



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

335 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel (212) 439-4000, Fax (212) 986-1083

Statement by H.E. Mr. CHO Hyun

TITLE Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative

FORUM Informal Consultations on the Institutional Framework for UN Environmental Activities

TOPIC The International Environmental Governance

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Thank you, Mr. Co-Chairs.

1. First of all, let me join the other delegates in expressing our gratitude for your organizing these informal consultations. I also commend the Co-Chairs' Options Paper, which summarizes the issues on International Environmental Governance (IEG) that we now face, and also maps out a road for an enhanced institutional framework for sustainable development.
2. Before discussing specific options, I would like to briefly explore why we need a better institutional framework in UN environmental activities and what we expect from the UN system. In light of the fact that global environmental issues such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, etc., have become severer and more evident, it is imperative to have a UN system that better coordinates all environmental activities under strong leadership, and utilizes and allocates resources on the basis of clear and agreed upon priorities. An improved UN system will better address the environmental issues effectively and efficiently at the global, regional, and national levels.
3. To this end, we believe that the UN system in the environmental field carry high authority and credibility. Global environmental issues are closely intertwined with sustainable growth, and these are strongly related to economic and social development. This feature makes environmental issues multi-faceted and more complicated. To address and coordinate these complex environmental issues, and to

provide better policy advice, it is essential that the UN environmental system should make it a priority to develop a well defined framework by establishing specific agendas for problem solving. The UN environmental system also needs to address environmental issues coherently, and, through use of its authority and expertise, must lead stakeholders toward agreed global objectives.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

4. Against this backdrop, my delegation supports most of the elements articulated in the Co-Chairs' Options Paper. We agree that this re-institutionalization should be implemented through a phased process, monitored and guided by the General Assembly. My delegation also believes that each UN environmental entity should be able to design its own reform plan, and, if necessary, to propose ideas for contributing to this institutionalizing process.

5. We specifically support the idea of strengthening scientific assessment, monitoring, and early warning capacity as elaborated in Building Block 1. We agree to the options for strengthening the scientific capacity of the UNEP, one of which is creating the position of "a chief scientist at UNEP." We hope, however, that creating this position will not create duplication or functional conflicts among other departments, such as the Department of Early Warning and Assessment of the UNEP. We also agree to the idea of establishing an "Environment Watch Strategy Vision 2020" in the UNEP. At the same time, we believe it will be beneficial to work closely with other international organizations, including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

6. We also support Building Block 2: Coordination and Cooperation at the Level of Agencies. We wish, however, to insure that setting up new joint units will not incur many additional expenditures. Regarding Building Blocks 3, 4 and 5, we think it is important to implement them as recommended by the Co-Chairs. Although some elements of these Building Blocks appear to be ambitious, we see their implementation as having more advantages than not, and these will enhance efficiencies with better results. We also fully support Building Blocks 6 and 7.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

7. The tasks ahead of us are of great importance. To meet them, every country should consider the severity of the global environment and make its best efforts to approach improvement of the institutional framework in the UN environmental system with the aim of achieving real results. My delegation would like to reassure you that the Republic of Korea will support and take part in these efforts for achieving a more efficient and effective institutional framework for the United Nations' environment activities. Thank you, Mr. Co-Chairs.