



### **South Africa's interventions during the First informal substantive consultation meeting on United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/333**

Madam co-facilitator,

My delegation wishes to align its statement with the statement delivered by Palestine on behalf of G77 and China as well as Eritrea on behalf of the African Group.

We wish to again extend our congratulations to the two co-facilitators for their appointment and register my delegation's support throughout the process. We furthermore look forward to fruitful consultations at this current meeting.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to underscore that the Government of South Africa is of the view that it is essential for the international community to step up multilateral efforts to address pressing global environmental challenges and that we maintain and build on the momentum behind Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the milestones of the Stockholm Declaration, Rio Declaration, and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation – as called for by the resolutions that have shaped this process. We believe that this should be done without undermining existing frameworks and creating new obligations.

South Africa asserts a policy position of sustainable interaction with nature for the socio-economic development of local communities and the broader economy. For this reason, we wish to support the call for an outcome that is action-oriented and people-centred with the eradication of poverty remaining the overarching objective to

free our people from want. We call for an outcome that ensures a proper balance among the three dimensions of sustainable development with a clear recognition that environmental challenges cannot be solved outside of the development context. South Africa's National Development Plan 2030 identifies poverty, inequality and unemployment as our main national development challenges. Overcoming these triple challenges fundamentally informs our approach to addressing issues of the environment.

Madam co-facilitator,

It is my delegation's wish to have the mandate as outlined in UNGA 73/333 respected and upheld. We strongly encourage that ideas around the discussions of the next three days adhere to the agreed outcomes of the relevant conferences as well as the principles of common understanding and importance. We call for resistance to the reopening or renegotiation of the agreed outcomes; including the recommendations we will be unpacking and to not turn this consultation into a negotiation.

My delegation underscores the importance of implementing paragraph 88 of the outcome document entitled "the Future we want" in its entirety. The realisation of this paragraph is bound to have a huge impact towards strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance. This realisation will not only reaffirm UNEP as the leading global environmental authority but will further develop its Headquarter, which is the only UN Headquarter in the developing world. In this regard, my delegation anticipates an outcome that would bring the adoption of the Political Declaration back to Nairobi, as the Environment Headquarter, and as a place where the Declaration is to be prepared.

Madam co-facilitator,

My delegation cannot conclude its intervention without highlighting the imperative need for the provision of means of implementation. Due recognition must be given to the fact that we live in a world that is unequal, and in this context the Rio Principles of the Right to Development, Equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibility, among others, need to be acknowledged and sustained.

I thank you!