

COMMENTS FROM NORWAY ON: Draft Outline Document for the Ministerial Outcome Document of the 2017 UN Environment Assembly

Norway wishes to thank the President of the bureau, H.E. Dr. Gutierrez for the opportunity to comment on the further iteration of draft elements for a negotiated outcome for UNEA-3. We appreciate that he has made every attempt to take on board those comments received thus far. In our view, the draft is moving in the right direction and the elements contained remain a good starting point. The ongoing efforts to ensure a transparent and inclusive process is most commendable.

As Norway has however previously noted, it remains a challenge for us that this consultation process around an outcome document continues to be somewhat apart from, among other things, the work on resolutions for UNEA-3. This is important to ensure a coherence and also, potentially, duplication of efforts.

Norway has already indicated our intention to submit a draft resolution, working with other countries, on marine litter and microplastics. Other countries have also indicated an intention to submit draft resolutions. We believe that this resolution would be central to allowing you to find appropriate language on this issue within the negotiated outcome. We will be submitting a draft outline on such a resolution within the coming days.

In addition, Norway is interested in the issue of anti-microbial resistance (AMR) and the environment. We are eagerly awaiting the launch of the Frontiers Report which includes this issue, among others. The issue of AMR in the context of the environment would greatly benefit from greater political awareness. Norway has been contemplating whether the outcome document from UNEA-3 could be a vehicle to do so. We will also consider whether the issue could be appropriate in the context of other resolutions, but do not see a need for a specific resolution. It is our intention to simply note that the problem of AMR has an environmental element which must be a part of a holistic response. At this point we simply propose a placeholder on this.

Finally, Norway remains committed to working with the President to see the best possible outcome document which is concrete and is a key contribution to the action and solution oriented outcome from UNEA-3. This is a new venture for UNEA 3 and we are learning by doing. One challenge which we see emerging will be to balance the substantial content of an outcome document with the possible mechanisms for consultation and negotiation. Especially if the outcome document is to be completed prior to the Open-Ended CPR. We recognise the superb efforts being put into ensuring all members are able to participate in this process, but achieving a balance may require somewhat more negotiation than consultation, and we would appreciate any feedback from the President on how to achieve this. We are finding it very difficult to respond in detail on issues in the absence of dialogue with other Member States so as to gauge where sensitivities and challenges may lie in the various elements being proposed, and also in the level of detail being proposed. It is important to us to be constructive and assist in building bridges in all multilateral fora, and this is difficult to do without a sense of where the sensitivities and interests of other Member States lie. We anticipate that since the process of negotiating resolutions will be well underway when we receive the zero draft, that this will enable us to make more concrete comments.

