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Sustainable development: report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. David Mulet Lind (Guatemala)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 19 (see [A/74/381](#), para. 2). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 22nd and 24th meetings, on 14 and 26 November 2019. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records.¹

II. Consideration of draft resolutions [A/C.2/74/L.10](#) and [A/C.2/74/L.52](#)

2. At the 22nd meeting, on 14 November, the observer for the State of Palestine, on behalf of the States that are members of the Group of 77 and China, taking into account also the provisions of General Assembly resolution [73/5](#) of 16 October 2018, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme" ([A/C.2/74/L.10](#)).

3. At its 24th meeting, on 26 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme" ([A/C.2/74/L.52](#)), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ahmad Saif Al-Kuwari (Qatar), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution [A/C.2/74/L.10](#).

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 13 parts, under the symbols [A/74/381](#), [A/74/381/Add.1](#), [A/74/381/Add.2](#), [A/74/381/Add.3](#), [A/74/381/Add.4](#), [A/74/381/Add.5](#), [A/74/381/Add.6](#), [A/74/381/Add.7](#), [A/74/381/Add.8](#), [A/74/381/Add.9](#), [A/74/381/Add.10](#), [A/74/381/Add.11](#) and [A/74/381/Add.12](#).

¹ See [A/C.2/74/SR.22](#) and [A/C.2/74/SR.24](#).



4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that document had no programme budget implications.
5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.2/74/L.52](#) (see para. 8).
6. Also at the 24th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America and Norway.
7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution [A/C.2/74/L.52](#), draft resolution [A/C.2/74/L.10](#) was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the mandate contained in its resolution [2997 \(XXVII\)](#) of 15 December 1972, by which it established the United Nations Environment Programme, and other relevant resolutions that reinforce its mandate, as well as the 1997 Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme of 7 February 1997,¹ the Malmö Ministerial Declaration of 31 May 2000² and the Nusa Dua Declaration of 26 February 2010,³

Reaffirming also its commitment to strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, entitled “The future we want”,⁴ and noting the follow-up on paragraph 88, subparagraphs (a) to (h), of the outcome document, including through General Assembly resolution [67/213](#) of 21 December 2012,

Recalling also the establishment of universal membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as other measures to strengthen its governance and its responsiveness and accountability to Member States, the attendant change of its designation to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme and the evolution in the periodicity of its sessions,

Recalling further its resolutions [68/215](#) of 20 December 2013, [69/223](#) of 19 December 2014, [71/231](#) of 21 December 2016 and [73/260](#) of 22 December 2018,

Reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development⁵ and its principles,

Taking into account Agenda 21⁶ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,⁷

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/52/25)*, annex, decision 19/1, annex.

² *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/55/25)*, annex I, decision SS.VI/1, annex.

³ *Ibid.*, *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/65/25)*, annex I, decision SS.XI/9.

⁴ Resolution [66/288](#), annex.

⁵ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

⁶ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁷ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome⁸ and the outcome document of the special event of the General Assembly to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals,⁹

Recalling also the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,¹⁰

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Reaffirming further the Paris Agreement and its early entry into force,¹¹ and encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹² that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Highlighting the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and other relevant major intergovernmental outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits in economic, social and environmental fields,

Welcoming the holding of the 2019 Climate Action Summit convened by the Secretary-General on 23 September, taking note of the multi-partner initiatives and commitments presented during the Summit and taking note also of the Youth Climate Summit, held in New York on 21 September,

Looking forward to the summit on biodiversity to be held in 2020 in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recalling resolution 71/312 of 6 July 2017, entitled “Our ocean, our future: call for action”, and looking forward to the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

⁸ Resolution 60/1.

⁹ Resolution 68/6.

¹⁰ United Nations Environment Programme, document UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1/Corr.1, annex.

¹¹ Adopted under the UNFCCC in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21.

