

## United States Intervention

UNEP CPR Sub-committee October 4, 2018

### Agenda Item 4 – China-Africa Environmental Cooperation Center

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- Para 26 of the background note and China’s note posted under this agenda item say “other interested parties” and “UNEA MS” are welcome to participate. If that is the case, all member states should be able to receive monthly briefings and we would kindly request invitations to the monthly briefings.
- We note that the interim secretariat is a temporary measure and expected to cease operations by February 17, 2019. If any of the parties participating in this interim secretariat believe that the secretariat needs to be extended beyond February 2019, we expect UNEP will consult Member States well in advance of February. In addition we also expect this topic to be discussed at UNEA-4, per paragraph 27 of this item’s background document.
- The United States is concerned that UNEP did not notify or consult with Member States prior to signing the Letter of Intent. In fact, we found out about these commitments six months later, and not from UNEP. If UNEP is making significant commitments like this in secret, it should not be surprised when Member States react with suspicion and concern.
- The scope and cost of this commitment should have been determined before the commitment was made. What will the scope and cost be? Will there be any UNEP contributions other than the in kind contributions related to the interim secretariat, which we understand are limited to office space and a percentage of time from three staff?
- We remain concerned about the appropriateness of UNEP’s involvement in what is essentially a bilateral agreement between China and Kenya.
- Why is it appropriate for UNEP to “mobilize funding and other resources from international institutions, partners, business, public and private sectors” for a center that seems intended to promote the transfer of one Member State’s technology and investment?
- The Vision document, which UNEP has not provided to Member States, states the center will benefit African countries with investment and technology from countries other than China, but it is unclear that there will be any role for other countries. The name alone, which we understand will not be changed, does not suggest that it is open to the involvement of others.

- According to the Briefing Note distributed prior to this meeting, “The Centre will strengthen cooperation between China and African countries in the field of environment,” and the center will be directed and steered by African countries and China. This underlines the bilateral nature of the project.
- How will the center provide “knowledge and capacity to countries along the [Belt and Road];” whose knowledge will be provided?
- Who will comprise the “expert panel of scientific advisors? How will this panel be established?
- Is there really need for another forum to identify best practices to achieve SDGs?
- We see UNEP requested that staff time devoted to the interim Secretariat be covered by the China trust fund. Is there an agreement on this?