

## **Regional Facilitators' Statement at the Opening of the Sixth Session of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives**

Thank you chair,

My name is David Munene with the Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) and one of the two regional facilitators of the UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa. This statement is on behalf of the six UNEP major groups and stakeholders' regions through their respective regional facilitators.

Excellences, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

UNEA-6 happens at a time when the three planetary environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are no longer abstract theories, but imminent threats whose impacts are driving global instability and loss of lives and livelihoods beyond reversal. On the one hand, each of these threats carries different weights in each region. On the other hand, these threats are no respecters of territorial and geographical boundaries despite the variations in contextual impacts.

The sixth OECPR of the highest decision-making body on the environment globally, provides a unique opportunity to break from the status quo. It is a chance to transcend barriers, affirm our shared humanity, and recognize equal rights across regions. In our deliberations on draft resolutions, we must be mindful that every word holds consequences for those least represented among us.

The UNEP major groups and stakeholders have found common ground despite our regional differences. We have established a united front that appreciates, and is painfully aware of the sufferings of the excluded and most vulnerable within our communities. We have reached out to member states and worked collaboratively with you in our regions and will continue to do so. We have evidence that working with all the nine UNEP major groups and stakeholders within our regions grants us greater latitude to address the crises collaboratively.

For example, in Africa, we have established outstanding working relations with the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and have provided valuable, expert input to the regional positions. In Europe, we have found means to engage intentionally and meaningfully to reach grassroots-driven and internationally impactful solutions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we have established a model for working closely with member states and respective governments to amplify regional issues at the global level and demonstrate working, workable solutions. In West Asia, we have been making great strides towards building collaborative structures and a formal regional forum of environmental ministers would be a significant stride. In the Asia Pacific region, we have worked closely with the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific to prioritize and act on environmental issues.

Even then, we still need significant support as regional facilitators to execute our roles and to work more closely with you. We ask you to open your doors even in regional consultations and briefings during the OECPR-6 and the UNEA-6. We remind all member states representatives, individually and collectively, that without multilateral thinking and an inclusive process, dismal results will be achieved.

Excellences, distinguished delegates, our commitment is not mere rhetoric; it's a call to action. UNEA-6 resolutions must translate into tangible results.

Lastly, we wish to congratulate Morocco for their inclusive leadership since election as UNEA-6 president and wish them all the best. We, in advance, express our deepest appreciation to all the member states for your objective, open-minded, and progressive engagement during this and the coming week.

Asanteni sana!