

Africa Group Closing Statement on OEWG-2

Thank you, Madam Chair

I am delivering this speech on behalf of the African region.

2. First of all, we would like to thank you, Madam Chair, for helping us navigate through the crucial stage of this process aimed at establishing a science policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention. We would also like to thank the Jordanian government for making this meeting a success and the Kenyan government for its support. We appreciate all the arrangements that went into enabling the participation of delegates from low and middle-income countries, and the secretariat for the excellent organization of the meeting. We would also like to thank the co-facilitators of the various contact groups for delivering on the mandates assigned to them.

Distinguished delegates,

3. We have reached the end of another crucial milestone in our collective effort to deliver on the mandates assigned to us by the UNEA Resolution 5/8 on establishing the science policy panel. We began with a skeleton document which has now been fleshed up into becoming a draft proposal. Congratulations to all delegates on this achievement.

Distinguished delegates,

4. We, however, still have more work to do to finalize the proposal as we head towards the intergovernmental meeting. To continue the momentum of the work we have achieved this week, we support robust intersessional work that is inclusive of all African countries, to deliberate on the outstanding issues and documents. Among the crucial issues that need to be addressed between now and OEWG 3 are the issues of capacity building, conflict of interest, financial issues, and the institutional arrangement for the new panel and its operationalization. In this regard, the region anticipates more work in the inter-session on the issue of capacity building as reflected in the report of the OEWG 1.2 (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/7 Annex II) to add capacity building as the fifth function of the Panel.

5. Consequently, we would like to emphasize the need for regional preparatory sessions in advance of the OEWG3 intersessionally, to articulate and refine our ideas. We encourage inter-regional, and multi-stakeholder consultations to further narrow differences and create common understandings on the features and functions of the new panel.

6. We urge for the facilitation of equitable participation of all African countries inclusive of all low- and middle-income countries in the intersessional period, including language translation services.

7. As I conclude, Madam Chair, We hope that the current session of the OEWG has laid a good foundation for further work that would enable us to draw the roadmap to an efficient, and operational Panel.

8. Finally, I wish you all safe journeys and look forward to seeing you all at OEWG3.

9. Till then we wish all the best for the festive season and a Happy New Year!!!