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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Sixth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-6)
Nairobi, Kenya, 19 February – 23 February 2024

Sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6)
Nairobi, Kenya, 26 February – 1 March 2024

- Statements by the European Union and its Member States

Delegations will find in the [Annex](#) for information a compilation of statements as delivered during the Sixth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-6) and of the Sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6).

Sixth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-6)

Nairobi, Kenya, 19 February – 23 February 2024

Statement on agenda item 1 – Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

‘Opening statement

on behalf of the European Union and its Member States’

- Excellency Chair, Madam Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director, distinguished delegates joining us today.
- It is my privilege to speak today on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
- Ukraine and Serbia align themselves with this statement.
- We are a week away from the sixth session of UN Environmental Assembly, which will gather participants from all over the world, offering an opportunity to deliver ambitious outcomes, including a forward-looking Ministerial Declaration, that we hope will provide useful input to the Summit of the Future.
- Allow me to wholeheartedly thank on behalf of the EU and its Member States, UNEP Secretariat and the host country Kenya for the tremendous effort in preparing UNEA 6.
- Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions must be taken to overcome the triple planetary crisis. This must not only be a pledge towards our societies but must be a prerogative to heal our planet, to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and to ensure that we leave a clean and healthy environment for generations to come.
- We welcome the engagement between co-facilitators and major groups and stakeholders in the run-up to this OECPR. These crucial voices need to be heard, for actions to overcome the Triple Planetary Crisis to be effective.

- We need to use the time available to us during the Open Ended CPR wisely to consider the twenty proposals on our table,
- We appreciate the wide span and pertinence of the proposals, as they range from addressing effectiveness and enhanced implementation to calls for action on all elements from air, to water, to land, soil and ocean,
- The EU and its Member States have shared three resolution proposals.
- Firstly, with regards to water: we want to place emphasis on the importance of water across all sectors and in the context of sustainable development and the triple planetary.
- crisis, and underline the need to promote integrated policy making on water across all levels.
- Secondly, on the circular economy approach: based on strong scientific evidence, we are convinced that we must depart from the linear economic model and make the transition to the implementation of the circular economy approach which can bring multiple benefits for nature, people, and climate.
- Finally, we are pleased to have tabled a resolution on the ocean, together with Costa Rica. The aim of this resolution is to emphasise the need to decisively act to improve the health, productivity, sustainable use and resilience of the ocean and its ecosystems, and to give impetus to implementation of global agreements such as the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the High Seas Treaty/agreement on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.
- With these proposals we want to stress that it is indispensable to take resolute actions on water, circular economy and ocean.
- On behalf of the EU and its MS I thank those countries which have come forward with resolution proposals and those who shared views on resolutions proposed by the EU, together with our partners and supported by co-sponsors Based on these views we have submitted updated versions of our resolutions on water and circular economy.

- We have an intense agenda for the Open Ended CPR . It is not only a heavy workload. This agenda reflects the strong commitment to the importance of international environmental governance of all UNEA member states, the commitment to engage constructively in the upcoming discussions to prepare for UNEA 6.
- you can count on the willingness and dedication of the EU and its 27 MS States. Allow me to wish all of us a fruitful OECPR meeting this week.

Sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6)

26 February 2024 – 1 March 2024 (Nairobi, KENYA)

Statement on agenda item 1 – Opening of the session

‘Opening statement

on behalf of the European Union and its Member States’

Madame President of the Assembly

Madam Executive Director of UNEP

Distinguished delegates

- It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
- I would like to start by thanking you Madame President and the Bureau of UNEA, the CPR, its Chair, the Bureau as well as the Executive Director and her team, for their unwavering commitment and efforts to deliver ambitious and meaningful UNEA6 outcomes.
- Allow me also to thank the UN office at Nairobi and the host country Kenya for the tremendous effort made in preparing UNEA 6 and your generous hospitality.

