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166<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives  
13 June 2024  
10:00 – 13:00, 15:00 – 18:00 (GMT+3)  
Conference Room 2 and Interactio Platform  
Hybrid meeting

### Chair's Summary

*Note: This Chair's summary complements the detailed meeting report prepared by the UN Office at Nairobi in advance for adoption at the next meeting of the Committee. All pre-meeting and post-meeting documents, including statements provided in writing by Member States, are available [here](#).*

#### **Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

1. H. E. Mr. Firas Khouri, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), opened the 166<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR on 13 June 2024 at 10:00 (GMT+3). The newly arrived representatives were welcomed, and the departing representatives were bid farewell.
2. A minute of silence was observed in memory of Dr. Klaus Töpfer, former Executive Director of UNEP.

#### **Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda of the 166<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

3. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda of the 166<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CPR, as set out in [UNEP/CPR/166/1/Rev.1](#).

#### **Agenda item 3: Adoption of the draft minutes of the 164<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, including its resumed meeting.**

4. The Committee adopted the draft minutes of the 164<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, as set out in [UNEP/CPR/165/2](#).

#### **Agenda item 4: Adoption of the draft minutes of the 165<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

5. The Committee adopted the draft minutes of the 165<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, as set out in [UNEP/CPR/166/2](#).

#### **Agenda item 5: Report of the Executive Director to the 166<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**

6. The Committee was invited to consider the Executive Director's [Quarterly Report to the 166th Meeting of the CPR - January to March 2024](#) and a [statement](#) by the Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Andersen, providing an update on key developments relevant to UNEP for the period January to March 2024.

7. Delegations that took the floor<sup>1</sup> welcomed the statement and the report of the Executive Director and provided the following comments in summary:
- a. Welcomed UNEP's engagement at global and regional levels, including UNEP's support to the [African Ministerial Conference on the Environment \(AMCEN\)](#).
  - b. Suggested that future Quarterly Reports should refer to the repositioning of the United Nations Development system instead of UN reform, as the former is clear.
  - c. Emphasized on the importance to fully implement the [15 resolutions](#) adopted at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6).
  - d. Thanked the Secretariat for preparing a [draft paper outlining observations, lessons learned and recommendations from UNEA-6](#) and further noted the on-going informal exchange which aims to identify key UNEA-6 lessons learned that find consensus amongst the membership, as a basis for further consideration and finalization at the 11th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR to be held from 8 to 12 July 2024, for final adoption at the CPR at its 167th meeting in September 2024.
  - e. Noted that the sixth meeting of the open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives held in February 2024 was overburdened with a high number of resolutions, and hence did not have enough time to find consensus and further hoped that this issue can be addressed as part of the lessons learned and recommendations that feed into future UNEA sessions.
  - f. Took note of the update related to the UNEP Foresight Report and requested clarification on when Member States would have an opportunity to comment on the full draft of the report.
  - g. Enquired on actions taken by the Secretariat to further outreach to persons from marginalized communities particularly those living with disabilities.
  - h. Took note of the report on [Used Heavy Duty Vehicles and the Environment](#) and queried on the findings and outcome of the report and whether there were any recommendations made, particularly in relation to developing countries.
  - i. Acknowledged the importance of the webinar on “Tackling the Loss and Damage Fund: Dialogue on the Fund’s Operationalization, Challenges and Opportunities” co-organized by UNEP, and expressed the wish for the full operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund in the near future.
  - j. Welcomed UNEP’s contribution and efforts made in preparing a comprehensive report on the environmental impact of the conflict in Gaza, despite the obstacles faced, and called for its timely publication.
  - k. Requested the Secretariat to step up action in backing Yemen so as to avoid the damage that may occur due to the various disasters.
  - l. Called for update from the Executive Director, at an appropriate moment, on the development of the revised gender policy for UNEP and its subsequent discussion in the CPR.
  - m. Urged UNEP to improve geographical balance among its staff and further requested that when presenting data on the geographical origin of UNEP staff in future quarterly reports, data for regions be broken down by country, given that within the same region, some countries are over-represented, some are underrepresented, and some are not represented at all.
  - n. Commented on the conclusions and recommendations of the [Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on Environmental Rule of Law](#) and queried whether a virtual meeting is planned on the recommendations for Member States.
  - o. Requested more information on how the Secretariat is implementing the recommendations from the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on Delegation of Authority and Board of Auditors (BOA) interim audit for financial audits of 2023, including non-acceptance of 4 out of the 18 recommendations provided.

