

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Hazem Shabat, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Republic of Kenya, and Permanent Representative to UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNON, Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China, Nairobi Chapter at the Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi, 1 October 2020).**

At the outset allow me to thank you, Mr. Chair and Secretariat for convening this timely meeting, allowing us to discuss the issue in a more inclusive and transparent setting that will take into consideration all of our concerns.

The Group believes that considerable number of participants representing developing countries will face challenges due to the existing internet access infrastructure gaps. This will directly impact the inclusiveness and transparency of the works of UNEA, and sheds unnecessary doubts on its universality.

The Group is also of the view that substantive matters should be concluded in the context of in person settings, as our experience with the existing virtual platforms so far sheds great doubts on the ability to provide equal opportunity of interactions to delegations, due to connectivity, as well as other technical challenges such as translation services, add to that the time zone factor. All of these challenges makes it difficult for us to expect a reliable technical solution for conducting negotiations on resolutions and decisions.

The Group also believes that holding a special "meeting" in February 2021 that ensures the continuity of UNEP's Programme of Work and budget could be explored as an option to be considered. Substantive resolutions and decisions can be addressed when the UNEA5 is held at a later date.

I, thank you, Chair