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**United Nations Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme  
First session**

Nairobi, 23–27 June 2014

Items 5 and 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy issues**

**Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of  
United Nations summits, in particular the United Nations  
Conference on Sustainable Development, and major  
intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the  
United Nations Environment Assembly**

**Report on the work of the Committee of Permanent  
Representatives**

**Note by the Executive Director**

Pursuant to paragraph 11 of Governing Council decision 19/32, the minutes of the meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives adopted since the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum are available from [www.unep.org/unea/official\\_docs.asp](http://www.unep.org/unea/official_docs.asp).

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\* UNEP/EA.1/1.

# **Minutes of the 121st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme**

## **Agenda item 1**

### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday, 18 December 2012, by Mr. Geert Aagard Andersen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

2. The meeting was attended by 85 participants from 58 countries and 2 observer missions.

3. The Chair welcomed the following new Committee members: Mr. Fernando Rolandelli, Chargé d'Affaires and Permanent Representative of Argentina; Ms. Akua Sekyiwa Ahenkora, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana; Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Abdul-Rahman Al-Abdulla, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Qatar.

4. He bade farewell to the following members who had departed from Nairobi, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. José Agustin Mina, Chargé d'Affaires and Permanent Representative of Argentina; Mr. Charles Mogotsi, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana; Mr. Humphrey Chatio Ajongbah, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana; Mr. Alain Paul Lebeau-pin, Permanent Representative of the Holy See; Ms. Charity Mutesha, Deputy High Commissioner and Deputy Permanent Representative of Zambia.

5. The Executive Director expressed his gratitude to departing members for their support to UNEP and welcomed new members of the Committee. He noted that the timing of the present meeting had been decided upon in the light of the calendar of meetings at United Nations Headquarters, including of the Second Committee of the General Assembly. He said that 2013 promised to be as extraordinarily busy as 2012, which had been particularly notable in that it had marked the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of UNEP.

## **Agenda item 2**

### **Adoption of the agenda**

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in document UNEP/CPR/121/1 and Add.1.

## **Agenda item 3**

### **Adoption of the minutes of the 120th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 26 September 2012**

7. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 120th meeting as set out in document UNEP/CPR/121/2.

## **Agenda item 4**

### **Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

#### **A. Report of the Executive Director**

8. The Executive Director drew attention to his written report and provided an oral report on recent UNEP activities. He highlighted a number of major events that had taken place during 2012, at the forefront of which were the fortieth anniversary celebrations of UNEP and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The Conference had generated widespread recognition of the contribution by UNEP to work on the environmental dimension of sustainable development, including on the green economy, sustainable development goals, sustainable consumption and production, the Global Environment Outlook and activities related to chemicals. In the follow up to Rio+20, the secretariat had been focusing on reflecting the outcomes of the Conference in the draft medium-term strategy and programme of work. A draft decision on the Rio+20 outcomes as they related to UNEP had been endorsed by the Second Committee and would be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session within a matter of days. If adopted, that decision would signal the conclusion of an intense period of reflection about the future role of UNEP and the environmental dimension of sustainable development in the context of the United Nations. He highlighted a vignette that illustrated the thought that had been put into preparations for Rio+20: the pavilion that UNEP had shared with partners at the event had deliberately been constructed of reusable and recyclable materials and was currently being dismantled and reconstructed in an impoverished area of Rio for use as a community recycling and employment facility.

9. He emphasized the significant evolution of the programme of work and its accomplishments, in part as a result of the increased trust of member States in UNEP. He provided a number of examples of important UNEP activities, including UNEP work over several years to facilitate and design an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, as requested by member States, and efforts that were complementary to the activities of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, such as extracting the most up-to-date findings for accelerated action on climate change, including in the context of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants; the Green Growth Knowledge Platform; and the Climate Technology Centre and Network. He recalled that, some years earlier, member States had, requested UNEP to initiate a process to negotiate a global instrument on mercury; that instrument was nearing completion and was likely to be finalized in 2013. In a demonstration of the significance of the extremely sensitive work often carried out by UNEP, the Government of Nigeria had announced recently that it would implement the recommendations of the UNEP report on Ogoniland through a national programme tailored to that end. The Government of the Russian Federation had requested UNEP to be the coordinating agency for a major programme on the Arctic with partners such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. He drew attention to a broad range of activities relating to the green economy, including tools developed in the context of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity initiative.

10. He highlighted a number of his recent visits abroad. In Moscow, he had signed a new memorandum of understanding on cooperation with the Government of the Russian Federation, which had pledged to double its contribution to the Environment Fund to \$1.5 million. In Beijing, he had signed a partnership agreement with the Government of China regarding the \$6 million dollars it had pledged at Rio+20.

11. Turning to the science-policy aspect of the work of UNEP, he drew attention to a number of UNEP products, such as the fifth Global Environment Outlook report, recognition of which in the outcome document of Rio+20 bore testimony to its importance in the framework of international environmental governance. A report entitled *Policy Implications of Warming Permafrost* had been launched at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Doha; the *Emissions Gap Report* had received universal support in terms of its clarity, precision and usefulness in negotiations; and a report produced in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, *Avoiding Future Famines: Strengthening the Ecological Foundation of Food Security through Sustainable Food Systems*, had considered how food might be provided for the future global population of 9 billion people in the light of current knowledge about agriculture and ecosystems. He also highlighted activities in the context of the Global Chemicals Outlook and the work of the International Resource Panel and the Environment Management Group, among others. With support from over 100 partners, the Great Apes Survival Partnership was being revived on the basis of lessons learned. The activities of the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability were continuing.

12. He expressed his deep personal appreciation to members for their support to the development of the medium-term strategy 2014–2017 and the draft programme of work and budget for 2014–2015. He stressed the difficulty of conforming with often unrealistic deadlines dictated by the calendar of meetings at United Nations Headquarters. He noted that queries had arisen as a result of an oral statement to the Second Committee by the Secretary-General, prepared on his behalf by the Controller, on the UNEP draft budget and programme of work 2014–2015. UNEP had identified certain minor errors in the statement, which had been corrected. He stressed that, with the exception of the figure for posts, no figures had been changed in relation to the document that had previously been considered by the Committee. The extra financing derived from the incorrect figure for posts had been redirected to other areas of the draft budget. Some 24 new staff posts had been added, of which only 13 were entirely new positions, bringing the total number of staff for the biennium to 869. He sought the assistance of members to clarify misunderstanding surrounding the draft budget to their capitals, noting that the Controller had been asked to withdraw the statement but had been unable to do so given that it was not factually incorrect. He noted that, in developing the draft budget, the intention had been to focus on more stable funding from the Environment Fund and the regular budget. In the light of the implications of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document, “The future we want”, a budgetary increase of \$18 million was not excessive.

13. He expressed his dismay at the loss of a vital contribution at the last minute in 2012. Some member States that had been forced by the prevailing financial situation to reduce to zero their contributions to UNEP had nevertheless sent messages of support to the organization and a number had indicated that they would endeavour to restore their contributions in the future. In accordance with his prudent approach to managing UNEP in the midst of a global economic crisis, he was using every instrument at his disposal to safeguard UNEP. He thanked member States that had increased their contributions to the Environment Fund for the following biennium and expressed his gratitude for first-time contributions from some eight or nine countries that had not previously pledged support. Despite the challenging outlook for 2013, the extrabudgetary funding target had been exceeded. He stressed that he would rely on the directors of the UNEP divisions to exercise their judgment on which activities would be retained and those that would not be in the face of financial constraints. He expressed his gratitude to the members of the secretariat, who had worked tirelessly to bring to fruition the aforementioned activities.

14. In closing, he said that following the death of Ms. Angela Cropper, former Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, her family had expressed a wish to hold a memorial event in Kenya, possibly in mid January, for her friends and former colleagues. The reaction to the news of her demise had illustrated that hers had been a life truly well lived.

## **B. Discussion**

15. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives thanked the Executive Director for his oral and written reports. Several representatives expressed their condolences to the family, friends and former colleagues of Ms. Cropper, paying tribute to her lifetime achievements and unwavering commitment to a sustainable future for all.

16. Many representatives stressed the need to implement paragraph 88 of the outcome document of Rio+20, “The future we want”, and to translate into action its mandates for the strengthening and upgrading of UNEP. Several representatives said that the Governing Council, at its twenty-seventh session, should focus on implementing the agreement reached at Rio+20.

17. One representative said that 2012 represented a watershed year for UNEP and member States were appreciative of its excellent performance. The Executive Director’s comments regarding the precarious financial situation were particularly worrying given that the new role of UNEP, as outlined in the outcome document of Rio+20, required dependable funding.

18. Another representative congratulated UNEP for its achievements over its 40-year history. He said that the beginning of the following 40 years, marked by the much-anticipated historical decision on UNEP to be adopted by the General Assembly, represented a new chapter for the organization. While 2013 was likely to be a challenging year for UNEP owing to financial constraints, he expressed the certainty that it would rise to the occasion. He highlighted aspects of UNEP work that were crucial to enabling policymakers to guide future activities and efforts, including activities related to the science-policy interface and analysis of the state of the environment; the establishment of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services was particularly relevant in that regard. He stressed the importance of UNEP regional activities and requested that regional considerations should be emphasized at the forthcoming session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum. He also highlighted the decision taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change to establish a Green Climate Fund and looked forward to the full cooperation of the international community in ensuring its early operationalization.

19. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that, in the light of the mandate for the strengthening and upgrading of UNEP set out in the outcome document of Rio+20 and the anticipated decision of the General Assembly, it was important to pursue an ambitious outcome at the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. She highlighted the importance of the medium-term strategy and programme of work and budget and looked forward to further discussions on ways of incorporating therein the orientation set at Rio+20 together with lessons learned. She highlighted linkages between the events of the previous three months with discussions at the forthcoming session of the Governing Council, including on the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the follow-up to the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. She expressed particular appreciation for UNEP work on the *Emissions Gap Report*. She emphasized also the importance of programmatic cooperation in relation to the

Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and regular and targeted reporting on the activities of the Environment Management Group and UNEP involvement in United Nations system-wide coordination, specifically on the follow-up to Rio+20.

20. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, congratulated the UNEP-led consortium for having been chosen as the host for the Climate Technology Centre and Network. He expressed the expectation that UNEP would initiate work in that regard without delay, including the appointment of a director for the centre. Considerable attention was being focused on ensuring that UNEP delivered on its new mandate. In that context, he reiterated the expectation of a strengthened and revitalized UNEP with more focus on results on the ground, and expressed the hope that its regional and national presence would be strengthened in partnership with other United Nations entities. It was to be hoped that due consideration would be granted to qualified citizens of underrepresented countries and to women, in particular, in the competition for UNEP staff posts. He underscored the importance of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and expressed the hope that capacity-building and capacity-development, including the strengthening of national and regional centres of excellence, would be prioritized in its work programme. It was to be hoped that at the platform's first meeting, to be held in Bonn in January 2013, organizational matters relating to rules of procedure and secretariat arrangements, among other things, would be finalized in order to enable substantive work to commence. He expressed his gratitude to countries that had contributed to the Environment Fund in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. He noted with satisfaction that a number of countries, including Brazil and China, had joined the ranks of the major donors and he commended the recent contribution by the Russian Federation. He thanked UNEP for its support to the African Ministerial Conference on Environment and expressed the hope that UNEP would continue to support the flagship programmes of the Conference.

21. One representative, speaking on behalf of the African group, said that remarkable progress had been made on improving access to water. Deteriorating water quality was, however, affecting the populations of many developing countries and guidelines on water quality for ecosystems were lacking. In order to address that deficiency, the African group would be presenting a draft decision on the matter to the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session.

22. One representative commended the secretariat for its zeal in preparing for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council and on the meaningful outcome of Rio+20. He urged the early establishment of an open-ended working group on sustainable development goals and a working group on the development of a financial strategy.

23. Another representative thanked the Executive Director for the pivotal role he had played in numerous environmental discussions. She said that Rio+20 represented the culmination of several processes, including the so-called "Belgrade process", which had come to fruition in the decision to upgrade and strengthen UNEP, including through universal membership of the Governing Council and consolidation of its headquarter functions. The Governing Council would be responsible for defining future arrangements for its own functioning. It was to be hoped that the necessary measures for the fulfilment of the new UNEP mandate would be in place by the close of the 2014–2015 budget cycle. She expressed the hope that, as a result of the review of institutional arrangements at the following session of the Governing Council, the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives would acquire renewed and wider significance and that the rules of procedure for the subsidiary body would set out updated functions for and ensure full membership of the Committee.

24. Responding to comments, the Executive Director said that 54 of the posts under the regular budget allocation would be in regional offices, which represented a significant attempt at the regional level to implement the vision of UNEP. Enhancing capacity at the subregional and national levels was also a priority for UNEP, in conformity with the outcome document of Rio+20. He noted that Governments had agreed in New York on the composition and functioning of the open-ended working group on sustainable development goals, which would begin its work in the near future. The High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda was due to complete its work by February 2013; he urged members whose delegations were represented on the Panel to stress the importance of the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

### **C. Presentation on the outcome of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

25. A representative of the secretariat provided an overview of the outcomes of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of relevance to the UNEP subprogramme on climate change. One of the main outcomes of the session had been agreement on the details of a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention, from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2020. Current pledges and targets on emissions were to be reviewed by 2014 and the fifth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was expected to be published in that year. Consensus had been reached on the need to begin negotiations on a climate agreement; the Parties had agreed on a workplan with milestones and that an initial draft negotiating text on a climate agreement should be available for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its nineteenth session. Parties had also endorsed the Secretary-General's call for a global climate leaders' summit, to be convened in 2014, to provide momentum for and support to climate change negotiations. Developed countries had reaffirmed their commitment to mobilize \$100 billion annually from 2020 for adaptation and mitigation activities, and certain parties, including Denmark, Germany and the European Union, had made specific pledges to assist developing countries in the period 2013-2015. Parties had also agreed to establish a new international mechanism to address loss and damage associated with climate change. Parties had also supported the hosting of a new Climate Technology Centre and Network by a UNEP-led consortium. In closing, she described salient aspects of the UNEP climate change subprogramme's focus on adaptation, mitigation, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD), science and outreach.

26. The representative of Japan drew attention to a new bilateral offset credit mechanism to complement the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol.

27. One representative said that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was still in force, but the Conference of the Parties was considering a new instrument to take over from the Kyoto Protocol. The coverage of the new instrument would be decided upon during the negotiations on its development. Discussions on an instrument on loss and damage, intended for compensation of least developed countries and other developing countries, would begin in 2013. He noted that no mandate had been given to UNEP to produce the *Emissions Gap Report*; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, was, he said, the legitimate forum for the assessment of issues related to climate change.

28. One representative, welcoming the outcomes of the eighteenth session, said that ambitions for the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol should be raised in order to attempt to achieve the less than 2-degree Celsius global warming target.

29. One representative said that the concept of tipping points was often discussed in academic circles. He suggested that UNEP should deliver clear warnings in terms of tipping points to the international community to clarify the stark realities of climate change. He asked whether UNEP had undertaken analyses related to tipping points.

30. The representative of the secretariat said that negotiations on a new legal agreement on climate change were likely to conclude by 2015. She said that the secretariat would give further consideration to the other issues raised by members.

