

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMB. MAKENA MUCHIRI, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO THE UNEP & UNON DURING THE CPR SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1ST OCTOBER 2020 TO DISCUSS THE TIMING AND FORMAT OF UNEA 5

Chairperson,

Madam Executive Director,

Delegates including the Dean,

1. Kenya thanks the Secretariat for presenting a comprehensive paper detailing the options on the timing and format of UNEA-5 given the situation arising from COVID-19 pandemic. We acknowledge the positive insights and relatable case scenarios as captured in this document which forms the basis for this session's discussions.
2. Kenya aligns itself with the statement of the African Group which has been read by H.E Amb. Beyene Russom, Dean of the African Group, on the timing and format of UNEA 5. My delegation supports the proposal to hold UNEA 5 in two stages; first to hold a virtual meeting of UNEA 5 in February 2021 to consider procedural matters as well as UNEP Programme of Work and budget, and then hold a physical meeting of UNEA 5 in early 2022 to consider substantive matters combined with the celebrations of UNEP@50.
3. Kenya recalls the proposal to kickstart UNEP@50 celebrations during UNEA 5 in February 2021 combined with a position we have articulated a few times in the last few meetings, and the suggestion that it culminates in Nairobi, UNEP Headquarters. Therefore, the suggestion given by the African Group, EU and other delegations, presents an opportunity to hold the final celebrations/ the culmination of the commemoration of UNEP@50 during UNEA 5 if we agree to hold a two stage UNEA 5 in a sequenced hybrid format with the first part virtually in February 2021 and the second part physically in 2022 as proposed earlier by the African Group

4. In addition to the statement made by the African group, we would like to highlight the need to agree on the categorization of procedural and substantive issues to get clarity on how UNEA-5 will be best conducted for optimum results. We also note the guidance given by the legal counsel and request it in writing to guide further negotiations.
5. We remain mindful of the ripple effects and implication of the decision on the format and time of hosting UNEA-5 to other global processes such as the conference of parties of the multilateral environmental agreements and vice versa. Therefore, this remains a critical matter at hand that requires in-depth consideration and time to reach a favourable decision.
6. As you may be aware and as you saw on monday this week when the national Covid-19 conference was convened, Kenya is cautiously reviewing the restrictions which were put in place early this year to stem the spread of COVID 19 including a ban on international meetings, conferences and events. The Government continues to monitor the COVID 19 situation and updates will be availed as soon as a decision is reached by the relevant agencies. As you have seen the skies are open and people are able to travel in and out of Kenya at the moment. In the meantime, the Government is working to put in place adequate and appropriate facilities to ensure safety for all persons living and working in the country including those working with UN and to ensure that the UN COVID facility is in place as soon as possible . In the meantime the facilities are quite adequate and have been serving the region.
7. In conclusion, Kenya reaffirms that it is engaging with the UNEP secretariat as well as UNON to start preparations for a successful UNEA 5 in a format and time that will be agreed upon.

I thank you, and my delegation continues to be ready to negotiate in the coming days on this format and to go into further details that we may not

have agreed today but we hope to bring ourselves today, closer to the decision that we will be discussing in the coming days.