Fourth Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
6-9 March 2017
Gigiri, UN Office at Nairobi
Conference Room 1

**Note by the Secretariat on the Structure and Organization of the
2017 Environment Assembly**

UN Environment Assembly resolution 2/22 on the review of its cycle decided that the third session of the Assembly shall consist of a 3-day meeting without prejudice to the duration and functions of its high-level segment as set out in Governing Council decision 27/2.

Governing Council decision 27/2 states that the role of the High Level Segment is to take strategic decisions, provide political guidance and perform, among others, the following functions:

a) Set the global environmental agenda;
b) Provide overarching policy guidance and define policy responses to address emerging environmental challenges;
c) Undertake policy review, dialogue and exchange of experiences;
d) Set the strategic guidance on the future direction of UN Environment;
e) Organize a multistakeholder dialogue, and
f) Foster partnerships for achieving environmental goals and resources mobilization.

As such, and in light of experiences at previous UN Environment Assembly sessions, the joint bureaux preparatory retreat of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the UN Environment Assembly in October 2016 recommended the following actions:

1. There was an agreement to use innovative ways to improve the interactive dialogue at the 2017 Environment Assembly, looking at best practices at other fora, such as the Davos meetings and the 21st Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
2. Member States should be allowed to deliver and record national statements, where feasible, in advance.
3. The Secretariat should prepare and present to both bureau in early 2017, a concept paper that proposes a truly interactive modus operandi of the High Level Segment at the 2017 UN Environment Assembly. Such a paper should also include proposals for better time management of interventions.
4. UN Environment should consider regional preparations (e.g. discussions of the theme/outcome in regional ministerial gatherings, or consultations, organized by

Regional Offices of UN Environment) and presentation of the outcomes of such meetings to the Assembly.

Scenarios

To implement the above recommendations, the Secretariat has prepared two possible scenarios for the organization of the 2017 Environment Assembly as reflected in Annex 1.

These scenarios aim to respond to Member States' wishes and highlight the centrality of the Assembly's theme of pollution, while allowing for interactive discussions to move the environmental agenda forward, and giving ministers and other high-level officials the opportunity to deliver statements and make their national positions known globally.

In this way, the High Level Segment can provide in-depth reflection on the theme, enhance the visibility of the UN Environment Assembly and provide a critical link to the High Level Political Forum and other important global meetings in the months and years to come.

The two proposed Scenarios contain a provision for the Ministers to discuss in plenary the main commitments, pledges and outcomes announced and reached during the High Level Segment.

Both proposed scenarios call for time management of interventions and recognize the benefits and importance for parallel groups to use professional moderators for the interactive portions and "traffic-light" systems for the national statements. Every effort will be made to maximize the limited time available without compromising visibility, interaction and effectiveness. Early agreement by Member States on one of the proposed scenarios will be vital for setting specific modalities.

Opening Plenary

To maximize on timing, Scenario 1 contains a functional opening plenary on Monday, 4th December 2017, and a short ceremony on Tuesday, 5th December. Scenario 2, on the other hand, concentrates the opening components on Monday, 4th December.

Leadership Dialogues

The interactive and Davos-style Leadership Dialogues will bring collective attention to the Assembly's multifaceted theme of pollution. Each Dialogue will focus on one of the priority areas of pervasive forms of pollution as defined by Member States. These dynamic and critical discussions, which will be professionally moderated, will bring together the environment leaders and members of the global community who have already made major commitments/pledges to tackle pollution and could inspire others to make similar commitments. At the end of each Dialogue, which will be streamed live, there will be an opportunity to engage and take questions from actual and virtual audiences.

National statements

In parallel to the Leadership Dialogues, Member States will have the opportunity to deliver and record national statements that may reflect policy that tackle pervasive forms of pollution. To

manage this, a time a list of speakers will be made available to help delegations organize their interventions. Depending on which scenario is chosen, National Statements could be limited to 2-4 minutes. The Secretariat will propose modalities to allow Member States to deliver and record national statements in advance of the Assembly.

Closing Session

In both scenarios the programme for the closing session will communicate and highlight the main outcomes of the Assembly and conclude the proceedings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

Considerations

Scenarios 1 and 2 are based on a number of considerations as follows:

a) Recognition that parallel meetings will be inevitable;
b) Strict time management will be exercised by the UN Environment Assembly President and Vice Presidents;
c) As this is an exceptional UN Environment Assembly, there will be no side events;
d) Holding the Open-Ended Committee meeting prior the UN Environment Assembly will reduce the time required for the Committee of the Whole;
e) For the early adoption of resolutions, the Assembly could consider and adopt outcomes on the basis of the recommendation from the Open-Ended Committee on 4 December;
f) The outcome of the High Level Segment would be negotiated before the session itself;
g) The cut-off point for the negotiations of both the outcome document and resolutions will be 5 December;
h) Given funding constraints, the priority for interpretation will be for plenary sessions and Committee of the Whole.

Regional Fora and global meetings with UN Environment representation should be used as building blocks to the UN Environment Assembly. The regional preparations for the Assembly, such as discussions of the theme/outcome in regional ministerial gatherings, or consultations organized by Regional Offices of UN Environment should also feature on the agenda of the Fora and the outcomes should be presented to the Assembly. This will help to aggregate national interests, save time and help raise the visibility of the Assembly at regional and national levels.

Based on the comments and inputs from Member States to this Note, and additional guidance on the scope of the theme, a more detailed and annotated concept paper will be prepared.

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PRELIMINARY STRUCTURE FOR THE 2017 ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY: <u>SCENARIO ONE</u>					
	Monday 4 December 2017	Tuesday 5 December 2017			Wednesday 6 December 2017
9:00-10:00	Regional Groups Meeting	Regional Groups Meeting			Regional Groups Meeting
10:00-13:00	Opening Plenary - Functional opening [President and Executive Director] -Statements from Regional Groups	High Level Segment Official Opening			Plenary -Pledges/ Commitments from Governments/Private Sectors
	Committee of the Whole	National Statements	Leadership Dialogue (Moderated)	Leadership Dialogue (Moderated)	Ministerial Outcome
13:00-15:00		Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue			Media Events
	Committee of the Whole	National Statements	Leadership Dialogue (Moderated)	Leadership Dialogue (Moderated)	Plenary Session -Adoption of resolutions and outcomes
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