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<sup>1</sup> United States of America, Columbia, Costa Rica, Nigeria, European Union, Chile, Algeria, Angola, Canada, State of Palestine, Brazil, Kenya, Japan, Yemen, Finland, Mexico, Netherlands (the Kingdom of the), France, Children and Youth.

- p. Requested the Secretariat to make more information available in future reports on earmarked contributions received, so as to provide a full picture of its budgetary allocation.
  - q. Emphasized the importance of UNEP's reports such as the [Global Resources Outlook](#) and the [Global Waste Management Outlook](#).
  - r. Highlighted the need for strengthening the science-policy interface, sought clarification on how the development of the [Malawi State of Environment and Outlook Report](#) is linked to capacity building under the [Global Environment Outlook \(GEO\)](#) process.
  - s. Highlighted the [third session of the Ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention](#), to be held on 17-24 June 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland and expressed readiness to collaborate with all UN Member States for necessary outcomes.
  - t. Welcomed the results of [the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment \(INC-4\)](#) held from 23 to 29 April 2024 in Ottawa, Canada and highlighted the importance of [INC-5](#) to be held from 25 November to 1 December 2024 in Busan, Republic of Korea.
  - u. Urged UNEP to continue to advocate for increased use and engagement of the global youth policy, recognizing the pivotal role of youth in environmental governance, while emphasizing the need for clear rules to avoid conflict of interest with business and industry organizations.
8. The Executive Director thanked delegations for their guidance and provided the following clarifications in summary:
- a. Updated that the Secretariat will hold a special event on the Foresight Report, prior to its launch, in the sidelines of the [11<sup>th</sup> Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR](#) and clarified that the draft version of the report is subject to revision based on the feedback received on the [Delphi Survey](#).
  - b. Updated that the Secretariat initiated outreach efforts to sister United Nations agencies with regards to attracting candidates of African descent from the Americas and other regions so as to ensure inclusivity in future recruitments and noted that the Secretariat is rolling out part two of the [Young Talent Pipeline](#) while enhancing diversity at all levels.
  - c. Detailed UNEP's ongoing efforts to regulate vehicle quality standards in collaboration with exporting and importing countries, focusing on environmental and safety standards.
  - d. Acknowledged the need for improved access and facilities for persons with disabilities at UNEP's headquarters and called for adequate budgetary allocations for necessary upgrades.
  - e. With respect to regional representation, assured that comprehensive reporting and transparency will be reflected in future documents and reports.
  - f. Addressed audit concerns, highlighting the critical nature of audits and explaining limitations in revising approved programme works based on audit recommendations, emphasizing adherence to established mandates.
  - g. Clarified that the Secretariat is looking into how to fold the rule of law and environmental justice into the [Montevideo Environmental Law Programme](#) and how it can ensure that regional exchanges on these matters continue.
  - h. Noted that the Secretariat will work to ensure that the AMCEN meeting highlights the importance of elevating linkages to environmental justice.
  - i. Highlighted that the Secretariat will continue to strengthen engagement to further the implementation of [UNEP/EA.6/Res.6](#) on fostering national action to address global environmental challenges through increased cooperation between UNEA, UNEP and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).
  - j. Noted that the Secretariat will provide an update on the gender policy in a future meeting.

- k. Highlighted that the Secretariat will issue a report on the environmental consequences of the situation in Gaza.
- l. Emphasized that the Secretariat will provide briefings in the future on strengthening the science policy interface.
- m. Noted that Under Secretary General's (USGs) are required by the UN Secretary-General to provide updates to Member States on cases of sexual abuse and harassment in their organization. While the caseload at UNEP is minimal, there is continuous monitoring of the issue.

#### **Agenda item 6: UNEA-6 assessment and lessons learned**

- 9. The Chair recalled that the Secretariat prepared a [draft paper outlining observations, lessons learned and recommendations from UNEA-6](#).
- 10. The Co-facilitators<sup>2</sup> of the informal exchange on [UNEA-6 assessment and lessons learned](#) updated the Committee on the outcomes of the informal exchanges held on 4 June and 10 June.
- 11. The Co-facilitators further updated that a continuation of the informal exchange will take place on 2 July with an aim to reaching consensus on a set of key recommendations for further consideration and finalization at the [11th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the CPR](#) to be held from 8 to 12 July 2024 for final adoption at the CPR at its 167th meeting in September 2024.