#### **Agenda item 5**

##### **Report of the subcommittees**

31. The Chair presented the report of the subcommittees.

32. One representative commended the organization of meetings and modalities for operation of the subcommittees, which were important in achieving an effective working relationship between the Committee and the secretariat. She requested that documents be distributed sufficiently in advance of meetings to ensure the optimal engagement of the Committee.

33. The Committee endorsed the report as presented by the Chair.

**Agenda item 6**

**Status of preparations for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

34. Introducing the item, the Executive Director expressed his gratitude to members for their active engagement in preparations for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to be held in February 2013. Preparations were progressing well for what promised to be an intense session that would be shaped by decisions to be taken in New York, including on the medium-term strategy and the budget and programme of work. Were a decision on UNEP to be adopted in New York as anticipated, the twenty-seventh session would be the first to accommodate universal membership, meaning that logistical arrangements would be more complex. Considerable effort had been deployed to organizing a number of events back-to-back with the session, including the Tunza International Youth Conference on the Environment and meetings of the Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment and the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability. He provided an overview of the proposed programme of work of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, including presentations and round-table discussions. Following guidance from United Nations Headquarters, the regional consultations, intended to enhance cooperation among ministers in the respective regions, would be constituted in the form of the regional groups, rather than in line with the regional offices of UNEP. Time had been allocated for interaction between the Executive Director and ministers or heads of delegation on key issues. He stressed that ministers were at liberty to request a reconfiguration of the programme of work

35. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that greater focus was required on the future governance structure of UNEP in the programme for the high-level segment of the session. The consultation between ministers or heads of delegation and the Executive Director should be extended; the one and half hours currently allocated for that purpose were insufficient. She emphasized the need for delegations to receive in a timely manner background information for the session, together with detailed information on side events and meetings being held back-to-back with the session. She expressed her understanding that information on sessional committees that might be established was indicative rather than limitative.

36. Another representative expressed the hope that the twenty-seventh session would pave the way for a strengthened UNEP, capable of adapting to emerging environmental challenges and working optimally with other United Nations entities and partners. Consensus was within reach on a name for the ministerial body, he said. The rules of procedure should be brought into line with universal membership and a comprehensive discussion was required on new institutional arrangements. Turning to the programme of work and budget, he said that adhering to the United Nations Secretariat's rules and procedures was clearly challenging. He welcomed the possibility of a briefing on the budget implications of the decision that was likely to be adopted by the Second Committee. He welcomed also the adoption of a decision by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighteenth session regarding the Climate Technology Centre and Network to be hosted by a UNEP-led consortium, and requested more information on the related memorandum of understanding to be presented to the Governing Council for its consideration in February 2013.

37. The Executive Director said that the letter of notification concerning the twenty-seventh session had been sent out. While member States were at liberty to organize side events, he cautioned that too many such events could represent a distraction from the main work of the session. Institutional arrangements were a matter for the consideration and decision of member States and the rules of procedure should work as an enabling framework for the operation of meetings. He showed a diagram illustrating how the universal membership body might function as a platform for the environment.

38. He suggested that a possible title for the body might be the United Nations Environment Assembly, which was currently being used as a working title. It had been proposed that the membership of the bureau of the Governing Council might be increased from 5 to 10 and should assist with running the new body, ensuring stronger engagement with the Committee and enhancing the Committee's role, among other things. The Governing Council could convene every second year, with a global conference being held in intervening years on the state of the environment. The conference could be

linked through the Global Environment Outlook process to the development of recommendations to the Governing Council. He noted that such proposals represented initial ideas and did not reflect consensus among member States or a final draft.

39. One representative said that consideration by the Committee of the possible form of the universal membership body was premature and the Governing Council would consider the matter fully. It was important, he said, for the Committee to finalize discussions on draft decisions before attempting to develop a clear set of options for the new universal membership Governing Council.

40. One representative said that upcoming changes to the Governing Council represented an opportunity to establish a robust, effective and efficient governance structure to optimize the decision-making process. He emphasized the importance of geographical balance and balance between developed and developing countries.

41. The Executive Director highlighted the importance of the Committee's role in facilitating preparations for sessions of the Governing Council, including by preparing in January and February 2013 options and scenarios for the enactment of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of Rio+20. The secretariat was in favour of holding an extraordinary session of the Committee in early February to facilitate optimal work by the Committee.

### **Agenda item 7**

#### **Other matters**

42. The Executive Director drew attention to a proposed funding contribution from a private company, Jiangmen Wealth Water Purifying Agent Co. Ltd, in support of the UNEP flagship environment award, Champions of the Earth. The company had been reviewed and found to be compatible with UNEP and the United Nations. In accordance with the Financial Rules of UNEP, the proposed contribution was required to be approved by the Committee.

43. The Committee approved the proposed funding contribution from Jiangmen Wealth Water Purifying Agent Co. Ltd.

44. One representative said that the schedule of meetings of the Committee in 2013, including the frequency of such meetings, was dependent on discussions to be held at the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council. It was premature, therefore, to approve a schedule of meetings prior to the session. He suggested that the ultimate meeting of the Committee prior to the session should be held at the end of January, possibly on 29 or 31 January, rather than the beginning of February, in order to ensure that the consideration of draft decisions was finalized and to allow time for informal preparations concerning institutional arrangements.

45. The representative of the secretariat said that a number of factors should be considered in relation to the schedule of meetings, including the availability of conference rooms and of members of the secretariat and the timing of other important meetings, such as the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, which would be held in January 2013. It was likely that the frequency of Committee meetings would be increased in the light of discussions at the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council, in which case additional meetings could be included in the schedule currently proposed. The secretariat had planned that informal preparations concerning institutional arrangements would be undertaken in parallel with discussions in the subcommittees on draft decisions. An extraordinary meeting of the Committee was planned for 6 February 2013, in advance of the twenty-seventh session.

46. A number of representatives said that informal consultations on institutional arrangements should take place after consultations on draft decisions and that the extraordinary meeting of the Committee in preparation for the session should be held at the end of January rather than in early February.

47. One representative said that an extraordinary meeting of the Committee in January might not be possible in view of other meetings that were scheduled for January.

48. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that her delegation had yet to finalize its consideration of the schedule of meetings.

49. The Committee agreed to take note of the proposed schedule of meetings, pending final agreement following the conclusion of the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council, at which the institutional arrangements for UNEP governance would be discussed.

**Agenda item 8**

**Closure of the meeting**

50. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.25 p.m. on Tuesday, 18 December 2012.

## **Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme**

### **Agenda item 1**

#### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.40 a.m. on Thursday, 31 January 2013, by Mr. Geert Aagaard Andersen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. The meeting was attended by 85 participants from 56 countries and 2 observer missions.
3. He welcomed the following new permanent representatives: Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Abdul-Rahman Al-Abdulla, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Qatar, Mr. Johan Borgstam, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sweden to UNEP, and he bade farewell to the following permanent representatives who had departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. Emmanuel Besnier, Deputy Permanent Representative of France, Mr. Manuel Jose Goncalves, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Mozambique, Ms. Ann Dismorr, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sweden.
4. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, welcomed members and thanked the Committee for its active engagement in preparations for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Adoption of the agenda**

5. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in the document that had been circulated.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

6. Introducing the item, the Executive Director of UNEP drew attention to his written report.
7. In his statement, he provided an overview of developments since the previous meeting of the Committee. Of particular significance, he said, was the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 67/213, on the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twelfth special session and on the implementation of section IV.C, entitled "Environmental pillar in the context of sustainable development", of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "The future we want". In the said resolution the General Assembly had decided to establish universal membership in the Governing Council of UNEP, and had mandated it, as from its first universal session to be held in Nairobi in February 2013, using its applicable rules of procedure and applicable rules and practices of the General Assembly, pending the adoption of its new rules of procedure, to expeditiously initiate the implementation of the provisions contained in paragraph 88 of the outcome document, in its entirety; to make a recommendation on its designation to reflect its universal character; and to decide on future arrangements for the Global Ministerial Environment Forum. That decision, together with the establishment of an open working group on sustainable development goals, represented the first steps in implementing the outcome of Rio+20, he said.
8. Also in December 2012, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 67/203, on implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. In conformity with that decision, the reporting line to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) had been designated and the identification by member States of national focal points for engagement with the ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns was proceeding. The establishment of the open working group on sustainable development goals was another important development. The first meeting of the group was to be held in early February 2013 in conformity with paragraph 240 of the outcome document of Rio+20.

9. Multiple processes were under way in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, including the meetings of the open working group, the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which was due to complete its work by April 2013, the United Nations inter-agency technical support team on the sustainable development goals and the United Nations system-wide coordination related to the post-2015 development agenda under the leadership of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). UNEP was considering the secondment of one UNEP staff member to each of the technical support team and the High-level Panel. Two working groups had been established, one on global partnerships for development and the other on measurement and indicators, to which UNEP was contributing its expertise as required. UNEP involvement in the complex set of post-2015 processes was, by necessity, strategic.

10. He expressed his satisfaction at the agreement reached at the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally-binding instrument on mercury, the outcome of which constituted a sound, meaningful, pragmatic and practical response to the challenges posed by mercury. The diplomatic conference for the signature of the Minamata Convention on Mercury would take place in Kumamoto and Minamata, Japan, in October 2013. Participants had agreed on a hybrid approach to the financial mechanism for the new convention, which combined a Global Environment Facility (GEF) trust fund and a special international programme of support for aspects that could not be financed by GEF. The outcome of the first meeting of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services had been equally pleasing; agreement had been reached, among other things, on the first chair of the Platform, a budget, an expert panel and a secretariat to be provided by UNEP.

11. UNEP had launched, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the “Think, eat, save: reduce your footprint” campaign to raise public awareness about food security and consider such questions as how to avoid the current enormous wastage of food by retailers, consumers and the hospitality industry.

12. In closing he drew attention to two new publications, “Responsible property investment”, which was aimed at the private sector and large-scale development, and “A new angle on sovereign credit risk. E-RISC: environmental risk integration in sovereign credit analysis”, a publication of the UNEP Finance Initiative, which focused on how better to reflect the environmental risks that could affect sovereign bonds in the future.

13. In the ensuing discussion, a number of representatives congratulated the Executive Director for his informative report. One representative said that the Executive Director’s substantial report reflected the dynamic nature of the international panorama with regard to the implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that it was crucial to stay abreast of widespread efforts to implement the outcomes of Rio+20.

14. One representative said that a great deal of ground had been covered in the consideration by the Committee of the draft decisions for submission to the Governing Council for its consideration. The draft decisions now reflected the different positions that existed among member States in readiness for the negotiations by the Council.

15. One representative expressed his satisfaction that UNEP was providing its support to the technical support team on sustainable development goals. He sought clarification regarding the date for the nomination of national focal points for the board on the 10-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production.

16. One representative congratulated UNEP for having been chosen as the secretariat for the intergovernmental platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and looked forward to the commencement of substantive work by the important body. Another representative expressed his satisfaction that the intergovernmental platform stood ready to fulfil its mandate in the light of the decisions reached at its first organizational meeting.

17. One representative said that the Minamata Convention on Mercury, agreed upon at the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, would enable the reduction of the risks posed by mercury and prevent mercury contamination on a global scale with the participation of as many countries as possible. The early entry into force of the mercury instrument was crucial. Another representative congratulated the presidency of the intergovernmental negotiating committee at its fifth session; the chair from Uruguay had skillfully steered negotiations to a successful outcome, he said.

18. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, congratulated the secretariat for its efficient organization of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and the participants who had contributed to its success. The outcome of the session would not only ensure that mercury contamination was tackled, but would also lead to enhanced cooperation and coordination among the instruments and activities in the chemicals and waste cluster. The outcome with regard to the financial mechanism would be helpful for discussions on financial aspects at the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council.

19. The representative of Japan said that his Government was eager to see the participation of as many countries as possible at the diplomatic conference for the Minamata Convention to be held in Kumamoto and Minamata, Japan, in October 2013.

20. Responding to comments, the Executive Director said that the deadline for the nomination to UNEP of focal points and alternates was 8 February 2013, while the deadline for the nomination by regional groups of members of the 10-member board for the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production was 30 January 2013.

21. He noted that the Deputy Executive Director had been unable to attend the present meeting due to other commitments. She was currently attending the thirteenth Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, in New Delhi, India, from 31 January to 4 February 2013, and had attended the twentieth African Union Summit, held in Addis Ababa from 21 to 28 January 2013. He drew attention to his recent visit to the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi from 15 to 17 January 2013. He had held a meeting in January 2013 with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), with which UNEP intended to work more closely and would be signing a memorandum of understanding in the near future. He had also attended the World Economic Forum 2012, in Davos, Switzerland, at which participants had expressed guarded optimism regarding the global economic outlook. He noted that the profile of the African continent was continuing to rise in the World Economic Forum. Topics such as the frontiers of economic development and investment, public-private partnerships, green growth, natural capital, oceans and forests, had all been prominent at the 2012 Forum. Climate change had been a topic under discussion at the Forum for some years; there was widespread acknowledgement that it was an issue of preeminent importance for humankind, including by the leaders of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the African Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The processes in place to address climate change were at their lowest point in terms of credibility and optimism, however. There was very little time remaining for the negotiation of a climate change agreement, which was supposed to be finalized by 2015. UNEP was working with the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Ms. Christiana Figueres, to continue to develop its close collaboration on climate change.

22. One representative requested that further information on UNEP collaboration with IRENA be provided to the Committee.

#### **Agenda item 4**

##### **Report of the subcommittees**

23. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the report of the subcommittees, the revised draft decisions considered by the subcommittees for submission to the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session and a draft decision on the green economy, recently submitted by China.

24. In the ensuing discussion, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, noted that while the review of the draft decisions in the subcommittees had been useful, it should be understood that discussions on the draft decisions would continue at the twenty-seventh session and could only be finalized by the Governing Council. She requested that the secretariat make available the full complement of information documents for the twenty-seventh session, including a report on the relationship between UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements, to ensure adequate consideration of issues by members prior to the session. She requested that members should be informed of the availability of new documents. She sought clarification regarding a possible separate decision on the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and requested a briefing by the secretariat on the participation in the twenty-seventh session of major groups and stakeholders.

25. The representative of China introduced a draft decision on the green economy, which was

intended to facilitate the further development of that concept. A number of representatives welcomed the draft decision on the green economy; two representatives sought clarification regarding the process for providing amendments thereto.

26. One representative sought clarification regarding a possible draft decision on the rules of procedure and institutional arrangements for the reconfigured Governing Council in the light of the transition to universal membership. He asked that any relevant information be made available to the Committee in a timely manner.

27. Responding to comments, the representative of the secretariat said that the draft decision on the green economy had only been submitted recently, thereby precluding its consideration by members in the subcommittees. It would therefore be bracketed in its entirety and submitted to the Governing Council for its consideration. The secretariat intended to convene informal sessions of the Committee in early February 2013 to enable an exchange of views on new rules of procedure and institutional arrangements for the Governing Council prior to an in-depth discussion on the matter at the twenty-seventh session. The relevant documentation would be circulated to members via email in the coming days. He noted that one or more member States were planning to submit a draft decision on the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services. If the draft decision were submitted to the secretariat in advance of the session, it would be circulated to members.

