

*Delegation from  
Libya*

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### ***Position Paper for United Nations Environment Assembly***

*The topics before the United Nations (UN) Development Programme (UNDP) are: combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife, implementation of the Paris Agreement, sustainable Use of the Oceans, Seas, and Marine Resources. The State of Libya advocates strong international cooperation to address these global issues and expect the upcoming conference to open efficient discussions.*

#### **I. Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife**

In 2015, the UN released the Sustainable Development Goals, which state that all parties should try and «take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products». Indeed, because of the value of wildlife products, illegal trade in wildlife is one of the major illegal economic activities, along with traffic of humans, drugs or weapons. Powdered rhino horn costs for example 100 000 \$ per kilogram (cocaine, in comparison, costs 52 000 \$). Illegal wildlife trade seriously harms the environment and ecosystem across the world. Poachers threaten the very biodiversity of our common planet by attacking endangered species. At the same time, illegal trade in wildlife has also consequences on human security. The profits generated by those trades are often used by transnational criminal organizations, if not terrorists groups, to fund actions that could shake global stability.

The State of Libya strongly supports the work of the UN on this issue. Since 2003, the State of Libya supports the CITES (*Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora*) and deeply believes that illegal wildlife trade is pushing species to the brink of extinction, robbing countries of their natural heritage and profiting international criminal work. It also supports the UN's last #Wildforlife campaign in 2016, which aimed at mobilizing the world to end this destructive trade.

The State of Libya recommends that the UN should put more pressure on the countries that didn't ratify the CITES. Only a global response can end this problem, since demand creates its own supply. Furthermore, Libya invites Member States to pass a resolution on fighting against corruption, which allows illegal wildlife products to enter many countries. Libya is confident that these initiatives will help create a better world for all its inhabitants.

#### **II. Implementation of the Paris Agreement**

Fighting climate change is an essential component of sustainable development. Global warming is a reality which is already affecting the lives of thousands of people. The fifth Assessment Report (delivered in November 2014) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides a clear and reliable view on the issue. From 1880 to 2012, average global temperature increased by 0,85°C and in the worst-case scenario, this augmentation may amount to 4,8°C by 2100 (from 0,3°C to 3,1°C in the other cases). According to the IPCC, this rise is extremely likely (95% probability) to be caused by human activities and particularly by significant greenhouse gases emission. As a result, many major crops (such as wheat and rice) are going through important yield reductions and the sea level keeps on rising (the global average sea level has risen by 0,19cm since 1901) as the polar ice cap is melting (an estimated 1,07 million km<sup>2</sup> of ice disappears every year).

As global warming endangers wild and human lives, the international community has long placed it at the core of the debate. Since 1972, several United Nations Conferences on Environment and Development (UNCED) were organized, held in Stockholm (1972), Nairobi (1982), Rio de Janeiro (1992) and Johannesburg (2002). As a result, the UN created the ICPP in 1988 and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992 by 154 countries to try and pass, through yearly Conferences of

Parties, legally-binding agreements on climate change such as the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The State of Libya recently recognised the need to join the fight against global warming and ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2006. Unfortunately, the latter proved unable to monitor this complex issue, particularly because of the American non-ratification. At the 21st Conference of Parties held in 2015 in Paris, the State of Libya was one of the 194 countries signing the Paris Agreement, a legally binding agreement aiming at “*holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change*”.

The State of Libya is directly concerned by the risks of climate change, the country being more and more threatened by droughts, desertification and crops yield reductions. That’s why it pledges for a global effort to address this global issue and deeply believes in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. It particularly demands the financial help of developed countries as South Countries won’t obviously be able to assume alone the price of this fight without jeopardizing too hardly their economic and social development.

### **III. Sustainable Use of the Oceans, Seas, and Marine Resources**

Oceans and seas cover three quarters of the Earth’s surface and represent 99% of the living space on the planet by volume. Biodiversity is there dense (200 000 identified species live in the seas, but actual numbers may lie in the millions) and natural resources are abundant (particularly minerals, oil and gas). Oceans are thus true sources of wealth; there are a few figures illustrating it: the market value of coastal resources and industries is estimated at \$3 trillion per year, over three billion people depend on the marine resources for their livelihoods and 200 million people work (directly or indirectly) in marine fisheries. As a consequence oceans and seas are strongly coveted and, unfortunately, often overexploited and polluted by neglectful companies. Not only does this misuse destroy thousands of ecosystems, it also jeopardizes the long term exploitation of oceans which is already bone of contention between countries.

Recognizing the need for an international cooperation to monitor an estate which goes over traditional borders, the UN organized three Conferences on the Law of the Sea between 1972 and 1982, and declared the oceans and marine resources the “common heritage of mankind”. The third conference held in 1982 in Montego Bay led to the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which establishes the rights and responsibilities of nations regarding their uses of the world's oceans, considering notably the marine business and the environment.

As a coastal state whose economy directly depends on oceans, the State of Libya strongly advocates for a sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources. It did sign the UNCLOS and wishes to have its application strengthened, calling for sanctions for states which flout its principles. The State of Libya reminds thus the Member states that the UNCLOS set out the legal framework for all activities on the oceans and seas by defining national sovereignty zones (the exclusive economic zones - EEZ) which are to be respected. Too many are the states which consider the oceans and seas as free exploitable milieu, ignoring international law on seas and damaging this precious milieu.