#### **Agenda item 7: Preparations for COP 16 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

- 12. The Committee was invited to consider a [briefing](#) by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, on the preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties ([UNCCD-COP 16](#)), to be held from 2 to 13 December 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- 13. The briefing was followed by a short presentation by the UNEP Secretariat on how the preparations of UNCCD-COP16 relate to the implementation of UNEP's programme of work and by a statement by the Host Country of UNCCD-COP 16, Saudi Arabia.
- 14. Delegations<sup>3</sup> that took the floor welcomed the briefing and provided the following comments in summary:
  - a. Highlighted resolution [UNEP/EA.6/Res.14](#) on strengthening international efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, focusing on reforestation and demographic trends as main drivers of land degradation and the importance of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in combating desertification, land degradation, and drought.
  - b. Acknowledged that policies should address the main causes of land degradation by going beyond immediate measures to combat drought and promote land restoration.
  - c. Recognized priorities in strengthening agrifood systems and resilience to climate change, delivering gender-responsive actions, reducing poverty, and ensuring food security to avoid economic and food shocks.
  - d. Requested further clarification on the efforts for collaboration between UNEP, UNCCD, and other MEAs such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), especially in light of resolution [UNEP/EA.6/Res.14](#), emphasizing the importance of promoting synergies across

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<sup>2</sup> Netherlands (the Kingdom of the) and Argentina.

<sup>3</sup> Brazil, Columbia, Canada, European Union, Children and Youth.

- interconnected environmental crises.
- e. Suggested integrating pioneering science, technology, and innovation into the UNCCD - COP16 agenda to harness data and research for informed policy and decision-making, highlighting the importance of incorporating various stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and comprehensive solutions.
  - f. Emphasized the critical role of youth in sustainable land management and restoration efforts, recognizing their innovative solutions and fresh perspectives for the planet's long-term health by supporting the creation of green jobs for youth in land restoration and sustainable management.
15. In response, the Secretariat thanked delegations for their comments and provided the following clarifications:
- a. Clarified the ongoing collaboration between UNEP and UNCCD, emphasizing joint efforts and engagement with other stakeholders to integrate the implementation of the [UNEP/EA.6/Res.14](#) resolution into the program of work leveraging science and evidence to drive actionable policies.
  - b. Recognized the pivotal role of women, youth, indigenous people, and local communities at COP16, and highlighted the special and side events such as the People's Day.
  - c. Emphasized the adoption of a new Youth Engagement Strategy and the imminent announcement of Land Heroes during the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.
  - d. Underscored ongoing capacity-building programs for youth negotiators.
  - e. Outlined upcoming initiatives set for COP16.
  - f. Expressed gratitude for supporting [UNCCD's Gender Program](#).

#### **Agenda item 8: Consideration of relevant evaluation reports and audits.**

16. In the absence of new evaluation reports or audits for consideration by the Committee, the Chair closed the item.

#### **Agenda item 9: Report of the Sub-committee.**

17. The Committee of Permanent Representatives endorsed the document [UNEP/CPR/166/7/Rev.1](#) entitled "Draft report of the Subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives" and decided to adopt the following recommendations:
- a. Each presentation on the outcomes of a Conference of the Parties or meetings of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) should be complemented with information on how such outcomes relate to the implementation of UNEP's Programme of Work.
  - b. The Chair and Bureau of the CPR, supported by the secretariat, should develop further guidance on how to prepare future contributions from UNEA to the High-Level Political Forum, taking into account any recommendations deriving from the UNEA-6 lessons learned process.
  - c. The Secretariat should further update the Committee on the foresight work.
  - d. The Secretariat should provide regular updates to the Committee on the development of Global Environmental Data Strategy and on the World Environment Situation Room.

#### **Agenda Item 10: Any other business.**

18. One delegation<sup>4</sup> requested that future briefings on the outcomes of a Conference of the Parties or meetings of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) be included in the agendas of

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<sup>4</sup> Netherlands (The Kingdom of the)

subcommittee meetings rather than CPR quarterly meetings, in the spirit of adhering to the [consensual conclusions pertaining to the implementation of paragraph 41 \(j\)](#) of the Chair's Summary of the 9th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR.

19. While noting the [consensual conclusions pertaining to the implementation of paragraph 41 \(j\)](#) of the Chair's Summary of the 9th annual subcommittee meeting of the CPR, the Secretariat stated that moving forward, all effort will be made to have updates related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other relevant environment-related intergovernmental processes and trends during the meetings of the subcommittee of the CPR.
20. The co-Chair of the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen, Mr. Mihai Constantinescu of Romania, announced that [the sixth meeting of the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen](#) will be held on 26 and 27 June 2024, focusing on updates and a draft roadmap towards 2030, and urged Member States to nominate focal points to attend the meeting.

**Agenda Item 11: Closing of the meeting.**

21. The meeting closed at 16:00 (GMT+3).