

GRULAC Intervention

151st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

14 September 2020

Chaired by: **H.E. Fernando Estellita Lins de Salvo Coimbra**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil

Item 5. Consultation on the Medium-Term Strategy 2021-2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023.

Thank you, Chair. It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of GRULAC. First of all, we would like to thank Madame Inger Andersen for her thorough report to this Committee and also to acknowledge the work carried out by the programme during this period, especially in regards to the COVID-19 response. Looking forward, we appreciate the document entitled *Consultation on the Medium-Term Strategy 2021-2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023*, which gives us an opportunity to discuss about the work and goals of UNEP, as well as to contribute to reaching our common aim of having a healthier environment and achieving sustainable development.

After reflecting on this document, our regional group would like to present the following suggestions and express the following:

1. We deem it absolutely necessary for the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) to strengthen UNEP's ability to assist Members States, in particular developing ones, in the implementation of their national environmental policies and international agreed-upon commitments, especially the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. In many paragraphs, including the MTS itself, we read language that seems to relate to the overcome debate on "planetary boundaries". We consider that the language should be aligned with consensually agreed-upon languages and the strategy should deal with consensual topics.
3. "*Nature-based solutions*" is a concept that still lacks a universally agreed-upon definition. Let me be clear: Our region is not against exploring and/or promoting the work with the concept, but it is important that an intergovernmental definition be outlined. We respectfully ask the Secretariat to present us with a conceptual paper in order to open the much-needed space for this discussion towards UNEA-5.
4. GRULAC agrees with raising environmental ambition with the UN System through UN Reform. While we acknowledge that environmental challenges and climate change can have an impact on issues of world stability, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Any involvement by UNEP in the Security Council's activities, including peace operations, should only happen when invited or mandated by the Council itself, and not on initiative of UNEP. For this reason, including this issue in UNEP's strategy is far from adequate.
5. GRULAC reiterates that UNEP's actions on climate and biodiversity should complement and be in support of those agreed/upon in the realm of UNFCCC and CBD, so it remains crucial to ensure that the MTS be aligned with the guidance

emanated from these and other MEAs. UNEP should respect their mandate and complement their work.

Mr. Chair,

GRULAC recognizes the effort of the Secretariat in carrying out consultations and in elaborating this Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work. Achieving a more effective, inclusive, transparent and accountable UNEP will benefit all of us. We are looking forward to continue this ongoing discussion and to make any constructive contributions in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and The Future We Want.

Thank you.

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