

**Intervention at the closing segment of
*First informal substantive consultation meeting on United Nations
General Assembly resolution 73/333***

22nd July, 2020

Thank you co-chair.

Distinguished delegates,

Thank you very much. I am Teresa Oberhauser, co-Focal Point of children and youth major group to UNEP.

In light of COVID 19, with several of international negotiations postponed - including those under auspices of UNEP, such as the BRS COP, the SAICM meeting - we underscore the importance of keeping all options on table for UNEA-5, including its postponement to a more suitable date during 2021. An inclusive and participatory UNEA is fundamental for the success of UNEP and its custodian institutions.

Similarly for the second meeting - we highlight the importance of the in person component in such meetings, and welcome it to take place before this year, including either November or October. Having a zero draft beforehand is important for us, so we are proactive in our inputs and not reactive.

There has been quite an amount of time and effort spent over the past two days for this informal consultation and we are thankful for the preparations conducted over the past months and year. We think it is absolutely crucial to have these consultations as governance, environmental law and a respective coherent monitoring of work and coordination of MEAs is not at the level where we would all want it to be and UNEP is not as widely known as we would wish. It is therefore crucial to find ways of making these well appreciated consultations and the respective developments faster and more effective.

The time of reference between 1972 and the upcoming 2022 commemoration has shown that our ambitions, our pace and our work is far from the speed we require to meet the climate and environmental catastrophe. We are absolutely convinced that UNEP has the potential to

become a success and the institution that has the potential to be a game-changer for the protection of the global environment.

Lastly, Co chair, Given the nature of this topic, the youth constituency also takes this opportunity to express deep concern and disappointment on inappropriate legal actions that have been taken by some governments against peaceful school children and youth who have been striking for their future.

Children and youth - especially those from Indigenous groups, migrant youth, health of children, continue to be at the frontline of environmental problems and climate change impacts. Those that are suffering the most have the least voice in the system. This is very much the right time to address this issue.

Finally, We also take this opportunity to highlight that what we have done in the last days here is historic. Never before have an intergovernmental meeting of this scale been convened virtually in the UN system. So we thank the co chairs Estonia and Pakistan, the co-facilitator, the UNEP Secretariat and member states for their commitment.