

Draft Statement by the Group of 77 and China to be delivered at the Subcommittee meeting on 1 October 2020.

At the outset allow me to thank you, Mr. Chair and commend You for your leadership and for convening this meeting in a timely manner, allowing us to discuss the issue in a more inclusive and transparent setting that will take into consideration all of our concerns. I also wish to Executive Director and the entire secretariate for their efforts and for preparing the Options document.

Allow Mr. Chair to share the view of the Group of 77 and China on the matter at hand.

The Group believes that considerable number of participants representing developing countries will face challenges due to the existing internet access infrastructure gaps. This will directly impact the inclusiveness and transparency of the works of UNEA, and effective participation of all Member States hence shedding unnecessary doubts on its universality.

The Group is also of the view that substantive matters should be concluded in the context of in person settings, as our experience with the existing virtual platforms so far sheds great doubts on the ability to provide equal opportunity of interactions to delegations, due to connectivity, as well as other technical challenges such as interpretation services, add to that the time zone factor. All of these challenges make it difficult for us to expect a reliable technical solution for conducting negotiations on resolutions and decisions.

The Group also believes that holding a special "meeting" in February 2021 that ensures the continuity of UNEP's Programme of Work and budget could be explored as an option to be considered while leaving negotiation on resolutions and decisions for a later time when UNEA 5 is decided to be held. I, thank you, Chair