

Subcommittee Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
4 October 2018, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi Gigiri,
Conference Room 4

**Background Document for Agenda Item 2:
Briefing from the Secretariat on the implementation of General Assembly 72/277, entitled
“Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”**

This note serves as a background document for discussions under Agenda Item 2: Briefing from the Secretariat on the implementation of General Assembly 72/277, entitled “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”.

Note to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Towards a Global Pact for the Environment: General Assembly resolution 72/277

1. This note provides an overview of actions undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme to support the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/277 adopted on 10 May 2018 entitled “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”.
2. The resolution sets out three main responsibilities for the Secretary-General and the United Nations Environment Programme: (i) The preparation of a Secretary-General’s report, (ii) the organization of future sessions of the ad hoc open-ended working group (“working group”), and (iii) the establishment of two trust funds.

i) Preparation of the report of the Secretary-General

3. General Assembly resolution 72/277 requested the Secretary-General to prepare a technical and evidence-based report that identifies and assesses possible gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments, with a view to strengthening their implementation (“gap report”). Preparation of this report is the responsibility of the United Nations Environment Programme. The report will primarily be done through a desk review of existing international instruments, in consultation with the secretariats of the Multilateral Environment Agreements.
4. The gap report is expected to address, inter alia, gaps concerning the application of principles of international environmental law; gaps relating to the existing regulatory regimes; gaps relating to the governance structure of international environmental law; and gaps relating to the implementation and effectiveness of international environmental law.
5. It is expected that the report will be made available to Member States and Members of Specialized Agencies as an official document of the General Assembly by no later than **30 November 2018**.

ii) Organization of the sessions of the ad hoc open ended working group

6. The President of the General Assembly has appointed H.E. Amal Mudallali, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations in New York, and H.E. Francisco António Duarte Lopes, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations in New York, as Co-Chairs of the working group.
7. According to General Assembly resolution 72/277, the working group will have one organizational session and several substantive sessions. Pursuant to the working group’s mandate as set out in operative paragraph 2 of the resolution, the substantive sessions are expected to discuss (i) the gap report; (ii) possible options to address possible gaps in

international environmental law and environment-related instruments (iii) the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument; and (iv) recommendations to the General Assembly, which may include the convening of an intergovernmental conference to adopt an international instrument.

8. The Co-Chairs chaired the organizational session at United Nations Headquarters in New York between 5-7 September 2018. At that session, the organizational session decided on the dates of the substantive sessions in Nairobi. The first substantive session will be between 14 to 18 January 2019; the second will be of 3/5 days duration, beginning on 18 March 2019; and the third will also be of 3/5 days duration, beginning on 20 May 2019.
9. A provisional agenda was also agreed at the organizational session, which will be attached to the report of the organizational session. This report is expected to be made available within short.

iii) Funding

10. General Assembly resolution 72/277 clarifies that all activities related to this process should be financed through by voluntary contributions. To this end, the General Assembly has requested the establishment of two voluntary trust funds: (I) A trust fund in support of the process including the secretariat functions; and (II) A trust fund to assist developing countries to attend the sessions of the working group. These two trust funds have already been established.
11. To date, the trust funds have received USD 1,072,748 (EUR 921,000) from the Government of France, and US\$ 500,000 (out of US\$ 1 million pledged) from the European Union.
12. The Secretariat is preparing letters to Member States seeking additional funding for the process through the Trust Funds.
13. The Secretariat will send out Invitations to the first substantive session in November.