28. He said that the draft decision on proposed revisions to the Financial Rules of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme and the General Procedures Governing the Operations of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme had been withdrawn in the light of advice received from the Controller and the United Nations Office at Nairobi to the effect that UNEP would be able to proceed with the introduction of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on 1 January 2014 prior to the adoption of revised financial rules and general procedures. A substantive revision of the financial rules and general procedures would commence in 2014 in collaboration with relevant parties, including the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). He said that a table showing the current procedure for the approval of financial rules for United Nations funds and programmes would be distributed to members.

29. One representative said that he had been convinced by the secretariat of the need for a draft decision on the financial rules and general procedures. It was doubtful, he suggested, that the Executive Director was empowered to withdraw a draft decision once it had been considered by the Committee. He noted that the draft decision should be forwarded to the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session for reassessment of the situation.

30. Another representative expressed her approval for the process proposed by the secretariat for the revision of the financial rules and general procedures, which, she said, would enable an in-depth discussion to tackle current challenges, including the existing tension between the financial rules of UNEP and other financial rules in the United Nations system.

31. The Executive Director said that the secretariat had initially been led to believe that the introduction of IPSAS would not be possible without prior revision of the financial rules. Following recent consultations with the Controller, however, it had become apparent that IPSAS could be introduced while the current financial rules were in force. The revision of the financial rules would require a great deal of coordination and consultation, including with internal and external auditors and ACABQ. He suggested that it would be appropriate, therefore, to keep the Governing Council updated on the latest developments but to avoid submitting a draft decision on the matter at the forthcoming session.

32. One representative, while agreeing to the withdrawal of the draft decision in question, said that he would not like to see the situation set a precedent for the spontaneous withdrawal by the secretariat of draft decisions that had been considered by the Committee.

33. The Committee agreed to the withdrawal of the draft decision on the proposed revisions to the Financial Rules of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme and the General Procedures Governing the Operations of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme.

34. The Committee agreed to forward the draft decisions for consideration by the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session.

**Agenda item 5****Preparations for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

35. Introducing the item, the Executive Director drew attention to the proposed organization of work, the provisional timetable and other relevant documentation for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council. He expressed his appreciation to members for their cooperation with the secretariat on preparations for the twenty-seventh session, which represented a milestone in the history of UNEP as the first session of the Council/Forum with universal membership. General Assembly resolution 67/213, of 21 December 2012, had identified areas in which the Governing Council was required to take action for the implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document. The Council would focus on two main topics at its twenty-seventh session, namely, how to frame the UNEP governance platform, and programmatic aspects, including the medium-term strategy, the programme of work and budget. The session represented a crucial meeting at which the tracks would be laid for the future functioning of the governing body of UNEP and processes would be set in motion that would be likely to continue for some time.

36. He asked members to convey to ministers the importance of attending the session, which would design the governance vision for UNEP. The ministerial consultations would take place from 18 to 20 February 2013 and ministers would be particularly welcome during that period. He drew attention to various events being held immediately prior to the session, including the Tunza International Youth Conference on the Environment, which he urged members to attend to witness the breathtaking excellence of young people, and the fourteenth Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, at which a session for interaction with governments would be included. A high-level meeting on the rule of law and the environment for ministers, chief justices, attorneys general, auditors general, chief prosecutors and other high-ranking representatives of the judicial, legal and auditing professions, and a meeting of the Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment, would also be held prior to the session. In addition, he invited members to participate in the half marathon and fun run scheduled to take place after the closure of the session on Sunday, 24 February 2013. Other side events included the “Sustainable innovations expo” and the launch of the UNEP fortieth anniversary book.

37. The representative of the secretariat said that over 100 delegations had registered to attend the session. He urged members to ensure that credentials were submitted in a timely manner. Registration was particularly important given that photo identity badges would be issued to all participants with the exception of heads of delegation. A number of sessions would be webcast.

38. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Kenya said that the President of Kenya would officially open the twenty-seventh session. A security desk would be set up to welcome delegates arriving at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi and transport organized for ministers and heads of delegation. Visas would be issued to delegates on arrival; discussions were under way regarding the possible waiver of the visa fee for delegates. Representatives of the Government of Kenya and UNEP were meeting on a weekly basis to finalize security arrangements for the session.

39. A number of representatives sought clarification on side events and meetings, including of the regional groups and the Bureau. One representative asked for further information on the high-level meeting on the rule of law and the environment while another suggested that parliamentarians should be represented at that high-level meeting.

40. One representative suggested that the meeting between ministers and the Executive Director should not be restricted to discussions on a particular topic, but should allow for consideration of issues of particular importance to participants.

41. Another representative, thanking the secretariat for its considerable efforts to prepare for the session, suggested that the regional groupings under UNEP did not reflect the reality of the regions on the ground. Stressing the importance of the regional delivery of UNEP programmes, she said that the current political regional groupings did not correspond to the UNEP regional offices and meant that at meetings of regional groups there was often a lack of shared concerns and issues.

42. One representative sought clarification regarding the availability of seating for delegations at the session.

43. A number of representatives asked the secretariat to ensure that members of the Committee were given access to UNEP offices during the session. One representative said that all delegates should have access to areas where meetings were to be held. Another said that members of the

Committee should always have access to the United Nations entities they were accredited to. One representative stressed the importance of the availability of documentation for the session, including draft decisions in electronic copy through the extranet.

44. Responding to comments, the Executive Director said that members of the judiciary had explicitly requested that parliamentarians should not be included in their meetings on the rule of law and the environment because they saw themselves as a distinct arm of government. Parliamentarians were, however, an important constituency for UNEP, and he would give further thought, he said, to ways of making UNEP more accessible and relevant for them. He asked members to avoid making further pre-session adjustments to the programme of work and schedule for the session; any further changes could be made at the session, as required. He said that he understood the point made regarding the configuration of regional groupings and would endeavour to find ways of responding to that concern during the session.

45. The representative of the secretariat provided further information on membership and meetings of the Bureau and regional groups. The Bureau was almost fully constituted; he appealed to the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean to expedite their nomination of a member to the Bureau. He noted that the issuance of photo badges would commence on the Friday preceding the session. Members of the Committee were required to register but would not need new badges for the session. He said that sufficient space would be available for a head of delegation plus at least two alternates per member State desk.

46. The Executive Director stated that the matter of access for members and delegates to offices on the compound would be brought to the attention of the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

47. The Committee drew lots to determine the seating arrangement for the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council. It was determined that Mauritania would occupy the first seat and the remaining member States would be seated in the adjacent seats according to their names in English alphabetical order.

#### **Agenda item 6**

##### **Other matters**

48. There were no other matters.

#### **Agenda item 7**

##### **Closure of the meeting**

49. The chair declared the meeting closed at 11.25 a.m. on Thursday, 31 January 2013

# Minutes of the 122nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme

## Agenda item 1

### Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting was opened at 9.35 a.m. on Thursday, 11 April 2013, by Mr. Geert Aagard Andersen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
2. The meeting was attended by 69 participants from 48 countries and 1 observer mission.
3. The Chair welcomed the following new Committee members: Ms. Maria Eugenia Correa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia; Mr. Andre William Anguile, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Gabon; Mr. Martin Mbugua Kimani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya; Mr. Ratubatsi Super Moloi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of South Africa; Mr. John Murton, Deputy High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Ms. Vanessa Redmond, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom; and Mr. Nestor Luis Fajardo Acosta, Chargé d'Affaires of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
4. He bade farewell to the following members who had departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Ms. Ana Maria Sampaio Fernandes, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil; Mr. Jose Miguel Castiblanco Muñoz, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia; Mr. Emmanuel Isoze Ngondet, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Gabon; Mr. George Owuor, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya; Mr. Domingo D. Lucenario, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines; Mr. Ndumiso N. Ntshinga, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of South Africa; Ms. Susannah Goshko, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom; and Ms. Louise Matthias, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

## Agenda item 2

### Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in document UNEP/CPR/122/1/Rev. 1 and Add.1/Rev.1.

## Agenda item 3

### Adoption of the minutes of the 121st meeting and the extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 18 December 2012 and 31 January 2013, respectively

6. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 121st meeting and the extraordinary meeting as set out in documents UNEP/CPR/122/2 and UNEP/CPR/122/3, respectively.

## Agenda item 4

### Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

#### A. Report of the Executive Director

7. The Executive Director drew attention to his written report on UNEP activities and progress made since December 2012 and gave a short oral report highlighting major developments.
8. He provided an overview of the status of implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), notably the work initiated in New York on the post-2015 development framework and the sustainable development goals, the work of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the initiative of the Secretary-General focusing on the 1,000 days remaining until the end of the Millennium Development Goals implementation period. Member States had shown enormous interest in the concept of the sustainable development goals, and from the perspective of UNEP those goals would be the focus of the most significant policy and conceptual discourse in the following two years, building on the outcome of Rio+20 and linking with discussions on the post-2015 development framework that were currently being conducted in a parallel process. He noted that 2015 would be a year of extremely intense and interrelated multilateral negotiations with climate change talks reaching a peak, the culmination of the Millennium Development Goals and the launch of the post-2015 development agenda.

9. There was a great deal of activity within the United Nations system on the post-2015 development agenda. He drew attention to progress in the work of the Post-2015 United Nations Task Team and key thematic consultations held recently at the global level on the environment and energy, as well as some 80 national consultations on the post-2015 development agenda. Stakeholders' views were also being sought through a significant online outreach programme on the matter. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel was completing its report, which would feed into the Secretary-General's report to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, and to which UNEP was contributing. UNEP was proactively engaged in supporting the various strands of work on the post-2015 development framework and was analysing where the organization could best deploy its resources in a strategic, complementary and value-added way. He expressed the view that the sense of bipolarity with regards to the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development goals was giving way to an understanding in intergovernmental forums and discussions of their convergence and the need to develop a framework to encapsulate the converging opportunities and activities called for. The crucial role of the United Nations system, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, lay in providing the background analysis and data to assist countries and the international community in setting meaningful targets and underpinning the goals with the necessary information base. The important role of the World Bank in assisting countries that were lagging behind in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals had been highlighted at the meeting of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, held in Madrid in April 2013, and reflected the importance attached thereto by the Secretary-General and the unprecedented dialogue taking place within the United Nations and World Bank leaderships on the implementation of the targets of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly on sanitation, water and health. The future and credibility of the sustainable development goals would, he said, be partly predicated on the success of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

10. Among other significant events, he highlighted the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, held in Bangkok in March 2013. Decisions adopted at the meeting showed the convergence between use-oriented management regimes, such as fisheries, and the conservation management of threatened species, with Member States starting to view those mandates as complementary rather than competing. At the meeting, attention had been drawn to the plethora of initiatives under way under different mandates and the important role of UNEP had been illustrated in bringing together the actors and stakeholders, examining the nature of international cooperation needed and supporting efforts leading to changes in consumption behaviour. He drew parallels between the illegal trade in wildlife and timber and the drugs trade in terms of the enormous financial volume and the economic crime being committed against nations, which called for a much broader alliance in combating the phenomenon.

11. Turning to climate change, he also mentioned the selection of a UNEP-led consortium to host the Climate Technology Centre and Network of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for which vacancies would be announced shortly. He also drew attention to the progress on the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and welcomed the pledge of \$10 million by Canada and contributions received from Sweden, the United States of America and others to the Coalition.

12. He welcomed the decision by the Government of Nigeria to dedicate \$1 billion to financing the clean-up operation in Ogoniland, as proposed by UNEP, and to initiate studies in other parts of Nigeria on similar operations. He highlighted the World Environment Day, to be held on 5 June 2013 and hosted by the Government of Mongolia, on the theme "Think, eat, save", and the forthcoming second simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants taking place in Geneva, Switzerland, which demonstrated the benefits of synergies at the level of intergovernmental action and at national implementation levels, including cost savings.

## **B. Discussion**

13. In the ensuing discussion, all the representatives who spoke thanked the Executive Director for his oral and written reports and said that the first universal session of the UNEP Governing Council had been a great success. A number of representatives referred to the important decisions taken at the meeting.

14. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, welcomed the outcomes of the first universal session, emphasizing the importance their implementation. Global challenges called for a multilateral and democratic response that brought all nations together. Universal membership would provide the necessary support and legitimacy to further strengthen UNEP but this universality should

not be confined only to meetings of the governing body; all Member States should participate in the work of the intersessional period, in particular in the elaboration of the medium-term strategy and programme of work and budget. In that regard, he called, inter alia, for the increased substantive participation of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, which did not have representation in Nairobi; for improvement in the work of the subsidiary bodies to the UNEP governing body, including the Committee, and the working methods of the secretariat in order to fulfil the mandate of the Programme; and for a timetable of meetings consistent with the processes taking place at United Nations Headquarters and in Geneva. It was essential, he said, to follow up on the decisions adopted by Member States at the first universal session, which were consistent with the direction received from Rio+20 and the General Assembly. The two major challenges of poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development had to be addressed through an integrated and flexible approach; the role of UNEP was of paramount importance and joint efforts were therefore called for to ensure that UNEP gained legitimacy and relevance by becoming more responsive, accountable and useful to Member States. In conclusion, he sought specific clarification regarding when the medium-term strategy adopted by the Governing Council at its first universal session would be considered by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, so that his colleagues in New York could cooperate closely in the process; he requested that the programme evaluation of UNEP conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services be made available to Member States; and he sought more information on the constitution of the new council of senior legal figures to advance the role of law, justice and good governance in achieving sustainable development, initiated by UNEP in 2012, and on the Global Environmental Alert Service's publication on transnational environmental crime and whether it referred to international or domestic violations.

15. Another representative expressed support for the new working methods being put in place for the Committee of Permanent Representatives, notably the advance distribution of the Executive Director's report, which gave Member States the opportunity to review it and consult with their capitals. She noted, however, that the reports still dwelt on activities and events, and she called for a more strategic approach, focusing on key questions that would promote interaction with and feedback from Member States. She also called for intersessional discussions of issues such as wildlife trafficking, rather than waiting for biennial meetings of the governing body to tackle such matters. She singled out wildlife trafficking as an area in which all States needed to be involved and UNEP could play an important role in harnessing positive activities that were already under way and exercising its convening power. Her delegation had been working on the issue for many years and would appreciate discussion and an exchange of views on the matter within the Committee, which was an appropriate forum for such debate and could also provide input on such issues to the Executive Director. Another representative suggested that the discussion on crime and illegal trade should be broadened to include wildlife and illegal timber and more general issues with regard to the rule of law.

16. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, welcomed the decisions adopted at the first universal session of the Governing Council, as well as the developments pertaining to the role of UNEP as the host of the Climate Technology Centre and Network and secretariat of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns. He called for all stakeholders and countries to be involved in the latter and for UNEP to fully operationalize the Framework. On governance, he called on the Executive Director to continue to support Governments in the implementation of environmental laws and the improvement of environmental governance at the national level, among other things, and to explore the possibility of establishing an international network of legal practitioners and enforcement communities. He called for enhanced stakeholder participation in the new universal governing body of UNEP, including wider accreditation of non-governmental organizations, while upholding the prerogative of Governments in decision-making. He urged the Executive Director to continue efforts to broaden the donor base of UNEP and to implement the Africa region flagship programmes identified by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fourteenth session as a means of implementing the outcomes of Rio+20.

