborate mechanism of SDGs review that consists of the High-Level Political Forum, the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC with its subsidiary machinery.

We firmly believe that UNEP/UNEA in its current shape has all the necessary means and powers to perform the duties the international community has entrusted it with. We, collectively, have the obligation to make it work as an essential part of the global effort to achieve sustainable development.