



Third informal workshop on the implementation of UNGA Resolution 73/333

7 July 2021

Statements by Brazil

as delivered by Mr. Patrick Luna,
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Thank you for giving me the floor, Mr. Co-Facilitator.

The discussions culminating in UNGA Resolution 73/333 revealed that the gap we must address is not a normative one, but an operational one. We do not lack norms; what we lack is the implementation of the norms we already have. The political declaration must bring us into a world where developing countries can count with more assistance – in resources, in technology, in capacity – to be in a better position to implement the commitments that they agreed to and "leapfrog" towards sustainable development. This is how the declaration can make a difference in real life.

The political declaration is expected to be adopted in the context of the commemorations of the 50th anniversary of UNEP. And this will be an opportunity not only to take stock of all that was achieved over the past fifty years, but also - and more importantly - encourage a reflection on how we can perform better. From our vantage point, it emerges clearly that while much has been achieved by UNEP under the normative angle, there is significant room for improvement under the implementation one.

Mr. Co-Facilitator,

The first guiding question for today's conversation asked us to identify which building blocks on means of implementation fall outside the scope of Resolution 73/333. From our vantage point, the draft building blocks actually fall short of the mandate of the resolution and would need to be strengthened just to get us back the level of ambition endorsed by the General Assembly.

Given the importance that a significant number of delegations have been consistently attaching to this issue, it would probably be adequate for the section on means of implementation to be the first - or at least not the last - in the political declaration.

Mr. Co-Facilitator,

Shortcomings in the implementation of environmental commitments are a challenge faced by developing and developed countries alike. All of us can do better. At the same time, it is equally true that each Member-State has different financial, scientific and technological capabilities to discharge their obligations, given the wide differences in levels of economic development. It is also true that those we call “developed” have been able to develop for longer times unimpeded by environmental restrictions, and now need to take on a greater share of responsibility for the problems of environmental degradation. At an ethical level, this is a translation of the principle of equity: “there is nothing more unequal than equal treatment of unequal people”. At the level of international environmental law, it is the fabric of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. While Brazil welcomes that the draft building blocks reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration, we consider that the vocation of this exercise to address implementation gaps would demand a specific and clear reference to CBDR. Otherwise, the political declaration would be backtracking, and that is not an option.

Mr. Co-Facilitator,

Given the time available, I would like to address questions (iv) and (v) together.

Regarding means of implementation, the draft building blocks contain several positive elements that should be retained or even strengthened. Paragraph 24, for instance, addresses the need to increase the predictability of financial resources to UNEP, reducing its current high dependence on voluntary (and oftentimes earmarked) contributions. As we all know, an excessive reliance on earmarked contributions pose a challenge both from programmatic and administrative angles, leading to an asymmetry in the distribution of resources across subprogrammes and it also reinforces a fragmentation trend within the Secretariat, running counter to the SG's call for the UN to “deliver as one”.

Talking about “delivering as one”, we consider it positive to make better use of the UN Resident Coordinator system, since the RCs are suitably placed to identify cooperation opportunities and receive cooperation requests, ensuring that UNEP's implementation support is tailored to each local context, demand-driven and aligned with national priorities. As we reflect on how to make optimal use of existing mechanisms and funds, as called for in question (v), Brazil considers that UNEP can have a more prominent role in connecting the dots between the different dimensions of implementation, by bringing together best practices, technology sharing, capacity building and access to financial resources.

In this context, and as recalled by many speakers before me, the financial obligations contained in the MEAs and in the Paris Agreement are far from being adequately fulfilled by developed countries. The Official Development Assistance targets are also regrettably far from being met. This situation makes it all the more difficult for developing countries to be in a position to, even with strong political will, adequately implement their environmental commitments.

Considering UNEP's coordination mandate, it would be uniquely placed to conduct a thorough study throughout the MEAs to assess to which extent the legal commitments regarding the financial obligations are being met, to provide us with a clearer picture of this gap.
