

Speech GRULAC
UNEP-Subcommittee (COL) CPR 23 June 2020
Nairobi

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is my pleasure to take the floor on behalf of GRULAC. In this intervention, I will first address the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of UNEP, both in its procedural and substantive aspects. I will then address the relationship that this event might have with a proposed High-Level Conference in 2022, while noting that they are different events and conceived under different mandates.

Mr. Chairman,

GRULAC has been calling for the beginning of a conversation on the *substance* of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNEP – in particular, unpacking what we all mean with “strengthening” UNEP. From our vantage point, this event should not only serve as an opportunity to recall the many achievements of the Programme over the past five decades. It should also, and above all, be forward-looking.

We consider that the “strengthening” of UNEP must take place within its mandate and institutional framework, precisely so as to allow it to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development and to the achievement of the goals and targets set in Agenda 2030 particularly for developing countries, as well as its responsiveness and accountability to Member States, reinforcing its coordination mandate within the United Nations system and the MEAs, enhancing the strong science-policy interface, and progressively consolidating headquarters functions in Nairobi (COL).

A “strengthened” UNEP would have a greater coordinating role within the UN system, in line with the Secretary-General’s UN reform and in support of the High-Level Political Forum and of the General Assembly, not lose sight of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

I will now turn to some procedural aspects related to the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP. Once more, GRULAC recalls that even if we agree that UNEA-5 should be the starting point of these commemorations, they are different events and based on different mandates. We reiterate that the 50th anniversary of UNEP should be celebrated in its headquarters, in Nairobi.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the offer to host a high-level meeting in Stockholm in 2022, GRULAC notes that since joint talking points were shared with delegations in February, no further information has been presented to the broader membership. We look forward to being in a position to discuss this issue, including its relationship with the anniversary of UNEP itself at a forthcoming CPR meeting.

If this offer is carried forward, GRULAC would consider it essential to reflect on how to better ensure complementarity with the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of UNEP.

GRULAC considers that, if an event to commemorate the 50 years since the Stockholm Conference is to be organized in Sweden, that there could be considered a correlation between this event and a final celebration in Nairobi.

Finally, we emphasize our view that this issue should continue to be examined in a transparent and participatory manner within the following CPR meetings. We therefore propose that the Secretariat circulate a revised note on the commemorations of the 50th Anniversary of UNEP based on the discussions held today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.