- The two years since UNEA 5, and the celebration of UNEP's 20th anniversary, have been marked by truly significant achievements in environmental multilateralism: the agreement on the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the High Seas Treaty, the Global Framework on Chemicals. And now nations are pressing ahead to conclude, by the end of the year, the negotiations on a legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution and to set up a new Science -Policy Panel on chemicals, waste and pollution. Both will be breakthroughs, both are urgently needed.
- As we meet in Nairobi this week – in record numbers – delegates come from all over the world, but are united in their expectation that UNEA, the world's leading environmental authority, will take forward looking steps to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- Over halfway into the 2030 Agenda, most SDGs are off track. Especially those related to the environment. This is a stark reminder of the urgent need for more effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral action for the current and future generations who count on us.
- The Global Youth Declaration on Environment agreed less than 2 weeks ago is unequivocal in its call for intergenerational equity, commitment to environmental multilateralism and systemic science-based policy action.
- This makes us also look forward to the launch of the Global Resources Outlook 2024 this Friday. Its findings on the role of natural resources management in the economies of today can and should inform our discussions, here in this UNEA and beyond.
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- Inauguring UNEA-6, we are aware of the work ahead of us this week. We are grateful for the rich exchanges we had the past week.
- The EU and its MS are encouraged by everyone's hard work and dedication. But we cannot ignore that so far no resolution or decision has been agreed ad ref and some resolutions have not gone through the full first reading yet. The sense of urgency and compromise needs to return to this room. You can count on our collective commitment to accelerate work towards resolving the outstanding issues for a successful and ambitious outcome acceptable to all.

- We look forward to engage with you, Madam President, to achieve a Ministerial Declaration with a level of ambition that reflects the urgency to address the key environmental crises at hand. It is in this manner that UNEA can send an important message to the Summit of the Future later this year.
- The EU, its Member states and aligned countries, look forward to the adoption of important resolutions. It is only by addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution with equal determination and vigour that we can protect our planet to the benefit of all.
- I thank you.

Statement on agenda item 9 – High-level segment

‘Opening statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States’

Madame President of the Assembly

Madam Executive Director

distinguished delegates

- It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
- Ukraine and Montenegro align with the EU statement.
- 2 years ago, UNEA-5 made a lasting mark with the celebration of UNEP@50 and its game changing outcome on the need to end plastic pollution. Since then, landmark agreements on the Global Biodiversity Framework, the High Seas Treaty, the Global Framework on Chemicals, and a first recognition of the need to a transition away from fossil fuels have demonstrated the collective power of nations working together towards a more sustainable future. These are truly significant examples of what environmental multilateralism is capable of.
- Unfortunately, this is not the full story.
- From the Middle East to the Sahel, from Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine to the Horn of Africa, from Haiti to Afghanistan, crises are morphing, and proliferating. Regardless of how conflicts or crises start or end, the environment is always a casualty. EU and its Member States remain determined to support UNEP in strengthening its role and mandate in supporting affected countries to respond to environmental consequences of conflicts and natural disasters.

- We regret that last Monday the EU and its Member States were the target of accusations based on an incorrect and misleading narrative. The EU and its Member States strongly reject these false accusations. Let us now move on, with the intent of keeping the focus on the work of UNEA and UNEP.
- Distinguished delegates
- UNEA's theme "effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution" could not have been chosen more timely. The urgency to address the triple planetary crisis we face as a global community has never been greater. Only the collective power of all of us working together towards a more sustainable future will suffice. It is what is driving our efforts to agree on the many important resolutions tabled before us. It is also why the first MEA day, which underlined the need of increased cooperation, more synergies and more concerted action on the ground is so important to us.
- We are standing at a crossroads. We are facing not one, but a triple environmental crisis: climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. These interconnected threats pose a monumental challenge, demanding bold and immediate action on a global scale. UNEA cannot afford to be a passive bystander.
- We have the power to lift it to a higher ground and maintain it as the beacon, showing the direction for the future, where clean and healthy environment is enjoyed by all.
- We can unite and deliver meaningful resolutions and uphold a necessary ambition in a forward-looking Ministerial Declaration. A Ministerial Declaration that serves as the key impetus from the environment [community to the Summit of the Future later this year.
- The need for the Nairobi Spirit to guide our actions has never been greater. For people and for the planet.
- I thank you]*

*: part in square brackets not delivered due to speaking time limitation.