¹² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

Taking note of the contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to addressing the challenge of, inter alia, climate change and biodiversity loss, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders,

Committed to strengthening international environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development in order to promote a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as well as coordination within the United Nations system,

Committed also to enhancing the voice of the United Nations Environment Programme and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening its engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and empowering it to lead efforts to formulate United Nations system-wide strategies on the environment,

Recognizing the important contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the 2019 high-level political forum on sustainable development, which met under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council from 9 to 18 July in New York and undertook an in-depth review of progress on a subset of 6 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals,

Reiterating the need for secure, stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlining the need to consider the adequate reflection of all the administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget, as well as the need to realize efficiency gains,

Reaffirming the commitments, as contained in the ministerial outcome document of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 June 2014,¹³ inter alia, to ensure the full integration of the environmental dimension, especially throughout the sustainable development agenda, acknowledging that a healthy environment is an essential requirement and key enabler for sustainable development,

Reiterating the need to develop and expand partnerships, including between Governments, the private sector, academia, relevant United Nations entities and programmes, indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society and individuals,

1. *Welcomes* the holding of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2019, also welcomes the report on the session and the resolutions and decisions contained therein,¹⁴ and looks forward to the convening of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly from 22 to 26 February 2021;

2. *Reiterates* the ministerial declaration entitled “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”,¹⁵ adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its fourth session, and reaffirms that embracing innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production are important elements for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁶ and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

¹³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/69/25)*, annex, resolution 1/1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, *Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/74/25)*.

¹⁵ UNEP/EA.4/HLS.1.

¹⁶ Resolution 70/1.

3. *Encourages* Member States to advance innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production, in line with resolution 4/1 of 15 March 2019 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme;¹⁷

4. *Invites* the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and other relevant United Nations entities to support the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme in the development of a global environmental data strategy by 2025, as referred to in the ministerial declaration adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session;

5. *Invites* Member States and all relevant United Nations bodies and partners to contribute to the delivery of the implementation plan “Towards a pollution-free planet” as set out in United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/21 of 15 March 2019;¹⁸

6. *Welcomes* the continued commitment of the United Nations Environment Assembly to contributing to the effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner, as reflected in its resolutions 2/5 of 27 May 2016¹⁹ and 3/3 of 6 December 2017²⁰ on the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

7. *Commends* the President and the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council for supporting and facilitating the effective integration of the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly into the preparation, work and proceedings of, and the participation of the President of the Environment Assembly in, the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council;

8. *Encourages* the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly to continue to convey the main messages agreed upon by the Environment Assembly at its sessions during the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, as appropriate, taking into account the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as General Assembly resolutions 67/290 of 9 July 2013 and 70/299 of 29 July 2016;

9. *Welcomes* the contributions of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the lead-up, inputs and meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2019, and looks forward to further contributions to the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

10. *Reiterates* that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme, and in this regard calls for the continued and focused implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building¹⁰ adopted by the Programme;

¹⁷ UNEP/EA.4/Res.1.

¹⁸ UNEP/EA.4/Res.21.

¹⁹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/71/25)*, annex, resolution 2/5.

²⁰ UNEP/EA.3/Res.3.

11. *Welcomes* the sixth flagship *Global Environment Outlook* report and its summary for policymakers,²¹ which was reviewed and approved by Member States from 21 to 24 January 2019 and welcomed with appreciation by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session, and reiterates the continuing need for the United Nations Environment Programme to conduct up-to-date, comprehensive, scientifically based and policy-relevant global environmental assessments, in close consultation with Member States, in order to support decision-making processes at all levels;

12. *Acknowledges* the contribution of the International Resource Panel, including through its report, *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want*;

13. *Expresses concern* about the findings of relevant global environmental assessments which indicate that, despite the availability of solutions to our common environmental challenges, our planet is increasingly polluted, affected by the adverse effects of climate change, quickly losing its biodiversity and experiencing widespread environmental degradation, and recalls the request by the United Nations Environment Assembly to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to promote greater coherence and coordination of global assessments undertaken within the United Nations system;²²

14. *Takes note with appreciation* of the request by the United Nations Environment Assembly to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare, in consultation with Member States, the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972,²³ making use of contributions from relevant stakeholders;

15. *Expresses concern* about the sustainability, predictability and stability of the funding of the United Nations Environment Programme governing body, and requests the Secretary-General to make proposals, as appropriate;

16. *Notes* the request by the United Nations Environment Assembly to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide options to secure the participation of developing countries in the Environment Assembly;²⁴

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-sixth session, under the item entitled “Sustainable development”, the sub-item entitled “Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme”.

²¹ The designations employed and the presentation of the material in the summary for policymakers do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory or city or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. For general guidance on matters relating to the use of maps in publications, please see www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/htmain.htm.

²² See UNEP/EA.4/Res.23, para. 10.

²³ Ibid., para. 7.

²⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/69/25)*, annex, resolution 1/15.