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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Second Meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016) - Information from the Presidency and the Commission

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Presidency and the Commission on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 20 June 2016.

**Second Meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly
of the United Nations Environment Programme
(Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016)**

- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -

The second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) convened from 23 to 27 May 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya. Over 2000 people attended the session, representing more than 170 nations. The meeting focused on the overarching theme of "Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

A High-level Segment took place 26-27 May, during which the majority of UN Member States was represented at Ministerial level (123, including 10 EU Member States). Ministers discussed the overarching theme in an interactive dialogue and discussed in roundtables the Global Thematic Report on "Healthy Environment, Healthy People". Ministers also participated in a multi-stakeholder dialogue as well as other Ministerial parallel sessions, including an EU hosted Ministerial breakfast on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). This event strengthened the profile of UNEP's 10 Year Framework Programme on SCP, while also addressing the crosscutting nature of SCP, necessary to achieve a circular economy.

UN Member States agreed by consensus on 25 resolutions * on a wide range of environmental issues, including priority areas for the EU such as the role of UNEA and UNEP in delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, SCP, climate, oceans, chemicals and waste, marine litter and illegal wildlife trade. These resolutions will guide national, regional and international environmental policy agendas for the coming years and strengthen UNEP's role as the global environmental authority. The final texts agreed are all generally well in line with the EU and Member States positions.

* Six of these were submitted by the EU and its Member States, focusing on: Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Oceans and seas (cosponsored by several Members); Sustainable production and consumption; Sound management of chemicals and waste, Supporting the Paris Agreement and the relation between UNEP and the MEAs for which it provides the Secretariat. The EU and its Member States also agreed to co-sponsor the resolution on Protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict and Sustainable Coral Reef Management.

The meeting also adopted UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021 and Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019. Furthermore, it was agreed that a "lean and mean" UNEA-3 will take place by the end of 2017 and UNEA-4 will be held in 2019, which will allow for future UNEA sessions to take place in odd years, thus aligning itself with the UN budget cycle.

Unfortunately, for a second time, countries could not overcome their differences in reaching agreement on updating UNEP's stakeholder engagement policy in line with the mandate from Rio+20. Current informal practice, already allowing for a fair participation of stakeholders, will be continued for the time being.

Despite EU mediation efforts, it could not be prevented that on 27 May a vote was requested by Israel on a draft resolution tabled by G77/China aiming at facilitating environmental assessment missions to the Gaza Strip as agreed in previous resolutions. The UNEP Secretariat was not able to provide clarity on the voting procedure. Eventually, no decision could be taken as, given the late hour, the quorum for a vote was not reached.

As a result the negotiations on the Outcome document could not be concluded before the meeting was closed. The EU and its Member States, as well as many other UN Member States, had hoped that UNEA-2 would produce a negotiated Outcome document to demonstrate UNEA's ability and role in setting the political agenda for the global environment.

Besides the formal programme, UNEA-2 was also an opportunity to initiate partnerships and announce environmental initiatives. These side events highlighted the urgency to act and the importance of partnerships between UNEP, other UN organizations, (local) governments and civil society for achieving the targets of Agenda 2030. A Sustainable Innovation Expo as well as a Science-Policy Forum provided for exchanges of best practices and insights at all levels.

In conclusion, the high turnout, the 25 resolutions adopted and the constructive nature of debates at all levels allows to broadly consider UNEA-2 successful. The leadership of the EU and its Member States, speaking with one voice throughout the negotiations, was widely acknowledged.