### **C. Presentation on enhancing UNEP participation in United Nations country teams**

17. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on enhancing UNEP participation in United Nations country teams in response to relevant past Governing Council decisions. She provided an overview of the different areas of UNEP engagement on the ground, notably under the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, including technical support and expertise, training for country teams and national institutions, and the development of national environment summaries. Regional and country offices served as the main delivery hubs for UNEP interventions in response to country needs, together with project offices, particularly in post-conflict areas, and various secretariats hosted or supported by UNEP. She outlined the systematic efforts being made by UNEP to increase the Programme's ability to work with country teams on the ground, including strengthening human resources, planning documentation, governance tools, and communication and outreach. The

responses of UNEP were driven by a number of external policy directives arising from the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, Rio+20, and the decisions of the governing body of UNEP at its first universal session, among others. Copies of the presentation would be made available to the Committee, she said.

18. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives thanked the secretariat for the presentation and expressed interest in receiving further information on the work of UNEP at the country level. A number of representatives requested more strategic and analytical information, for example, regarding the major challenges facing UNEP in country-level activities, successes achieved and areas where less progress was being made and Member States could provide assistance, and how the activities of UNEP were responding to regional priorities and efforts. One representative noted that the framework for regional activities seemed to be geared towards the “Delivering as one” approach and sought further clarification regarding the pilot phase thereof. Another called for UNEP country programmes and regional frameworks to be in synergy with national priorities, and recommended the good practice employed by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme of appointing regional managers in some countries, which would ensure that the work of UNEP was effective on the ground. One representative queried whether information newsletters sent to country officers were translated into the six languages of the United Nations in order to reach as many people as possible in the field.

19. The representative of the secretariat said that further consideration would be given to the suggestions made by members. She said that UNEP was developing a new programme framework that would analyse strategies for delivery and raise the geographical priorities of the regions to a higher level. The “Delivering as one” approach constituted the classic approach employed by UNEP in its work with country teams, in response to the call of the Secretary-General for a more coherent system-wide approach. In all subprogramme areas, however, UNEP engaged not only with the country teams but also with other agencies and on its own. The pilot scheme had started with eight countries, but the “Delivering as one” initiative would be expanded and applied to all countries progressively.

20. In his response, the Executive Director acknowledged the interest of the Committee in the strategic direction and analysis of the work of UNEP at the regional levels and proposed the organization of a briefing to meet that demand. On the question of regional newsletters and reports shared with the Committee, he pointed out the distinction between informal and internally circulated information and formal reports that had to be translated into the six official languages of the United Nations; currently UNEP did not have the financial resources to translate all the information shared with the Committee. The translation policy for documents was constantly under review and although the number of translated documents was growing, it was not possible to translate everything that was published. He invited proposals on the matter.

21. He noted that the regional offices were becoming increasingly important in delivering and shaping the programme of UNEP through regional frameworks; their contribution fed into discussion by the Committee of the programme of work. A number of strategic directions had been taken to strengthen regional offices, and although hampered by the global financial crisis, the underlying trend had been a growth of 20–30 per cent in funding to the offices. He expressed the hope that UNEP strategic advisers would also be embedded in United Nations country teams in the future.

22. He expressed appreciation to Member States for their encouragement of the work of UNEP on wildlife trafficking and welcomed the call for greater engagement with the Committee on the issue. Despite the amount of money and energy being spent by various actors, the statistics showed that it was insufficient or not targeted enough. It was important to consider where UNEP could add value and provide a platform for a different approach and a more systemic set of initiatives to tackle violations of the rule of law and environmental law. He welcomed the support from Member States for the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the funding commitments of some \$50 million received from, among others, Canada, Denmark, Japan and the European Union; the initial pledges were very encouraging, he said. With regard to the outcome of Rio+20 in relation to sustainable consumption and production, UNEP was moving forward rapidly with the implementation of the 10-Year framework of programmes, according it high priority; he thanked Member States for the support expressed for the process.

#### **Agenda item 5**

#### **Outcome of the first universal session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

23. The Committee had before it the report on the outcome of the first universal session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Nairobi from 18 to 22 February 2013.

24. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that the salient points had been covered in the discussion under the previous agenda item. He invited members of the Committee to approach the secretariat, who would assist in providing specific information regarding the interpretation of the decisions, the approach to implementation and timetables, among other things. He noted that 147 Member States had attended the first universal session and there had been record attendance by major groups and stakeholders. He expressed appreciation to the Division of Conference Services of the United Nations Office at Nairobi for accommodating the challenging meeting and providing the facilities for successfully hosting it.

### **Agenda item 6**

#### **Calendar of work of the Committee**

25. The Executive Director drew attention to the revised draft workplan for the Committee for the period from April 2013 until the session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP in 2014 and highlighted some of the considerations that had influenced the revision. The main aim had been to provide a date for the session of the Assembly in June 2014 and a timetable for the work of the secretariat and the Committee in preparation for that meeting. The draft workplan constituted a first attempt to construct a new framework for working. It was considered preferable to schedule the Assembly session to follow the review of the UNEP strategic framework and programme of work by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and other processes in New York so that the Assembly could approve the programme of work and budget. He alerted the Committee to the costs of participation of an increased number of countries; the secretariat had provided parameters for discussion thereon by highlighting financial considerations and he invited further discussion on the matter. Lastly, he underscored the need to avoid convening too many meetings, but noted the obligation to hold four Committee meetings annually, and suggested that in the year of the Environment Assembly, the open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives be considered as one of those four meetings.

26. In the ensuing discussion, a number of representatives thanked the Executive Director and the secretariat for providing the Committee with a draft workplan and stressed the importance of reaching consensus on a time frame for the 2014 session of the Assembly. A number of representatives welcomed the revised draft as a great improvement on the original workplan; it now contained most of the elements that were considered important as topics for discussion and represented a good basis for the work of the Committee in the coming months. Strong interest was expressed in thematic debates that could include some of those key topics.

27. A number of priority areas were suggested for thematic debates in the Committee in preparation for the next Assembly session. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, stressed the importance of agreeing on priority areas and suggested more horizontal subjects for thematic debates, including evaluations of UNEP performance and its communication strategy. She also identified possible themes leading to policy debates, such as the role of UNEP in the post-2015 development agenda, the role of multilateral environmental agreements, "Delivering as one", regional activities and delivery at country level, the role of UNEP in water and food security, and emerging issues more broadly. One representative spoke in support of a thematic debate on wildlife trafficking.

28. Some representatives highlighted areas that they felt had been omitted from the specific tasks of the Committee in the draft workplan, namely the science-policy interface; the dialogue with the Executive Director on a strategy on access to information; and the follow-up to the Bali Strategic Plan.

29. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, emphasized the importance of proceeding with the implementation of Governing Council decision 27/2 on the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, part of which related to the review of the institutional set-up of UNEP and required decisions to be taken by the Committee; informal sessions held in preparation for the current meeting had been useful in that respect.

30. Representatives expressed differing views on an appropriate date for the 2014 session of the Assembly, with general acknowledgement that it was difficult to find a perfect solution, but that a decision should be reached quickly in order to enable the Committee to proceed with its work. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, favoured the holding of the Assembly in May to enable it to report to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, among other considerations. The timing of the open-ended Committee meeting was important for the preparation of the session and the February-March period was therefore recommended by another representative. Fewer but more efficient meetings were desirable and an additional preparatory meeting of the Committee in May 2014 was not considered necessary. One representative stressed the importance of identifying a date that would fit in with the programme of work and budget review cycle, and of

avoiding overlap with other important meetings; the window of possibilities appeared to be narrow and the final decision could be left to the Bureau of the governing body. A number of representatives concurred with the proposed convening of the Assembly in June 2014 as set out in the draft workplan. One representative noted that the scheduling of the session in June 2014 would mean that the approval of the programme of work and budget for 2016–2017 would be brought forward by eight months, and he voiced concern in that regard. Another questioned whether the next session of the United Nations Environment Assembly should be correctly referred to as the second session, or the first.

31. On the timing of the open-ended Committee meeting, one representative said that it should take place immediately prior to the session of the Assembly to limit the time-consuming consideration of decisions that had already been prepared and discussed. Others, however, felt that the two meetings should not be held back-to-back and that allowing sufficient preparation time for the Assembly session was important; Member States needed more time to consider draft decisions and prepare ministers for the discussions and work of the Assembly. One representative said that more consideration should be given to the timing of the open-ended Committee meeting and a decision should be taken at the next regular meeting.

32. One representative welcomed the idea of holding the biennial open-ended Committee meeting and the annual subcommittee meeting on the medium-term strategy, programme of work and budget consecutively, which he said would help to reduce the costs of developing countries participating in both meetings. Some representatives expressed the view that the number of meetings of the Committee should be flexible and that they should be held when there was work to be done. One representative said that the role of the Committee was to validate UNEP work and meetings should be scheduled when they could be most productive in that sense; interaction at more informal levels could also be productive.

33. A number of representatives acknowledged budgetary constraints. One representative considered that the costs of officials from capitals attending meetings of the subcommittees of the Committee should not be borne by UNEP. Another said that there was room for further reduction of travel costs. One representative referred to the strengthening of stakeholder participation but said that it was premature to discuss the cost implications thereof.

34. One representative expressed support for the improvement of the working methods of the Committee and looked forward to updates on implementation to that end. She stressed the need to improve accountability, transparency and efficiency in the work of the Committee in the intersessional period. It was particularly useful to continue receiving short summaries of the main conclusions and action points from all meetings, and not only the reports on the formal meetings of the Committee.

35. Clarification was sought on a number of specific elements of the overview of tasks of the Committee. One representative queried the reference to the challenges of management of multiple trust funds. He also took issue with the separation in the draft workplan of the tasks relating to stakeholder participation, amendment of the rules of procedure, and amendments to the financial rules of UNEP, noting that the three issues were interrelated. He called for fundamental revision of the rules of procedure to include, for example, clarification of the status of the expanded Bureau and the rules applicable to it; accommodation of non-resident permanent representatives in the work of the Committee through video conferencing or other information technology mechanisms and clarification of how that would affect the conduct of business; and adjustment of the rules of procedure to fully reflect the participation of major groups. He proposed that the Committee at its following session should establish a working group to consider those issues and draft a report for adoption at the 2014 session of the Environment Assembly. Another representative pointed out that additional capacity-building might be required to avoid excluding countries that were disadvantaged in the digital technology sphere.

36. Responding to these comments, the Executive Director noted that the pathway set out in the draft workplan seemed to have been accepted in principal. The secretariat had been given the mandate by the governing body at its first universal session to work on the proposal and he felt that it captured the essence of that decision. Certain issues, for example that of the subcommittees, called for further consideration and he proposed one more meeting of the Committee to bridge the remaining differences. The next step was for the Committee to reach agreement on the methods of working and for the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly to meet to decide the date of the 2014 session of the Environment Assembly. In closing, he underscored the significance of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Assembly in the international governance arena; it was vitally important for the future of the Assembly to balance the attention given by the Committee to the operational side, including planning and the rules of procedure, with focus on the agenda of work in the year ahead and the substantive issues that the Environment Assembly should address. With regard

to working methods, he said that the secretariat would provide annotated agendas for the schedule of meetings, more succinct background documents, and proposals for improved follow-up to Committee meetings, among others.

37. The Committee agreed to the proposal of the Executive Director to convene an additional meeting of the Committee to resolve the issues remaining with regard to the draft workplan.

**Agenda item 7**

**Other matters**

38. A representative of the secretariat informed the Committee that the current Bureau would complete its term in June 2013 and a new Bureau would be elected for the period 2013–2015. The Chair of the Bureau would be appointed from the Asia-Pacific group, the three Vice-Chairs from the African, Eastern European and Western European and others countries groups, and the Rapporteur from the Latin American and the Caribbean group of countries. The secretariat would be seeking nominations for those positions from the regional groups shortly.

**Agenda item 8**

**Closure of the meeting**

39. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.35 p.m. on Thursday, 11 April 2013.

## **Minutes of the 123rd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme**

### **Agenda item 1**

#### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.24 a.m. on Tuesday, 18 June 2013, by Mr. Geert Aagaard Andersen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
2. The meeting was attended by 104 participants including 68 countries and 1 observer mission, as well as 2 observer entities
3. The Chair welcomed the following new Committee members: Mr. John Moreti, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Botswana; Mrs. Marcela M. Nicodemos, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil; Mr. Marcel R. D. Chirwa, Deputy High Commissioner and Chargé d'Affaires of Malawi; Mr. Majok Guandong Thiep, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of South Sudan; Mr. Charles Daniel Balvo, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of Holy See. He also welcomed Mr. Ruffo di Calabria, Ambassador and observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.
4. He bade farewell to the following members who had recently departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. Asger Hallberg Borg, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark; Mr. Masoud Gharanfoli, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Mr. Adel Mustafa Kamil Alkurdi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Iraq; Mr. Moulay Zaine El Moussaoui, Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative of Morocco; Mr. Domingo D. Lucenario, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Philippines; Mr. Yassine Ahmed Mokbel Al-Shargabi, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative of Yemen; Mr. Alain Paul Lebeaupin, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Holy See.
5. The Executive Director welcomed participants from permanent missions in Addis Ababa participating in the meeting via videoconference: Mr. Bignoumba Moundemba, counselor in charge of UNEP affairs for Gabon, Ms. Rekia Sanda Maiwouya, First Secretary of Niger, Mr. Jamel Eldhoudhek, First Secretary of Tunisia. He also welcomed representatives who had travelled to Nairobi from their duty station in Addis Ababa to attend the meeting in person: Mr. Ferdinand Montcho, Ambassador for Benin and Ms. Olive Johnson, Attaché, Benin.

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Adoption of the agenda**

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in documents UNEP/CPR/123/1/Rev.1 and Add.1/Rev.1.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Adoption of the minutes of the 122nd meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 11 April 2013**

7. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 122nd meeting as set out in document UNEP/CPR/123/2.

### **Agenda item 4**

#### **Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

##### **A. Report of the Executive Director**

8. Introducing the item, the Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, drew attention to his written report entitled "Information note on the Executive Director's report to the Committee of Permanent Representatives". He highlighted a number of key events and meetings that had taken place since the previous meeting of the Committee. He described the achievements of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at its sixteenth meeting, held in Bangkok in March 2013, including efforts to establish new partnerships within the United Nations and beyond, the adoption of a strategic vision for CITES and a resolution to impose a suspension of trade on countries that failed to act on international trade, which represented an important step in restoring the confidence of the scientific community and member States in the Convention's effectiveness. He drew attention, in particular, to the UNEP collaboration with CITES in hosting the African Elephant Fund, and the increasing role for UNEP in providing practical advice to the Convention in the light of the onslaught of poaching in the African elephant range States. He said

that the parties to CITES were keen to address urgent needs related to the devolution of the instrument and the provision of support, including capacity-building, to countries. It was to be hoped that the UNEP programme of work would reflect those changes in the coming years.

9. The second simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, held in Geneva in May 2013, had represented the culmination of an extremely intense and complex logistical effort. Parties to the three conventions had seen significant gains through the adoption of the synergies process, including cooperation in their implementation agendas and real costs savings. He acknowledged the excellent contributions of Thailand and Switzerland to the management of the meetings.