Statements on agenda item 12 - Adoption of the resolutions, decisions and outcome document of the session

‘Circular Economy resolution’

- One of the messages the EU and its MS wanted to highlight at this UNEA is that, to tackle the triple planetary crisis and achieve a just transition for a resilient society, moving further towards a circular economy is indispensable. This view is shared by many member states and regional groups, scientists, Major Groups and Stakeholders and others.
- We welcome the commitment of the Co-Facilitators, and UNEP’s secretariat, our team and the engagement on the text of many delegations. However, the EU+MS feel that the end product of these deliberations would not bring UNEA forward. Therefore we decided not to continue discussions at this UNEA.
- We thank the parties who contributed with constructive proposals and dedicated their time to this very important topic. We are pleased with the result of negotiations on the other related topics on the table (circularity in the sugar cane agroindustry and sustainable lifestyles) and congratulate the proponents of those proposals. We look forward to further work together with countries and stakeholders – including youth, to promote the opportunities that circular economy has to offer for addressing the triple planetary crisis and achieving the SDGs.

‘Ministerial declaration’

- Thank you Madam President, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,
- I have to honour to take the floor on behalf of the EU and its Member States.
- We gathered here with a sense of urgency to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- We engaged actively in the past months in the consultations to deliver an ambitious general message of UNEA to the world and as input to the Summit of the Future communicating the planetary emergency we are facing. For the EU and the Member States, it is of utmost importance to keep the level of ambition and ensure effective environmental multilateralism delivers important messages to the global level.

- It is only then that we will be able to act timely, efficiently and preserve the health of this planet for current and future generations.
- Even though we appreciate the modifications answering to some of our concerns, we would have expected a more ambitious and forward looking declaration.
- In particular, at UNEA 5 we resolved to end plastic pollution based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics and our processes need to build upon our ambition.
- We would like to put in the record of the meeting that the reference to the UNEA 5 resolution
- “UNEA 5/14 End Plastic Pollution” is not correctly reflected in the document.
- We feel also the crucial voices of the youth that participated in UNEA, could have also been better captured.
- The Global Resources Outlook is our joint achievement, giving us important scientific information to adapt our policies to ensure truly sustainable development that meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We should have appreciated to see it mentioned in the text.
- Thank you Madam President.

Statement on agenda item 16 - Closure of the session

‘Closing statement’

- Thank you Madam President, Excellencies,
- Dear colleagues,
- It is my privilege to share these closing remarks on behalf of the EU and its Member States.
- We would like to thank you Madam President, the Bureau of UNEA, the Executive Director of UNEP and her staff, the host country Kenya and the delegations for the efforts, commitment and ambition you put into this Assembly.

- Our quest for *effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution* can only be accomplished if we **faithfully and resolutely** turn into action our joint milestone commitments in the multilateral arena, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Global Framework on Chemicals, the High Seas Treaty and the groundbreaking decisions of UNEA-5: to end plastic pollution; set up a science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution; promoting circular economy; and on fostering nature-based solutions.
- Backtracking cannot be an option; and even a standstill we simply cannot afford it.
- Dear colleagues,
- This session of UNEA showed that we cannot always take this for granted.
- Despite intensive discussions during the past two weeks, we did not reach agreement on a number of actions that could have taken us further on the path to sustainability and to using our one planet's resources in a way that leads to positive development outcomes for all of us sharing it. As the IRP's Global Resources Outlook report has unequivocally demonstrated, we need to rethink our relationship with nature, **work with nature, not against it**, towards sustainable **circular bioeconomies**. This may be self-evident, but at this UNEA we were not able to put this into words we could all agree to.
- Because backtracking is not an option, the EU decided to withdraw its resolution proposal on Circular Economy.
- This is a conversation that must continue. We are pleased that there is also a UNEA outside the negotiating rooms. A UNEA where science, business and civil society representatives have come together in record numbers, pushing forward the debate, presenting solutions.
- And to continue on a positive note, UNEA-6 **did** approve a number of outcomes that address critically pertinent issues and clearly show the path the global community needs to take **if** we are to succeed in tackling planetary emergencies and environmental crises and achieve the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. This is the message UNEA-6 has agreed to send to the world. This is our message to the Summit for the Future.
- Excellencies, dear colleagues, let me assure you that the EU and its Member States will remain committed to that direction.
- Thank you/ Asante sana