



**6th Annual meeting of the Subcommittee
of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP
7-11 October 2019**

**Closing statement behalf of
the European Union and its Member States**

Mister Chair, distinguished colleagues, it is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its 28 Member States have appreciated the depth of the discussions held during the 6th Annual Sub-committee and the positive contributions made by both Delegates and the UNEP secretariat. The active participation of an increasing number of Member States in the discussions clearly shows the importance we all attach to the work of UNEP. We would also like to recognise and thank the Secretariat for the detailed presentations on the implementation of the Programme of Work that demonstrate the good progress on the diversity of UNEP's work.

We have only 11 years to go before 2030 and we are not on track to meet the environmental dimension of the Agenda2030. We must therefore take urgent and transformative action. The recent scientific reports on the state of environment and emerging challenges have very clearly demonstrated that we cannot continue with business as usual if we care about a healthy planet for future generations.

In light of this, the upcoming preparation of the Medium-term Strategy for the period 2022-25 provides us with a timely opportunity to steer the work of UNEP towards the most pressing environmental challenges. We must be more ambitious in our efforts, including in assessing impacts on the ground. In the coming year we will engage fully in the dialogue with the Secretariat on this strategy and help delivering the level of ambition that matches the challenges ahead. Based on the intensive discussions we had this week we are convinced it will be a joint effort by UN member states.

We also had a very important discussion on how to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stockholm conference of 1972 and the establishment of UNEP. The occasion will provide an excellent opportunity to take stock of progress made to protect the global environment, address issues where we are still lagging behind as well as to highlight the role of UNEP in this respect. It could be further an occasion to look at some of the "unfinished business" from the Stockholm Declaration, not least in the area of environmental governance. EU and its Member States welcome the offer of the Government of Sweden to host a high-level meeting to be held in Stockholm. The EU and its Member States give full support to Sweden. We also

welcome the cooperation with Kenya who hosts the headquarters of UNEP and should play an important role in this regard. We look forward to further discussions on this.

The EU and its Member States trust that the ongoing UN Development System reform can significantly help to advance action on the environment, through enhanced integration of the environment in the UN country plans and operations. We are encouraged by the active participation of UNEP in the reform so far. We also highlight the very important role of the Environment Management Group in helping to mainstream environmental issues within the UN system.

Mr Chair,

The 6th Annual Subcommittee initiated the very important discussions on the CPR based review process that we consider will significantly help us increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies. We welcome the richness of the discussion and varied views expressed by a number of Member States. That promises that we will be having very good outcomes during the consultations the next Annual Subcommittee meeting. We offer our full support to the designated co-facilitators from Malawi and Canada, and welcome the approval of the roadmap guiding the CPR's work towards concrete improvements to be agreed by UNEA5.

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the successful organisation of this year's Annual Subcommittee. We generally consider that the format and the timing were substantially improved and conducive to constructive discussions. However, as stated by the EU and its Member States also the last year, we would have appreciated having greater feedback from the evaluation office, including results of recent evaluations and overview of planned evaluations, as well as better inclusion of reporting from the regional offices. These would have further enriched our discussions and provided information on lessons learnt for future work.

In order to be able to fulfill its mandate to fully implement the Programme of Work and provide instrumental guidance and support the UN Member States, UNEP needs sufficient resources. In that respect, we reiterate our urgent call on all Member States to contribute with their fair share to the Environment Fund. Every contribution counts.

Mister Chair,

Allow us to thank you and the Vice-Chairs for the skilful conduct of the meeting. We also congratulate you, your team and the Secretariat for the very meaningful Chair's summary which will guide us on our future work. We appreciate your hard work and involvement. However, we regret and express surprise, that despite them being recalled this morning, several important and non-controversial issues are missing in that document, notably: the reference to a follow-up to the UNGA resolution 73/333; UNEP's work on the post-2020 framework on chemicals and waste; and the need to better coordinate the scientific work of UNEP and other external scientific bodies.

The EU and its Member States look forward to continuing the good collaboration during the coming months as we embark on the important discussions to strengthen UNEP, the UN Environment Assembly and the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda. We must act on the scientific findings and the call of the public - most notably the youth and urgently move forward to address the planet's pressing environmental challenges.