10. The twelfth meeting of the International Resources Panel had been held in Berlin, Germany, on 24 April 2013. The cutting-edge work of the Panel of eminent scientists had been increasingly garnering attention around the world. The Panel's reports on mining and metals, decoupling, and resource efficiency were used as points of reference at many international meetings and the Panel's work programme was testament to the role of UNEP in bringing together science and policy aspects. Progress on the Climate Technology Centre and Network was proceeding apace with the first meeting of its Advisory Board held in May 2013, calls issued to Governments for the nomination of their focal points and support for the organization expressed by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Financial commitments had already exceeded the initial 6-month target. The core secretariat functions for the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns were in place and there had been considerable progress in the implementation of the UNEP mandate in that regard. The identification by countries of potential initiatives to be tackled by the Climate and Clean Air Coalition was progressing well and its membership had expanded to over 60, including 29 Governments and regional economic organizations and some 30 scientific institutions and non-governmental organizations. The recent evaluation of the Poverty and Environment Initiative, a joint venture undertaken by UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to provide more focused capacity-building and scientific advisory service to countries, had been extremely positive. Over 50 countries had made requests to join the Initiative and work was under way in over 25 countries. Discussions had been intensified with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) with regard to joining forces on issues of mutual interests. The two programmes were already collaborating on numerous projects related to urbanization and environment, adaptation to climate change, and waste water, among others.

11. He highlighted a number of reports published over recent months, including the annual report, *Global Trends in Sustainable Energy Investment 2013*, which provided information on total global investments in clean energy. Two interesting trends highlighted in the report were the reduction in total financial investment in renewable energy in 2012 for the first time since 2006, quite possibly linked to the dramatic reduction in the cost of solar photovoltaic and wind energy, and the positive news that close to 50 per cent of all investment in energy infrastructure around the globe in 2012 had been in renewable energies. The *Green economy and trade* report attempted to capture the state of knowledge on whether the green economy and trade could mutually reinforce each other or whether they must necessarily obstruct each other. The report of the high-level panel on the post-2015 development agenda, entitled *A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development*, released in early June, was intended to move forward discussions on sustainable development in the light of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the post-2015 development agenda. Initial reaction to the report had been positive, welcoming the approach of the high-level panel, its substantive analysis of the sustainable development agenda and its focus on bridging the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals and emphasizing the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, among other things.

12. He drew attention to the Global South-South Development Expo = to be hosted by UNEP in Nairobi from 28 October to 1 November 2013. The annual United Nations event focused on highlighting examples of successful South-South and triangular cooperation by entities of the United Nations system and its partners. He requested members to bring the event to the attention of their capitals to ensure its success.

13. Turning to internal issues, he described progress in the finalization of the programme of work and budget for 2014–2015, including consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Committee for Programme and Coordination. He expressed some

surprise regarding questions raised by Member States in the latter Committee meetings with respect to the programmatic mandate of UNEP and its relationship with the Rio+20 outcome document “The future we want”. Noting that such interventions could be the source of significant challenges for UNEP, he recalled that the programme of work and budget had been adopted by the governing body of UNEP at its first universal session and he asked members to ensure that their capitals had a robust understanding of the work that had gone into the development of the programme of work and budget.

14. The United Nations Board of Auditors had begun its review of UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and UNEP was also working with the Office of Internal Oversight Services on an audit that included the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat.

15. The recruitment of a director for the UNEP New York office had been finalized and would be announced shortly. Recruitment was continuing for the position of Chief Officer of the secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol and the post of Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, which, it was to be hoped, would be completed by the end of July 2013.

16. He reported on developments in the lead up to the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to be held in Warsaw in November 2013. The climate change conference held in June 2013 in Bonn, Germany, had not been encouraging. There were significant concerns regarding the development of legally binding framework on climate that was aligned with scientific knowledge. Added to the lack of optimism on financial mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund, the situation was likely to raise serious questions about the ability of the international community to cooperate effectively. The Secretary-General’s initiative to convene a high-level summit on climate in September 2014 was intended to avoid another climate impasse.

17. In closing, he noted that the financial situation of UNEP remained troublesome; some 85 per cent of financing projected for the year had been received to date. On a more positive note, extrabudgetary funding was likely to surpass projected levels by some 15 or 20 per cent.

## **B. Discussion**

18. Most of the representatives who spoke thanked the Executive Director for his informative and comprehensive report and several thanked the Executive Director for circulating his written report well in advance of the meeting. Several representatives welcomed colleagues attending the meeting via videoconference from Addis Ababa; one representative expressed the hope that broader participation in all UNEP meetings would ensure effective implementation of universal membership of the UNEP governing body. Universal membership would have a real impact on the qualitative nature of discussions, said another. Several representatives congratulated the former Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Amina Mohamed, on her appointment as Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kenya and wished her well in her new post.

19. Several representatives commended the efforts of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to exploit synergies, reduce costs, avoid duplication of effort and promote consistency. A number of representatives thanked the secretariat for organizing the second simultaneous meetings of the conferences of the parties to the three conventions and expressed satisfaction with the outcomes thereof. The endorsement by the conferences of the parties to the three conventions of the reorganization and structure of the secretariats of the Basel, Stockholm and the UNEP-part of the Rotterdam Convention was testament to the confidence of member States in the synergies process. One representative expressed regret that at its eleventh meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention had failed to agree to adopt technical guidelines on transboundary movements of electronic and electrical wastes.

20. One representative expressed the hope that the findings of the report of the International Resources Panel entitled *City-level decoupling: urban resource flows and the governance of infrastructure transitions* would be shared with UN-Habitat and its recommendations implemented jointly by the two Programmes. Another representative emphasized the importance of the UNEP and UN-Habitat partnership framework to be completed in 2013, which should, he suggested, address the continuing interlinkages between environment and urbanization and would be useful in helping developing countries to meet environmental challenges resulting from the pressure of increasing numbers of people living in urban areas.

21. One representative, referring to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda, emphasized the importance of the participation of stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and international organizations, and of national dialogues as inputs. Another representative said that coordination with other United Nations entities was vital in the development of the post-2015 development agenda, which should include the very important topics of migration and inequalities together with other subjects of a cross-cutting nature. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and the formulation of sustainable development goals were central to the future development framework. The environmental pillar of sustainable development should address environmental risk, environmental damage, ecological scarcities and resource depletion, and people should be placed firmly at the heart of sustainable development. It was vital to improve access to clean energy, water, sanitation and food, and contribute to improved transport and housing, resulting in more resilient communities, boosting living standards and helping to eradicate poverty. It was to be hoped that UNEP would provide support to that end. Another representative noted that extensive consultations on the post-2015 development agenda had been undertaken in New York, Geneva and Nairobi, and that these should be consolidated. She requested UNEP to keep members informed of its participation in relevant meetings and activities, including an upcoming experts' meeting on sustainable development goals in July in Geneva.

22. One representative said that the sustainable development goals should adopt a comprehensive approach to cross-border and international challenges and address the most pressing challenges of the twenty-first century, including poverty eradication, food security, environmental protection, climate change, transnational crime and the illegal trade in wildlife and timber.

23. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed his appreciation to UNEP and other partners for the support provided to the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and bilateral and regional programmes on the African continent. He called on UNEP and countries in a position to do so to support flagship programmes identified by AMCEN and to complement African efforts with financial and technical support. He requested the secretariat to provide updates on environment-related activities around the globe. He thanked the Executive Director, UNEP staff members and the outgoing Bureau of the Committee for their hard work.

24. Another representative said that African countries would increasingly be the focus of efforts as the effects of climate change were felt more keenly around the world and environmental protection and sustainability were increasingly prioritized.

25. Several representatives expressed their satisfaction with the cooperation between UNEP and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and, in particular, the meetings to be held in Nairobi in November 2013. One representative asked for further information on those meetings.

26. One representative thanked the secretariat for its continuing work on wildlife crime and trafficking and the broader issue of environmental crime; she emphasized the importance of UNEP continuing to provide updates and information in that regard. She said that despite successful elements emanating from the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, progress had been less extensive than had been hoped, especially with regard to polar bears. One representative hailed the work of the Global Initiative on Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Timber, which contributed to existing activities thereby avoiding duplication and ensuring added value.

27. The representative of Kenya provided an update on measures undertaken by her Government to combat the illegal trade in ivory and urged other member States to undertake complementary actions. He commended the establishment of the African Elephant Fund, for which UNEP would serve as secretariat. The illegal trade in wildlife and timber was a global problem requiring a global solution, he said.

28. A number of representatives expressed their interest in the Global South-South Development Expo and asked to be kept updated in that regard. One representative stressed that the topic of South-South cooperation was of interest beyond the countries of the global South. Another representative, commending UNEP work on South-South and triangular cooperation, highlighted the importance of implementing best practices in that regard.

29. One representative thanked the Executive Director for providing an update on recruitment; it was helpful to be informed ahead of time when senior-level positions would fall vacant in order that qualified candidates could be made aware of such vacancies. She emphasized the need to consider

fully all applications for the post of Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, which was an extremely demanding position requiring significant managerial and substantive policy experience.

30. One representative sought clarification on questions raised by Member States in the Committee for Programme and Coordination in New York with regard to the UNEP programme of work and budget 2014–2015. She also requested a briefing session on the upcoming regular audit of UNEP, UN-Habitat and the United Nations Office at Nairobi with representatives of the three entities and requested timely information on reports of the Office of International Oversight Services that were of relevance to UNEP.

31. The representative of Kenya recalled that by its resolution 67/251, the General Assembly had changed the name of the Governing Council of UNEP to the United Nations Environment Assembly and looked forward to an enhanced partnership between UNEP and Kenya, the host country of the UNEP headquarters. He said that his Government was keen to see greater streamlining of UNEP activities with United Nations system-wide development activities. He called on the Executive Director to provide a schedule of activities to help countries with their national environment policies and a timeline for the consolidation of UNEP activities.

32. A number of representatives drew attention to initiatives and reports developed in their countries and regions. Two representatives provided information on their country's contributions to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. One representative said that a regional workshop on climate change negotiations for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in April 2013, had been particularly useful and should be replicated for other regions. He suggested that UNEP should consider the development of a programme on regional environment and development policies similar to that conducted in the context of the World Trade Organization.

33. One representative stressed the importance of operationalizing the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns. Another representative expressed satisfaction with the establishment of the board for the ten-year framework and looked forward to its first meeting.

34. One representative expressed her satisfaction that UNEP was continuing to implement the foresight process aimed at the needs of small island developing States and asked to be kept informed of developments, including on a report on best practices. Another representative commended the work of the International Resources Panel and the new report on the green economy and trade.

35. One representative stressed the need to operationalize the secretariat of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and expressed his satisfaction that UNEP had advertised a vacancy announcement for the head of its secretariat.

36. One representative sought clarification on the consideration by the fifth committee in New York on increasing the contribution of the United Nations Regular Budget to UNEP.

37. Responding to comments, the Executive Director thanked members for their comments and stressed UNEP commitment to achieving greater synergies among conventions, including at the level of national implementation. He was heartened, he said, by the growing level of international attention to the issue of the illegal trade in timber and wildlife and said that there was a need to look at global solutions to address how the market was working, elevate the issue to global attention, preserve the natural resources of nations and deal with the economic, enforcement and international cooperation aspects. It was important to support fully the implementation of CITES decisions, he noted. The UNEP secretariat would consider providing a thematic briefing for the Committee on the scale of the increase in poaching and illegal trade, and various related initiatives that were under way. He highlighted cooperation with a number of countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Kenya, South Africa and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with partners such as INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. He acknowledged the support of Canada to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and emphasized UNEP commitment to supporting AMCEN in the development of its flagship initiatives. He said that he would endeavor to arrange a briefing on the work of the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and stressed that the Global South-South Development Expo was not exclusively aimed at the countries of the South, but was a global meeting to support such cooperation. The expert meeting on sustainable development goals to be convened in Geneva in early July was part of an effort to bring together experts to assess the state of knowledge of relevance to the post-2015

development agenda and the sustainable development goals, including their relationship with the hundreds of internationally agreed targets and goals.

38. He said that the Office for Internal Oversight Services carried out regular evaluations of United Nations entities as well as investigations into allegations of misconduct or nonconformity with regulations. He noted that United Nations entities were not forewarned by the Office for Internal Oversight Services in the case of investigations of potential misconduct or nonconformity with regulations and were obliged to act in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations. For example, the UNEP secretariat was prohibited from approaching any staff member who might be the subject of investigation until the acceptance by the Assistant Secretary-General of Human Resources of possible disciplinary action. He outlined the complex process for the approval of the biennial programme of work and budget of UNEP, noting that the approval of the 2014–2015 document would not be finalized before 24 December 2013.

### **C. Presentation by the secretariat**

39. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on a report that was currently being prepared on embedding environment in the framework of the sustainable development goals. He drew attention to the many parallel processes related to the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals. He described lessons learned from other internationally agreed targets and goals and the rationale and overarching vision for embedding environment in the sustainable development goals. He outlined the approach to developing the sustainable development goals and the characteristics of potential targets as well as means of tracking progress towards their attainment. In closing, he said that the main conclusion of the report was that the sustainable development goals provided an excellent opportunity to couple environmental sustainability with social and economic development as an ecological foundation for human wellbeing.

### **D. Discussion**

40. In the ensuing discussion, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, thanked the Executive Director and the secretariat for their efforts to emphasize the importance of the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals. She acknowledged the existing global challenges, chief among them poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, for which global political commitment and coordinated action by all countries across all policy areas was crucial. She welcomed the continuing efforts by the United Nations as an important input to the development of an overarching framework for sustainable development. She stressed the importance of participation by civil society and the private sector in discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and of a single framework for the delivery of results at all levels defined around a set of global goals to drive action in all countries. Any post-2015 framework should recognize sustainable development as a guiding principle and that poverty eradication and sustainable development were mutually reinforcing. The framework should have clear, universal goals that were ambitious, evidence-based, action-oriented, achievable and easy to communicate. It should be based on national ownership and take into account the different contexts, capacities and national priorities of countries. It should include qualitative and quantitative targets, and indicators that should be monitored and reviewed to ensure transparency and accountability. The goals should be developed in close partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable in society were prioritized, with a focused time frame for action, lifting developing countries out of poverty and addressing the responsibility of all countries to move to sustainable development. UNEP had a key role to play in integrating environmental sustainability into the post-2015 development agenda. The outcome document of Rio+20, “The future we want”, specified that the sustainable development goals should be consistent with international law and build on existing commitments. UNEP work on compiling internationally agreed goals and targets had clarified shortcomings as well as areas of consensus; the Programme’s knowledge on the state of the environment was easily accessible for policymakers. She sought clarification on the timeline for the completion of the report presented and asked at what stage the Committee would be included in its review. In closing, she stressed the need to ensure compatibility and alignment between the United Nations Environment Assembly and the United Nations system-wide discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

41. One representative suggested that the international community should rethink its approach to the sustainable development goals, which should be incorporated into environment rather than the reverse. The United Nations Environment Assembly should endeavour to develop and monitor post-2015 programmes, including encouraging the achievement of environmental goals.

42. Another representative raised the issue of perspective in relation to the sustainable development goals. She recalled the elaboration of an agenda for development, Agenda 21, at the international level,

which had set out principles, rather than goals, for development and constituted a comprehensive framework for the international community that had been extremely useful for development specialists but not easily understood by the general public or policymakers. The Millennium Development Goals, on the other hand, had set short goals and targets that were illustrative rather than comprehensive and were easily understandable by the general public. It was important to identify the approach for the sustainable development goals in line with their purpose, setting a comprehensive approach to attain the targets and enabling the general public to understand the goals and support them.

