



South Africa's intervention to the discussion on the CPR-led review process

Thank you Mr Chair, my delegation wishes to put on record that we will be making a submission to the discussions on the MTS and POW&B as we missed discussions on this agenda item earlier.

We wish to join the previous speakers and express our appreciation to the two co-facilitators Mr Mapopa Kaunda and Mr Marcus Davies for their guidance and direction in the discussions throughout this process.

We also wish to align our intervention with the statements delivered by the G77 and China and the African Group.

Mr Chair,

The process for review by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and its subsidiary bodies was set to give concrete proposals for the improvement of their **efficiency** and **effectiveness**. My delegation welcomes the proposals and recommendations made throughout the deliberations aimed at realising this main function – registered amongst others as follows:

- Encouraging that the theme for UNEAs is aligned to the Dialogues, Side events, resolutions and decisions;
- Close cooperation between the UNEA and CPR Bureaux;
- Rationalizing the number of events during UNEA;

- Recognising the important role and possible contribution of the MEAs during UNEA sessions;
- Strengthening of UNEA preparations at Regional levels as well as participation by relevant stakeholders;
- Encouraging member States to accredit themselves to UNEP which has a bearing impact on strengthening this UN Headquarter;
- Proposals on the better use of the intersessional period;
- Timing on the presentation and negotiations of resolutions without prejudice to the UNEA Rules of Procedure (RoP),

My delegation through the African Group has effectively participated in this process and has shown flexibility on issues that seek to achieve the mandate of this process. It may be noted however, that some proposals and ideas require better understanding and clear evidence as to how they would have a positive impact on the work of UNEA and its subsidiary bodies.

I recall the suggestion by the African Group in March 2019 when the proposal of this process was included in a procedural resolution to decide on the provisional agenda, date and venue of the fifth session of UNEA; which suggested for a proper study and analysis to be done to identify the challenges regarding the UNEA and its governing bodies and for consensual views on how these challenges disturb effective and inclusive participation by the membership of UNEA and all the relevant stakeholders; and that only then should a process of review take place.

Nonetheless, as this delegation, in line with the African Group position we cannot appreciate the proposal to rename, name, identify or rebrand the meetings of the OECPR and the Annual Subcommittee. We believe that the meetings in the UN system are identified by their functions and not by what they are called. In all the few months' discussions we have not been able to be convinced that changing the names of these meetings would be towards the realisation of effectiveness and efficiency to UNEA and its subsidiary bodies.

Furthermore, Mr Chair, there exists no evidence that the current standing of these meetings have had negative impact on the effective and inclusive participation by

member States through officials accredited to UNEP and those coming from the Capital and any other stakeholder. This is because participation in both these meetings has rather increased from UNEA 1 up until now. Mr Chair, we believe that changing the names of these meetings would give an impression that the functions have changed for the very same reason that it is only the function of the meeting that can better explain what a meeting does. Mr Chair, while paragraph 3 of this document clearly states that the renaming does not intend to change the functions, it is however, unfortunate that this explanation paragraph will not always be attached to the communication regarding these meetings. Therefore, the proposal before us would not solve the confusion but would instead transfer the confusion under these new proposed names, as already indicated by other delegations today. Again we wish to reiterate that if a meeting does not make sense or is not clear it is the functions of that meeting that are improved and not what the meeting is called.

Mr Chair, we have all been calling for better use of the intersessional period, we believe that the current meetings of the UNEA subsidiary bodies in a way prepare for UNEA and the proposals in this document enhances this work even further. The proposed naming on paragraph 6 limits the scope of discussion for this meeting. While noting what has been said that the suggested name is in line with the Governing Council decision that called for the annual subcommittee, it must be recognised that oversight and review is done even in the CPR and CPR Subcommittee meetings. We should be cautious then to not give an impression that review and oversight is only done during the annual Subcommittee meeting. This is in the same way as the proposal in paragraph 4 – giving an impression that preparations for UNEA only take place during the OECPR.

On the issue of the annexure as I conclude Mr Chair, my delegation is aligned with the position of the G77 and China and the African Group to have only one document adopted by consensus to avoid unintentionally undermining the RoP. We stand ready to further deliberate on this matter as already stated during the informal consultations of this week and in order to reach consensus on this paragraph; because we listened and understand that it would be useful for new officials to have a reference document on the roles and responsibilities of the UNEA and CPR Bureaux, we do not share why this should be adopted as an annex, but do reason

that perhaps a manual document providing guidance to member States would be more useful as it would include the relevant RoP and the common practice that have been useful. As this is a successive document; we appreciate that the manual document would also provide room and possibility to include new and improved proposals that would be deemed at that time as effective common practice without undergoing the CPR-review process to achieve this.