

## UNEP DED Opening Remarks

### Orientation Session for New Members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

HYBRID Meeting; Conference Room #4

Monday, 26 September 2022 at 10:00 am

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1. Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,
2. On behalf of UNEP and the Executive Director, it is a pleasure to welcome you all to this special session, which we hold once a year, to give orientation to new members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives – the CPR.
3. As I welcome new members of the CPR, I am also pleased to recognise familiar faces in the room and names of colleagues who have joined online.
4. Despite the setbacks occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, our collective resolve did not diminish to provide global leadership on environmental issues. It is into this role that you have been assigned by your governments and called upon to work with the United Nations Environment Programme to continuously provide leadership that safeguards our environment. 2022 has been a critical year for UNEP as it commemorated 50 years of its existence. It was a time for reflection. While we celebrated accomplishments so far achieved over the years, we also took cognisance of issues of critical environmental concern. To this end, UNEP has embarked on new strategy to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, loss of nature and biodiversity, and pollution. You will hear more about our work throughout the day.
5. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the fifth session of UNEA was segmented into two parts: UNEA 5.1 held in February 2021, was fully virtual, and dealt primarily with UNEP's Programme of Work (2022-2023) and Budget; and the resumed fifth session, UNEA 5.2, held in February 2022, under a hybrid format, adopted 14 resolutions, one decision and one Ministerial Declaration. UNEA also held its first special session for the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of UNEP (UNEP@50) on 2 and 3 March and adopted a Political Declaration.

6. UNEA resolution 5/14 to “End Plastic Pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument” marked the climax of multilateralism and encapsulated the mood of the session. A dedicated secretariat for this process has since been established and preparations are underway for the first Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) later this year in Punta del Este, Uruguay.
7. UNEP played a significant role during the commemoration of Stockholm+50, and the conference of parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions. We look forward to member states’ continued leadership on the environment as we progress towards Climate Change COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt; and the second part of COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be hosted in Montreal, Canada this year in December, under China’s Presidency. All these present great opportunities to reiterate our commitment to people and planet, as well as our global ambitions.
8. As you shall shortly learn from prepared briefings, the CPR is an integral and essential part of UNEP’s governance with the responsibility to take strategic decisions and provide political guidance. We therefore welcome you all to this exciting role of being part of decision-making and providing leadership on global environmental policy.
9. We look forward to our continued collaboration in delivering transformational change that is aligned to UNEP’s mandate.
10. Thank you and wish you a productive meeting.