43. Responding to comments, the representative of the secretariat said that members' comments would be taken into account in the first version of the report, which was intended to instigate discussion. The report would be presented afresh to the Committee and a second version elaborated on the basis of its consideration. He sought members' guidance on the goals as well as priority issues and products they wanted to see from UNEP.

#### **Agenda item 5**

##### **Preparations for the United Nations Environment Assembly in 2014**

44. Introducing the item, the Executive Director stressed the importance of according the highest priority to a policy-relevant agenda for the upcoming session of the United Nations Environment Assembly from 23 to 27 June 2014 that was substantive, contemporary and qualitatively different to previous sessions of the Governing Council of UNEP.

45. The representative of the secretariat drew attention to the revised calendar of meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives 2013–2014 leading up to the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

46. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, welcomed the efforts undertaken in preparation for the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. She stressed the importance of UNEP efforts taking place within its mandate and as agreed by the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives at Rio+20 and in the General Assembly, and collaboration with relevant entities such as the multilateral environmental agreements and organizations. In order to fulfill that mandate, it was important to improve the work of UNEP subsidiary bodies and working methods to ensure that the Programme was responsive, accountable and more useful to its Member States. The strengthening of regional offices and their role would enable UNEP to respond in a timely manner to any requests for support to address global environmental challenges. Universal membership was key to providing support and legitimacy in the strengthening of UNEP. Ensuring adequate and innovative means of participation for Member States, including videoconferences, was also critical. She cautioned, however, that the limited technological capacities of some developing countries should be taken into account and adequate support provided. Communication should be improved and she suggested, to that end, that an online platform containing relevant documentation and contact information would support electronic exchanges of information for delegations accredited to UNEP. In striving to attain the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development, she underscored the paramount importance of strategies to promote sustainable production and consumption patterns.

47. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, thanked the secretariat for the revised calendar of meetings of the Committee and the roadmap on stakeholder engagement. She stressed the importance of considering the timing of meetings in the light of the development of the sustainable development architecture. She welcomed the planned joint discussion between the Committee and major groups scheduled for 10 September 2013 and expressed her commitment to contributing to the identification of thematic debates in preparation for the 2014 session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. She thanked the secretariat for the detailed annual performance report that had been distributed and looked forward to receiving documentation for the joint subcommittees meeting to be held at the end of September 2013.

48. One representative, noting that the upcoming session of the United Nations Environment Assembly represented a historic opportunity for the entire international community to work together on environmental issues, said that it must be planned in order to enable the General Assembly to approve the UNEP programme of work and budget. The Committee should take into account the strengthening process planned for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and that UNEP reported through the Council to the General Assembly. She emphasized the need to address the three dimensions of sustainable development in an integrated manner and to adopt a transparent and efficient approach, avoiding duplication and streamlining resources.

49. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that the present meeting was taking place at an important time during the operationalization of the outcome of Rio+20. The Committee and the secretariat had already undertaken commendable work in addressing procedural aspects to operationalize the United Nations Environment Assembly. The Committee, in particular, was already reaping the rewards of that work in terms of the efficient organization of its meetings and more user-friendly documents. It was to be hoped that adequate consultation would characterize all aspects of discussions on the upcoming session of the Assembly in order to facilitate reaching consensus. Highlighting work by the secretariat on enhancing stakeholder participation, he expressed the hope that such work would take into account the need to respect the character of UNEP as an intergovernmental body. Given the lack of clarity on how some of aspects of paragraph 88 of “The future we want” would be implemented, he requested the secretariat to provide a clear road map with specific plans for matters such as strengthening regional presence, enhancing UNEP responsiveness to country needs and consolidating headquarters functions. He cautioned against losing momentum in operationalizing paragraph 88 and sought clarification on the continuing implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. He expressed support for the likely increase in funding of the Environment Fund from the Regular Budget of the United Nations, which should allow UNEP efforts to be more effective, more results-oriented and more responsive to country needs. He welcomed the call by the Executive Director for Member States to accredit their representatives to UNEP to ensure that universal membership became a reality. It was to be hoped that more countries would establish resident missions in Nairobi. He urged increased attention to language considerations and their impact on participation and inclusiveness.

50. One representative said that the Executive Director’s report illustrated the rich variety of UNEP activities and the importance of Member States providing strategic advice thereon. The recent strengthening of the Committee’s work had been rewarding, making its meetings more efficient and transparent and enabling greater involvement by members of their capitals thereby enhancing intergovernmental ownership of the Programme. Important work lay ahead in following up on the implementation of paragraph 88 of the Rio+20 outcome document, not least on the aspects of stakeholder participation and the science-policy interface. It was important to get to grips with the planning cycle of meetings of the Committee to ensure the provision of successful input to high-level bodies.

51. Another representative emphasized the need for greater support to UNEP by the international community. UNEP required adequate funding in order to live up to the great expectations that its Member States had of its work. The secretariat should, therefore, elaborate specific proposals for resource mobilization and a related strategy.

52. Responding to comments, the Executive Director invited members to submit to the secretariat possible topics for thematic debates for the session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in 2014.

#### **Agenda item 6**

##### **Report of the subcommittees**

53. The Committee endorsed the report of the subcommittees.

#### **Agenda item 7**

##### **Election of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP for the period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015**

54. The following new members of the Bureau for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015 were elected by acclamation, after nominations by the regional groups whose turn it was in the customary rotation of nominations:

Chair: Mr. Chan-Woo Kim (Republic of Korea)  
 Vice-chairs: Ms. Rosemary Semafumu Mukusa (Uganda)  
 Ms. Julia Pataki (Romania)  
 Mr. Bart Ouvry (Belgium)  
 Rapporteur: Mr. Konrad Paulsen (Chile)

55. The outgoing Chair paid tribute to his colleagues and to the Committee for their collaboration during his term of office. The incoming Chair then thanked the Committee for electing him and said that he was honoured to take up the position at a challenging time in the history of UNEP, following the fortieth anniversary of the Programme and in the lead up to the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

**Agenda item 8**

**Other matters**

56. The representative of the Holy See said that, on the occasion of World Environment Day on 5 June 2013, the Pope had delivered a statement focusing on the environment, including combating food waste. The Holy See had a great deal to offer in terms of spreading important environmental messages to the grassroots level. He urged members to work together for the benefit of humankind.

**Agenda item 9**

**Closure of the meeting**

57. The meeting was declared closed at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, 18 June 2013.

## **Minutes of the 124th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme**

### **Agenda item 1**

#### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 10.10 a.m. on Friday, 27 September 2013, by Mr. Chan-woo Kim, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
2. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed condolences to the Government and the people of Kenya for the loss of lives and casualties that had occurred as a result of the recent terrorist attack in Nairobi.
3. The meeting was attended by 87 participants from 56 countries and 2 observer missions. Also taking part in the meeting by videoconference were participants from permanent missions in Addis Ababa and Geneva.
4. The Chair welcomed the following new Committee members: Ms. Valerie Z. Coulibaly, Honorary Consul of Cote d'Ivoire; Mr. Lars Bredal, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark; Ms. Helena Vuokko, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland; Mr. Rémy Maréchaux, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, and Ms. Annick Mathis, Deputy Permanent Representative of France; Mr. Hoshiar H.S. Dazayi, Chargé d'Affaires and Acting Permanent Representative of Iraq; Mr. Tatsushi Terada, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan, and Mr. Mikio Mori, Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan; Mr. E. Hans Brattskar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway; Mr. Ivan Kandijas, Deputy Permanent Representative of Serbia; Mr. Emil Matejka, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic; Ms. Regina N. Nyangang Gai, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Sudan; Mr. Joakim Ladebom, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden; Mr. Jhony Fredy Balza Arismendi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. He also welcomed Mr. Abdelmoneism Mohammed Mabrouk, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative of the League of Arab States.
5. He bade farewell to the following members who had recently departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. Agis Loizou, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative, and Mr. Georgios Loizou, Deputy Permanent Representative of Cyprus, following the closure of the mission; Ms. Kaarina Airas, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland; Mr. Etienne de Poncins, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, and Ms. Marine Collignon, Second Secretary, of France; Mr. Toshihisa Takata, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, and Mr. Yoichiro Yamada, Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan; Ms. Margit Hellwig-Bötte, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany; Mr. Sandor Juhasz, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary; Mr. Per Ludvig Magnus, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway; Mr. Djura Likar, Deputy Permanent Representative of Serbia; Mr. Jozef Bandzuch, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic; Ms. Katarina Zinn, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden; and Mr. Nestor Luis Fajardo Acosta, Chargé d'Affaires of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Adoption of the agenda**

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in documents UNEP/CPR/124/1 and Add.1 as orally amended.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Adoption of the minutes of the 123rd meeting, held on 18 June 2013**

7. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 123rd meeting on the basis of the draft minutes set out in document UNEP/CPR/124/2.

### **Agenda item 4**

#### **Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

8. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, expressed his appreciation to the staff of UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi for the discipline they had shown in continuing their work in the light of the recent terrorist attack in Nairobi, and to the members of the

Committee, some of whom had been directly affected by the tragic events, for their commitment in participating in the present meeting.

9. He also expressed appreciation for the spirit of cooperation and efforts of the members and the secretariat during the 2013 annual meeting of the subcommittee, held over the four preceding days.

10. Introducing the item, he drew attention to his written report, highlighting some of the achievements of the previous three-month period. Much had been accomplished, including the continuing work to finalize arrangements for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; the celebration of World Environment Day, hosted by Mongolia, which had attracted unprecedented global attention; the establishment of the board of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns. He highlighted the post-conflict work of UNEP in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire; the launch of the next phase of the Poverty-Environment Initiative; the input by UNEP to the development of the sustainable development goals; the launch of the fifth Global Environment Outlook report (GEO5) for business and a number of other publications; and the organization of a series of meetings on various themes, described in more detail in his written report.

11. The Executive Director took the opportunity to focus on the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, released on the day of the meeting, which presented unequivocal evidence of global warming and an increased level of certainty of the impact of human activities on climate change. The report was being released at an important moment in the climate negotiations process as preparations were under way for the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Warsaw in November 2013, and as work was intensifying on the post-2015 development agenda. He anticipated both intense scientific discussions and, particularly, discussions in the coming months on the technological and economic viability of scaled-up responses to climate change.

12. In the context of the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly currently commencing in New York, he underscored the efforts by the United Nations Secretary-General to bring to the attention of Governments the work that was outstanding in terms of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, as well as continuing work on the implementation of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, progress towards the sustainable development goals and financing for sustainable development, which would all converge towards 2015 in what he described as a major "policy crescendo". UNEP was actively engaged in the process with the formation of a post-2015 strategic team within the secretariat; UNEP was working closely with the United Nations task team in New York and with sister agencies, and had been focusing in recent months on articulating the environmental dimension of sustainable development and assisting in developing a set of goals in which the environment was embedded. In the evolving discussion on the sustainable development goals, the social, economic and environmental dimensions were both distinct and integral; the challenge facing UNEP, the United Nations Environment Assembly and the Committee was to ensure adequate integration of the environmental dimension and this discussion would benefit from the thoughts and feedback of Member States. The environmental dimension was in many ways a cross-cutting issue affecting all aspects of economies and societies and it was important to find the right balance in the sustainable development agenda and with regard to the role of UNEP therein. UNEP was engaged in seeking system-wide approaches as reflected in its cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping, the International Labour Organization and others. The secretariat would continue to brief the Committee regularly on progress in that work to assist Governments.

13. With regard to future work, the Executive Director drew attention to the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury to be held in Kumamoto, Japan, in October 2013, which would be cause for celebration by UNEP as the culmination of a project begun only three years previously. He also referred to the Global South-South Development Expo to be held from 28 October to 1 November 2013 in Nairobi and called on Member States to show solidarity and support for Kenya by ensuring their attendance.

14. In closing, he welcomed a number of senior appointments by the Secretary-General, including Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw as UNEP Deputy Executive Director, and Mr. Jean Christophe Bouvier as Director, Programme Management, UNEP Office for Operations and Corporate Services.

15. In the ensuing discussion, all the representatives who spoke expressed their condolences to the Government and the people of Kenya, and to other countries affected by the tragic events, on the recent terrorist attack.

16. Many representatives thanked the Executive Director for his informative report.

17. One representative, in welcoming the comprehensive report, endorsed the role that the UNEP secretariat had to play in supporting the Secretary-General and providing background documentation for the discussions taking place in New York on sustainable development. He also stressed the importance of the upcoming Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention, hailing it as the successful result of interdisciplinary negotiations bringing together environmental, social, health and industrial elements, and he praised the Executive Director for the achievement under his tenure. He also welcomed the South-South Global Development Expo as an opportunity for Member States to show solidarity with Kenya while engaging in a crucial issue for sustainable development; he supported the call of the Executive Director to mobilize capitals to that end.

18. Two representatives referred to the work of the annual meeting of the subcommittee in the preceding four days. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, thanked the secretariat for the preparation and servicing of the 2013 annual meeting, and member States for their valuable contributions. The meeting formed a significant part of efforts to strengthen and upgrade UNEP and had been a welcome opportunity to review the programme of work and budget. He called for greater effort in monitoring impacts as well as activities under the subprogrammes and looked forward to further discussion of the programme of work. On the question of consolidation of headquarters functions in Nairobi, he called for full implementation of the relevant provisions under Governing Council decision 27/2 and looked forward to the report of the Executive Director thereon at the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. With regard to the consultations on the revised draft financial rules, he stressed that the revisions should enhance efficiency and effectiveness, reduce duplication and engender greater accountability within the framework of the existing United Nations General Assembly mandate for the provision of administrative and other support services to UNEP, including by the United Nations Office at Nairobi. On the management of trust funds, he expressed support for efforts to promote multi-donor trust funds but insisted on strict adherence to the United Nations guidelines for full cost recovery, noting that the views expressed did not constitute endorsement by Member States but were comments to be taken into account in the process of reviewing the rules.

19. He said that he attached great importance to the newly constituted United Nations Environment Assembly and expressed commitment to working with others to ensure its success. He welcomed the opportunity to discuss preparations for the forthcoming session of the Assembly and the thematic debates, recognizing the importance of selecting a theme that reflected regional priorities and also had global visibility. The issue would be considered at the fifth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to be held from 15 to 18 October 2013 in Gaborone.

20. With regard to the discussion in the subcommittee on the strategic framework for 2016–2017, another representative highlighted the important role of the UNEP regional offices in providing support to countries in implementing the subprogrammes, while avoiding duplication and maintaining low costs. She also emphasized the importance of increased stakeholder participation in the work of the Environment Assembly. Referring to rule 69 of the current rules of procedure, she said that non-governmental organizations should be allowed to make interventions during the work of the Assembly. She cautioned, however, against according voting rights to interest groups and supported specific guidelines with regard to the accreditation of non-governmental organizations to avoid a large increase in the number of participants and the adverse effect it may have on the efficiency of the Assembly's working procedures.

21. A number of representatives welcomed participants from capitals and other duty stations who had either travelled to Nairobi or were participating in the meeting via video link. One representative considered that the participation of missions or delegations without permanent representation in Nairobi was of fundamental importance and should be supported. He congratulated the Executive Director on the initiative and sought clarification on the process for supporting the presence of more delegations at meetings of the Committee and the Environment Assembly.

