

**Statement by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia at the 151st
Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP
(Nairobi, 14 September 2020)**

Mr Chairperson,

Madam Executive Director,

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,

On the Quarterly Report

Ethiopia wishes to thank the Secretariat for the preparation and presentation of the Quarterly Report, including UNEP's response to COVID-19.

Ethiopia wishes to welcome the reference made to its 2020 Green Legacy Programme, the Second of its nature, pledging to plant 5 billion trees, launched by H.E. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali on World Environment Day.

Over four billion tree seedlings were planted in the First Green Legacy Campaign organized in 2019 during the Ethiopian rainy season from which a record number of nearly 354 million trees were planted in a single day on what the Ethiopia called a **Green Legacy Day**, on the 29th July 2019. Thanks to the commitment and determination of our people, close follow-up by our people, and adequate rainfall - over 80% of the trees planted last year have flourished.

In addition to referring to this incredibly inspiring story, Ethiopia hopes that it is within UNEP's mandate to formulate a lesson from such an African success story and share it with the rest of the world. Ethiopia notes that an attempt is underway, but we are keen to see the result and impact in the globe.

On the issue pertaining to human resource in the United Nations Environment Program, Ethiopia wishes to second the issue raised by the distinguished delegate of Malawi regarding regional representation and gender equity. Ethiopia also notes the response by the executive director. In this regard, Ethiopia encourages UNEP's Secretariat to make a deliberate effort to conduct reach out activities targeting regions such as Africa that are less represented in the overall structure.

On Medium-Term Strategy 2021- 2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023

Ethiopia thanks the Secretariat for the preparation and presentation of the Medium-Term Strategy 2021- 2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023.

Ethiopia notes with an appreciation of how the Executive Director captures the interventions related to poverty eradication from the distinguished delegates from India and South Africa. Ethiopia encourages that the Medium Term Strategy a Medium-Term Strategy 2021- 2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 also capture the same.

Ethiopia notes with concern that the developing world, especially Africa, is missing from the MTS picture. Africa, especially least developing countries, are lacking behind in the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Indicators for poverty, environmental degradation, access to water, energy, and decent jobs clearly show that the United Nations System and in particular the United Nations Environment Program should make a focused intervention targeting Africa.

Science is informing us that climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are causing a humanitarian crisis in the world and Africa and least developing countries are paying the ultimate price. Studies have also linked a hotter climate to more damaging locust swarms, leaving Africa disproportionately affected as twenty of the fastest-warming countries globally are in Africa. Climate change in general is responsible for the locusts' invasion and the current floods as witnessed in the Horn of Africa.

In light of this, the MTS mentions Least Developing Countries and the impact of climate change in its generic terms and Ethiopia, as one of the LDC, suggests that the MTS gives adequate focus and coverage to LDCs.

Though climate change is a global phenomenon, Africa, especially the LDCs, is highly vulnerable as a result of the prevailing poverty in the continent. LDCs also lack the resources and the means to recover from effects of climate change quickly. AS thirty-three out of the Forty-seven LDCs are African states, it would be in order for UNEP to prioritize Africa, including through instituting a special program for Africa. Such prioritization has precedence in the United Nations system, among others the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization has global priorities targeting the Africa region and Gender Equality. Prioritizing Africa has helped UNESCO to impact education in Africa.

In conclusion, as the video presentation indicates, the Medium-Term Strategy 2021- 2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 will attempt to forge the UNEP we want, and the UNEP we want is a transformational and transformed at the service of Africa where its most significant impact is felt.

I thank you, Chair.