22. A number of representatives noted the importance of discussions on the theme for the forthcoming session of the Environment Assembly. One representative urged that the Assembly should focus on a few key environmental challenges that were of global interest and concern and were likely to draw the attention of Governments and stakeholders so that the session would receive high-level attention and broad participation.

23. One representative said that for a developing country emerging from conflict, there was a danger that development needs could override long-term environmental considerations. Her Government was endeavouring to mainstream the environment in the humanitarian and development agenda through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and UNEP was providing assistance in a number of areas, including developing environmental and natural resources management policies and legislation. She urged UNEP to also focus on the implementation of those policies and in that context welcomed the forthcoming Environment Assembly session as an opportunity for ministers to deliberate on critical environmental issues.

24. Another representative highlighted UNEP involvement in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. He drew attention to a recent meeting of the Coalition held in Oslo, and looked forward to continuing to work with UNEP and other Member States to ensure that the initiative on short-lived climate pollutants continued to grow. The Coalition was an excellent example of the convening power of UNEP and of the key role that UNEP could play.

25. On issues relating to sustainable consumption and production patterns, one representative welcomed the nomination of the board of the 10-year framework of programmes; he said that the work in that area was a priority for his country and called for sufficient financing for implementation in developing countries. He also pledged his country's support to the Poverty-Environment Initiative, the Montevideo Programmes for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, and the Minamata Convention. He commended the work and vision of the Executive Director and called for support for the forthcoming Minamata conference. On chemicals and waste, he welcomed the constructive work of UNEP and called for continuing support for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

26. Responding to comments, the Executive Director thanked the representatives for their substantive feedback. He noted that the new generation of instruments and mechanisms in the twenty-first century, such as the sustainable development framework and the Minamata Convention on Mercury, could not be compartmentalized and had to be subject to a cross-sectoral approach, covering environmental, social, economic and other areas; UNEP had always pioneered such a concept of sustainable development, but a new level of integration in the governance arena was being reached.

27. He welcomed the forthcoming meeting of African ministers of the environment and acknowledged the significant set of items on the agenda for the meeting, which would contribute to UNEP work regionally and at headquarters, especially in the preparations for the Environment Assembly session. He expressed appreciation to the Government of Norway for hosting the recent meeting of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, and for the Government's pledge of over \$20 million towards the work on short-lived climate pollutants during the meeting.

28. He reassured the Committee that the strengthening of the regional presence of UNEP remained a top priority and expressed the hope that the planned budgetary allocations would enable UNEP to fulfil that goal. He noted that the role of national committees and UNEP cooperation with them was an area of discussion that could be revisited in the following biennium.

29. In closing, he recognized the personal commitment of the representative of Uruguay, Mr. Fernando Lugin, in the process of negotiating the Minamata Convention. In the broader context of chemicals, he highlighted the likelihood of achieving a more coherent and substantive financial basis for the chemicals agenda and a strengthening of implementation at national levels]. He acknowledged that there was more work to be done and expressed the hope that with the support of Member States and other agencies, UNEP could increase the momentum with regard to implementation of the chemicals agenda.

#### **Agenda item 5**

##### **Preparations for the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in 2014**

30. Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that the subcommittee had already discussed a number of issues in relation to the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, including its expected outcome, links to the high-level political forum on sustainable

development, the participation of ministers and multi-stakeholder engagement. He said that the current meeting provided an opportunity for Member States to advise the secretariat on the organization of the first session. In closing, he said that the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly would consider the issue in October 2013 in the margins of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

31. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives thanked the secretariat for its preparatory work for the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

32. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that it was important to ensure the success of the first session of Assembly in order to demonstrate the relevance of UNEP in the United Nations system. She expressed support for active Bureau engagement both before and during the session, and highlighted as key ingredients for a successful first session the following elements: a short and engaging agenda for the session's ministerial segment; a format that enabled meaningful exchanges between ministers; a negotiated outcome that could feed into the meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2014 and the negotiations on the sustainable development goals in 2014 and 2015; and meaningful participation by stakeholders, both prior to and during the session.

33. In terms of procedure, she suggested that decisions by the United Nations Environment Assembly should be concise and focused and the Committee should consider the best way to ensure their efficient handling. Member States and the secretariat should be committed to submitting draft decisions well in advance of the open-ended meeting of the Committee to be held in March 2014. She said that the primary role of that meeting should be the pre-negotiation and approval ad referendum of as many draft decisions as possible. Thematic sessions held during the subcommittee meetings and the open-ended Committee meeting in March 2014 should provide food for thought during the ministerial segment of the first session. In closing, she requested UNEP to provide an assessment of the costs associated with the 2014 meetings of the governing bodies of UNEP.

34. One representative said that it was his understanding that the high-level political forum had recently decided to hold meetings every four years at the level of heads of States and every year at the ministerial level, noting that both would adopt negotiated declarations. Given that the United Nations Environment Assembly was the highest level meeting at which ministers would discuss issues related to the environmental pillar of sustainable development, the outcome of its first session should be taken into account by the high-level political forum. It was important, therefore, to reach a "soft consensus" on the format for and possible elements of the outcome of the first session in advance of the open-ended Committee meeting. To that end, he suggested that the thematic debates currently planned for the period between October 2013 and February 2014 should be held over a shorter period with a view to concluding the discussions thereon by 24 December 2013.

35. Another representative said that the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly afforded UNEP the opportunity to reshape its governing body into a dynamic and effective forum. Her delegation looked forward to a format that would enable high-level Government officials and world-renowned experts to consider, and make recommendations to address, the most pressing environmental issues, and to identify emerging environmental concerns. She said that to do this effectively, the session should devote as much time as possible to discussion, stakeholder engagement, including with the private sector, and targeted public outreach. She added that the Committee should be charged with discussing and negotiating the draft outcome documents before the session or, at a minimum, before the session's high-level segment.

36. She suggested that the 2014 session should focus on pressing issues that fell within the core mandate of UNEP and that, regardless of the topic chosen, it was essential that it be directly related to the purview and decision-making power of environment ministers. Regarding the way in which UNEP and environment ministers could contribute to the post-2015 development agenda, she suggested that it would not be productive to have another discussion about the role of UNEP within the United Nations system, as that had already been well delineated. Instead, she supported defining the key environmental issues that needed to be addressed and how the environment fitted within the broader development agenda. For the high-level segment, she said that innovative ways should be sought to enable ministers to truly engage in discussions.

37. She identified as key elements of a successful meeting: a relevant and interesting theme on which participants could take action or effect change; concise, well written and relevant background materials delivered in a timely manner; an energetic and engaging moderator or chair who solicited

opinions from participants; and short and focused interventions designed to elicit interactions on the topic at hand. She called for a practical approach to the desired outcomes of the session. The international community was still trying to find a way forward on a number of issues, while on other topics there was general agreement.

38. In closing, she expressed the view that a decision on the themes for and organization of the high-level segment of the first session should be made by December 2013 rather than in March 2014. It was essential, she said, to send out the invitations for the session as early as possible to ensure the participation of high-level representatives of Governments, the business sector, non-governmental organizations, the academic and philanthropic communities.

39. Several representatives expressed support for the view that the themes and structure of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly should be finalized by the end of 2013. Stressing the significance of the year 2015, one said that the timing of the first session offered an opportunity for the Assembly to focus on strategic issues that would continue to confront the environment into the future. He suggested that the themes should be clearly articulated, limited in number, and make it possible for ministers to engage in meaningful debate. He highlighted the need to achieve as much progress as possible on the participation of major groups and stakeholders, and he called for a streamlined approach to decisions that encompassed clear and concise text and the early circulation of drafts.

40. Another representative stressed that a well-organized session would demonstrate to the international community that the decisions to strengthen UNEP taken by participants at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and by the Governing Council at its first universal session were being implemented. She then highlighted as elements of a successful session: an interactive and innovative setting to enable meaningful ministerial discussions and the active participation of stakeholders; strategic decisions that would send a strong message to the United Nations system, including the high-level political forum; and no more than two environmental themes of broad appeal to ministers. She suggested as a possible theme a review of the state of the environment and progress achieved in the implementation of internationally agreed environmental goals as a contribution to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals. In closing, she suggested that achieving a well-prepared session would require active involvement by the Bureau and dedicating additional time to finalizing draft decisions at the upcoming open-ended meeting of the Committee.

41. One representative said that it was important to select attractive themes for the session to ensure significant attendance by ministers, hold interactive dialogues between ministers and other participants and demonstrate the importance of UNEP as a leader on environmental issues. It was essential to have clarity about all the draft decisions to be considered by the Assembly by the time the open-ended meeting of the Committee convened in March 2014.

42. Recalling that the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly would include a multi-stakeholder dialogue, she requested the secretariat to include in the report on stakeholder engagement, to be presented to Member States, innovative options for greater stakeholder engagement in the work of UNEP. Specifically, she requested the secretariat to include among possible options the participation of civil society members in the open-ended meeting of the Committee, the rescheduling of the session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum to a month prior to the first session of the Assembly, and the participation of some of the Forum's civil society participants at the first session. Some of these options, in particular rescheduling the session of the Forum, might entail significant additional costs but were important to ensure a proper link with civil society and alert Member States about the contributions of civil society.

43. Another representative urged the Committee to assume its role as the main body responsible for the organization of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The current Bureau of the Assembly was composed of only five members whereas the following Bureau, to be nominated at the beginning of the first session of the Assembly, would comprise ten members. He noted that the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was expected to deliver its outcome by February 2014, which meant that the Assembly at its first session would have little to say on the sustainable development goals and should perhaps focus on how to integrate the goals into the post-2015 development agenda. He said that to aim at a contribution from the United Nations Environment Assembly to the forthcoming meeting of the high-level political forum would not be productive as this might pre-empt and constrain Government positions to be presented to the forum. He suggested that the Assembly should provide instead the opportunity for environment ministers to interact with each

other and to report on those discussions to their own Governments in order to inform the positions they would present to the Forum.

44. The representative of the secretariat expressed appreciation for the comments made. Regarding the timing for submission of draft decisions, he said that in response to Committee members' requests, the secretariat had revised the timetable for the open-ended meeting of the Committee to allow more time for discussion of draft decisions. The revised timetable brought forward the discussion of the draft decisions to the very first session of the meeting to ensure that negotiations on the decisions were completed by the end of the meeting. He said that the secretariat would prepare a list of possible decisions that might arise out of the reports to be presented by the secretariat at the meeting. He requested members to alert the secretariat as early as possible regarding draft decisions that their Governments might want to introduce. In closing, he said that the secretariat would continue to be guided by the suggestions and recommendations of the Committee on this issue.

#### **Agenda item 6**

##### **Report of the 2013 annual meeting of the subcommittee**

45. Introducing the item, the Chair said that the secretariat had incorporated into the Chair's report of the 2013 annual meeting of the subcommittee the comments received from a number of representatives on 26 September 2013.

46. The Committee endorsed the Chair's report as presented in document UNEP/CPR/SC2013/L.1.

#### **Agenda item 7**

##### **Other matters**

47. The Executive Director of UNEP recalled that according to rule 203.3 of the financial rules of UNEP, he was required to seek the Committee's approval prior to receiving voluntary contributions from non-governmental sources in excess of \$500,000. He noted that he was seeking approval from the Committee to receive a contribution of \$695,000 from Hisense International, a Chinese enterprise that was involved in the SEED initiative, a multi-stakeholder partnership that supported entrepreneurs for sustainable development in the context of the subprogramme on resource efficiency.

48. The Committee approved the proposed contribution from Heisense International.

49. A number of participants then made closing remarks.

50. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, offered some remarks on the four-day meeting held on 23–26 of September 2013, while stressing that she could not offer a conclusive evaluation of the meeting or its outcome. Reiterating her condemnation of the terrorist attack in Nairobi, she commended the Executive Director and his staff for having held the meeting as planned. Noting that several representatives from capitals had attended the meeting, she said that it had been useful for them to get first-hand information on the overall implementation of the UNEP programme of work and to participate more closely in the shaping of the strategic framework and other matters. She suggested that the meeting's open format enhanced the Committee's sense of ownership of UNEP and led to a better understanding of how the organization functioned. Regarding substance, she suggested that in the future work of the subcommittee, it would be important to provide feedback on the implementation of Governing Council decisions within the programme of work.

51. The representative of Kenya expressed his appreciation for the many expressions of sympathy to the Government and the people of Kenya following the recent terrorist attack. He stressed that such incidents were a frequent phenomenon around the world; almost sixty terrorist attacks had been carried out since 1 July 2013 and the tragic event at the shopping mall in Nairobi had been an "international event applied locally". His Government had been heartened by the robust international response to the attack and he urged that, in that spirit of togetherness, representatives encourage delegations scheduled to travel to Nairobi over the next few months to continue with those plans. His Government was extremely conscious of security challenges and was committed to doing its utmost to ensure the safety of visiting delegations.

40. A number of representatives expressed their solidarity with the Government of Kenya.

53. One representative, speaking remotely from Addis Ababa, thanked UNEP for the opportunity to participate remotely in the meeting of the Committee and expressed the hope that interpretation could

be provided to remote participants to enhance their level of engagement. He also emphasized the importance of making electronic documents available in a timely manner.

54. The Chair invited representatives to provide to the secretariat any comments or suggestions on the recent four-day annual meeting of the subcommittee that might be helpful in organizing future such meetings.

**Agenda item 8**

**Closure of the meeting**

55. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.32 p.m. on Friday, 27 September 2013

## **Minutes of the 125th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, held on 10 December 2013 as adopted by the 126th meeting on 24 March 2014**

### **Agenda item 1**

#### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.55 a.m. on Tuesday, 10 December 2013, by Mr. Chan-woo Kim, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
2. At the invitation of the Chair, the Committee observed a minute of silence in memory of Mr. Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa.
3. The meeting was attended by 78 participants from 50 countries and 3 observer missions. Also taking part in the meeting by videoconference were participants from permanent missions in Addis Ababa and Geneva.
4. The Chair welcomed the following new permanent representatives to the Committee: Mr. Charalambos Kapsos, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cyprus; Mr. Beniamino Salacakau, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Fiji; Mr. Andreas Peschke, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany; Mr. Sandor Kocsis, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary; Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Shakarchi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Iraq; Mr. Mauro Massoni, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy; Mr. Per Ludvig Magnus, Chargé d'Affaires and Acting Permanent Representative of Norway; Mr. Mansoor Falah Al-Dosari, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative of Qatar; Ms. Elena Dumitru, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of Romania; and Mr. Vladimir Lenev, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation.
5. He bade farewell to the following members who had recently departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Ms. Wanja Michuki, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Mr. Sergey Trepelkov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation.

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Adoption of the agenda**

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in documents UNEP/CPR/125/1 and Add.1/Rev.1.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Adoption of the minutes of the 124th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 27 September 2013**

7. The Committee adopted the minutes of the 124th meeting on the basis of the draft minutes set out in document UNEP/CPR/125/2.

### **Agenda item 4**

#### **Report of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

8. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, extended a warm welcome to new permanent representatives joining the Committee.
9. Introducing the item, he drew attention to his written report and its addendum. He provided an overview of major international environmental meetings and activities of the previous three-month period.
10. Addressing climate change, the Executive Director acknowledged the unease among Member States at the insufficient progress made at the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, held in Warsaw in November 2013, and the challenges that still remained to be tackled before the following two sessions to be held in Lima in 2014 and in Paris in 2015, respectively. Referring to the UNEP 2013 *Emissions Gap Report*, he cautioned that within two to three years the 2°C target might no longer be viable and he urged

Governments to strive for a collective response to global warming. There was a growing willingness to act at country level and notable momentum on the part of the public, local government, the private sector, commerce and industry, with clean energy targets ratified in 140 countries, renewable energy policies implemented, record investments and new initiatives at urban and industrial sector levels; that momentum needed to be harnessed and matched in the negotiating process and the high-level summit on climate change to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in September 2014 would afford an opportunity to do so. Any agreement reached in Paris in 2015 would not become a legal commitment until 2020, so actions taken in the interim period would be essentially of a voluntary nature and contributions made by countries in that respect would be critical to maintaining the viability of the 2°C target. The Secretary-General had committed the United Nations leadership to doing everything possible to maintain the momentum ahead of the summit on climate change.

11. He highlighted a number of UNEP-led initiatives, such as the “En.lighten” initiative and others in the transport sector, some of which would be presented to the business community at the Davos World Economic Forum in 2014, which would have climate change as a key topic on the agenda. A great deal of attention had been paid at the Warsaw climate change conference to UNEP initiatives that illustrated a bottom-up, complimentary approach to tackling global warming, such as the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, demonstrating the success of UNEP in bringing science closer to the policy arena. Great success had also been achieved in the area of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation with important decisions on that topic adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its nineteenth session. He paid tribute to the Government of Norway for its contribution to the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries in its catalytic phase. He drew attention to a number of reports released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which had been well received, and said that positive feedback had also been received on the Climate Technology Centre and Network, which was now operational with basic staffing in place, although recruitment continued. He expressed the view that science was becoming less of a battleground in tackling climate change; the current challenge was to tackle the issues in a way that was sustainable for economies. Climate change would continue to dominate many international discussions and the work programme of UNEP in the coming years.

12. Turning to areas in which work that had been in progress for several years had come to fruition, he drew attention, among others, to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and expressed his appreciation to the Government of Japan for hosting the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Convention in Minamata in October 2013. The target now was to achieve sufficient ratifications for the treaty to come into force; the United States of America had been the first country to ratify it. Financing for mercury actions would now be integral to the replenishment process of the Global Environment Facility.

13. After many years of negotiation, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services was now in place and operational: the Platform’s secretariat had been appointed and sufficient resources were available to begin implementation of its work programme. He paid tribute to the Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, for facilitating the contribution of UNEP to the process, and to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization for their assistance. With regard to the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, he said that a very dynamic Board had been constituted and the programmes were on track and moving forward.

14. Turning to the green economy and biodiversity, he singled out the consolidation of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, which was now receiving funding pledges, and looked forward to the United Nations Development Programme formally joining the partnership in the coming year. He also highlighted the great progress being made by The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity network, using its original report, produced largely by UNEP, and methodology derived therefrom, to assist countries in evaluating their natural capital and its significance for their economies. Some 27 processes were now under way globally, most recently in Ecuador and Bolivia, which were exploring ways of cooperating with UNEP using a network of practitioners and partnerships. Such examples illustrated how certain UNEP initiatives were taking on a momentum of their own.

15. He thanked Member States for hosting and participating in a number of international events, such as the sixth Global South-South Development Expo, held for the first time in Africa, in Nairobi, from 28 October to 1 November, and the first joint UNEP and International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Conference, held in Nairobi in November 2013.

16. Looking ahead to 2014, he drew attention to key priorities, notably the preparations for the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, of which high expectations were being expressed by Member States; it was important to ensure that the high-level segment was meaningful and would deliver on those expectations. The second major priority would be the programme of work for 2014–2015, with a major focus of attention being the evolution of the results-based management approach and improving the delivery of the programme of work by UNEP. He assured the Committee of the senior management team's deep commitment to that end.

17. The post-2105 development agenda and sustainable development goals would also be important topics on the agenda, with UNEP called upon to formulate an integrated approach to those goals. Lack of resources had posed difficulties in that regard in recent months. He underlined that financing and technology transfer remained issues of major concern which transcended all areas of UNEP activity, including climate change and the green economy. Great interest had been expressed in the financial world in engaging more closely with the public policy arena, as witnessed at the recent global round-table meeting organized by the UNEP Finance Initiative, held in Beijing in November 2013. The potential for financing and innovative possibilities indicated at the meeting needed to be explored.

18. Concluding his remarks on future developments, he hailed UNEP-Live as potentially one of the most transformative initiatives in the work of UNEP in the past 40 years, offering a modern technology foundation and data environment to facilitate global responses to environmental change and challenges. Likewise, the transition to the International Public Service Accounting System being invested in by the United Nations system would transform the accounting methods in UNEP. He undertook to keep the Committee briefed on progress in that regard.

19. With regard to the financial outlook for 2013–2014, he cautioned that a number of countries were still suffering from the effects of the financial crisis and their contributions to the Environment Fund remained at zero or very low, leaving a shortfall in the originally approved Environment Fund projections for the biennium. Much had been done, however, especially among developing countries, for example by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to increase the number of countries contributing to the Fund and to raise the level of their contributions. Environment Fund contributions for 2013 were expected to reach close to \$80 million by the end of the year, still short of the original budget of \$95 million but an improvement on the previous year. With conservative management of the carry-over, income at the end of 2013 was likely to be close to \$90 million. Implementation had been more conservative throughout the year in order to avoid a deficit at the end of the year. On the other hand, trust fund income had reached its target by 1 October and stood at \$122 million. It was hoped that by the end of the year the trust fund target would have been exceeded by about \$24 million. The regular budget stood at \$14.1 million and would be spent by the end of 2013.

20. In conclusion, he noted some significant staff movements within the secretariat as set out in his written report. The recruitment process for a number of other vacancies was still in progress. The Chief Scientist of UNEP, Mr. Joseph Alcamo, the first person to have held the post, was leaving the organization and his successor had been recruited subject to final clearance.

21. He said that Mr. Jamil Ahmad would be leaving the post of Secretary for Governing Bodies and Stakeholders, which would be taken over by Mr. Jiri Hlavacek, current Chief of the Regional Support Office, from 1 February 2014.

22. The Executive Director expressed appreciation to the staff of UNEP and to the Committee for their active engagement throughout the year in developing the medium-term strategy and programme of work, and he thanked Mr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of United Nations Human Settlements Programme, for his support in fostering closer cooperation between the two organizations.

23. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives paid tribute to the life and work of Mr. Nelson Mandela and expressed condolences to the Government and people of South Africa on his death.

24. Many representatives thanked the Executive Director for his comprehensive report. One said that the results of the previous three months were more impressive than ever and a reminder of the wide range of activities in which UNEP was involved. He expressed support for the general approach of the report. A number of representatives congratulated the Executive Director on the extent of commendable work carried out since the previous meeting of the Committee, only a small part of which was covered by his report. One representative said the report illustrated the growing role of UNEP as the key structure within the United Nations for environmental protection. Another representative thanked the secretariat for their efforts resulting in the outcomes documented in the

report and for their readiness to interact with the Committee. One representative noted that his Government supported the proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the Executive Director of UNEP for an additional two years.

25. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed appreciation for the support of UNEP in bringing the Global South-South Expo to the southern hemisphere; it was seen as having fully achieved the goal of promoting south-south and triangular cooperation. Citing a number of examples, she said that initiatives such as the Expo helped developing countries to leapfrog towards sustainable development. The Expo had been established as a key event in the calendar of the United Nations, reflecting the growing political importance of south-south cooperation. A second representative, speaking on behalf of another group of countries, welcomed the event's achievements, including pledges of over \$450 million to support the exchange of southern-grown investment ideas. South-south and triangular cooperation should complement, not replace, development cooperation commitments by developed countries, particularly those that were in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. He also expressed appreciation for the South-South Technology Transfer Facility for landlocked developing countries launched in the margins of the event and called on Member States to support it. Another representative noted the value of the experiences shared at the Expo which could be replicated. One representative, in congratulating the secretariat on the organization of the Expo and the Interpol conference, noted that both meant exploring new ground for UNEP and were successful in laying foundations for future work.

26. The representative of Japan, speaking on behalf of his Government as the host of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury, thanked UNEP and Member States for contributing to the great success of the Conference. His Government was preparing the necessary legal instruments for the Convention and supports the early entry into force of the Convention; his Government was pledging \$2 billion for three years to support measures to combat air and water contamination and for solid waste management in developing countries. A number of representatives congratulated UNEP and the Government of Japan on the success of the Conference. Describing it as a landmark event, one representative highlighted that the Convention was the first new multilateral environmental agreement on chemicals and waste to be signed in ten years; it was encouraging that international cooperation on the environment could bring results and real benefits to people worldwide. Another representative reiterated the call for the Convention to come into force as soon as possible. One representative described the ratification of the Convention by the United States of America as a shining example for all to follow.

27. With regard to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, the representative of Norway expressed the continuing full support of his Government for the involvement of UNEP and cooperation across United Nations entities in the that area, describing it as a very important tool in the fight against climate change. The newly elected Government of Norway had also confirmed its earlier pledge of \$20 million over two years for the Climate and Clean Air Coalition.

28. A representative of the African group of countries welcomed the continuing support of UNEP and development partners for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment; the fifth special session, held in Gaborone in September 2013, had highlighted environmental issues that were important to Africa, including climate change and the implementation of regional flagship programmes in line with the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. He called on Member States to support the regional flagship programmes and work on other issues raised in the Gaborone Declaration. He welcomed the outcomes of the INTERPOL executive level meeting held in Nairobi, and UNEP involvement therein, and called for attention to be focused on the illegal trade in endangered species at the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

29. With regard to the United Nations Environment Assembly, the same representative called for enhanced participation of stakeholders, including accreditation for non-governmental organizations from developing countries, and provision of the necessary financial support for their participation. He also urged that the consolidation of headquarters functions in Nairobi and the strengthening of regional offices should be undertaken in a transparent and forthright manner in the spirit of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want", and called for a detailed report on the subject by the Executive Director in the context of the 2016–2017 programme of work at the following session of the Assembly. He called for the creation of subregional offices in Africa and looked forward to an update from the Executive Director on strengthening the regional presence of UNEP and enhancing delivery at the national level, and the inclusion of the issue on the agenda of the first session of the Assembly. The outcome of the first session should take the form of a president's summary, he said.

30. One representative noted that the Executive Director had not made reference to the outcome of the discussion on the twenty-seventh session of the UNEP Governing Council at the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly in November 2013. Another sought more information on the outcome of the fifth African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and related workshops held in Pretoria in November 2013.

31. One representative welcomed the support of UNEP for capacity-building of African climate change negotiators and called for similar support for other regions.

32. One representative welcomed the activities of UNEP in the wake of typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Another stressed that the devastation caused by the typhoon highlighted the urgency of working together for the full integration of the environmental component in policymaking.

33. On climate change, one representative endorsed the concern expressed by the Executive Director with regard to climate change and welcomed the efforts made to move forward, including the involvement of civil society in seeking a common response to the challenge. He also noted the importance of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and thanked the Government of Norway for its support for the Coalition. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, called on all Member States to “do their homework” and to table their contributions towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions well in advance of the climate conference to be held in Paris in 2015; those contributions should be clear, transparent and understandable.

34. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, referred to the thirteenth meeting of the International Resource Panel, held in Naivasha, Kenya, in November 2013. The meeting had provided a useful update on the work of UNEP on the science-policy interface and was particularly relevant to the post-2015 development agenda. She requested that the Committee be kept informed of the Panel’s contribution and that Member States should continue to be involved in the work of the secretariat on the post-2015 framework.

35. In his response, the Executive Director welcomed the observations made by representatives. He acknowledged the difficulty of covering all UNEP activities and meetings in his report and the need to be selective. He undertook to provide more information in his next report on the General Assembly discussion on the twenty-seventh session of the UNEP Governing Council and on the fifth African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in Pretoria. He expressed his satisfaction at the response of the Committee to the Global South-South Development Expo and its positive reaction to the decision by UNEP to host the event, and he thanked the secretariat and UNEP divisions for their efforts.

36. With regard to international meetings on climate change, he emphasized that the role of UNEP was to explain the science and monitoring efforts, and to remind the international community of the work still to be done. It was essential to reach an agreement in 2015 that would be relevant to the scientific evidence on which UNEP was endeavouring to act.

#### **Agenda item 5**

##### **Preparations for the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP in 2014**

37. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the proposed themes for the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly as discussed at the meetings of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 12 November and 3 December 2013. The subcommittee had agreed, first, that one of the themes should be devoted to the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda; second, that the secretariat would organize a briefing session on the state of the environment as an entry point for the ministerial discussions; and third, that there would be a symposium on financing the green economy which would also feed into the high-level segment. Many different views had been put forward with regard to the high-level themes; it had been agreed that there should be a maximum of two themes, with one being the sustainable development goals, and proposals for the second including sustainable consumption and production and the illegal trade in wildlife and timber.

38. A lengthy discussion ensued on the proposals, focusing on the themes for the session. Most of the representatives who took the floor supported limiting the number of themes to a maximum of two; there was broad support for the theme of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, and many representatives voiced support for the subject of the illegal wildlife trade as the second theme, with some calling for it to be broadened to cover all environmental crime.

39. One representative noted that previous high-level discussions had been too diffuse and strongly supported limiting the number of themes. Another said that in selecting the themes, attention should be paid to emerging environmental issues of strategic importance in the long term, to areas where UNEP could make a difference, and to avoiding duplication of effort with work being done by other organizations.

40. One representative advocated the idea of an overarching umbrella theme of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, which would bring together different themes. He emphasized that the outcome of the thematic debates should contribute to, but not prejudice the outcome of, the discussions on the sustainable development goals that were taking place in New York.

41. There was wide support expressed for the idea of a special briefing for ministers.

42. Summing up the discussion, the Chair said that at its meetings in January 2014 the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives should conclude discussions on the selection of themes for the high-level segment, in support of which the secretariat would prepare notes on possible outlines of the background papers on the proposed themes.

#### **Agenda item 6**

##### **Report of the subcommittee**

43. The Chair presented the report of the subcommittee, providing an overview of the meetings of the subcommittee that had been held since the previous meeting of the Committee. At the meeting held on 5 December 2013, members had discussed the proposed strategic framework and programme of work for the period 2016–2017. The result of the discussion on the proposed strategic framework was attached to the report of the subcommittee for consideration by the Committee.

44. The Committee endorsed the strategic framework for 2016–2017.

#### **Agenda item 7**

##### **Other matters**

45. The representative of Botswana expressed appreciation for the participation of many Member States and international organizations in the African Elephant Summit of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, held in Gaborone in December 2013. The participants had agreed on a set of urgent measures to support the African Elephant Action Plan and he encouraged more Member States to sign up to it before the end of December 2013. He urged UNEP to continue its support for the Plan, including political support at the highest level.

46. The representative of South Africa expressed appreciation on behalf of his Government for the messages of condolence on the loss of Mr. Nelson Mandela. The South African High Commission in Nairobi was hosting a memorial in conjunction with the Government of Kenya to which all were invited.

47. The representative of Kenya invited the members of all missions in Nairobi to take part in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Kenya's independence at the Kasarani Stadium in Nairobi on 12 December 2013.

#### **Agenda item 8**

##### **Closure of the meeting**

48. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 1.10 p.m. on Tuesday, 10 December 2013