

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY 3 REPORT 2017

Dates for Meetings held in Preparation and during UNEA

27th–28th November–*Major Groups and Stakeholders*

29th November–1st December–*Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OCPR)*

30th November–*Faith Based Organizations*

2nd–3rd December–*Science Forum*

4th–6th December–*UN Assembly High Level segment*

Introduction

The third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) took place in Nairobi from 4 – 6th December 2017. It was opened by Dr. Edgar E. Gutiérrez-Espeleta, President of the Environment Assembly. Its theme was “Towards a pollution free planet.” The deliberations resulted in 11 adopted resolutions. Participants included civil society, politicians, private sector, scientists and others. During discussions, it was agreed that pollution is linked to loss of diversity, climate change and ecosystem degradation. There were urgent calls during presentations for action to be taken to change the trend for a better future. It was also noted that there is a strong link between environment and health.

UNEA was created as a result of the call made by world leaders at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Brazil in June 2012. Its aim is to strengthen and upgrade the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda. It established universal membership in its Governing Council.

The first UNEA meeting took place in Nairobi in June 2014 under the theme “Towards a Life of Dignity for All”.

The second UNEA meeting took place in May 2016 under the theme, “Delivering on the Environmental Dimension of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.” By the end of UNEA-2, member states adopted 25 resolutions. UNEA-2 was one of the first major global conferences taking place since the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The 2030 Agenda is an action plan for people, planet and prosperity and aims to achieve 17 goals, dubbed Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) with a further 126 targets within 15 years.

It was reported by the Executive Director that progress had been made in the implementation of some of the resolutions adopted during UNEA 2.

During the meeting, issues of air pollution, land and soil pollution, marine pollution, fresh water pollution, chemicals and waste, militarism, noise and other pollutions were extensively discussed, with a view to finding solutions. The private sector show-cased some of their environmentally friendly innovations, most of which were still in the early stages of development.

Civil Society meeting

The civil society (an aggregate of non-governmental organizations) held a two-day meeting and discussed, in plenary and in groups, issues of pollution. In their final presentation, the civil society reported that 70% of projects were implemented by them.

Faith Based Organizations Group meeting

A consultative meeting was held with faith based organisations (FBO's) groups with the aim of strengthening the role of faith based organizations in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Each organization made a presentation to introduce its organization. From the presentations, it emerged that FBO's were already doing a lot in areas of promoting positive environmental practices. Discussions then centred around strengthening partnerships within FBO's, encouraging faith based investments and sharing knowledge and scientific findings. With a vision of “a world where all creations live in balance”.

It was noted that FBO's are never invited to scientific meetings. It emerged that there is need to respect traditional knowledge & cultural diversity and therefore support messages of faith with scientific knowledge.

When asked ‘What FBO's can offer to SDG's implementation?’ It was agreed that values should be at the core of the 2030 agenda. Each FBO was asked to give a short write-up on this.

Science-Policy-Business Forum on the Environment

During the forum, it was noted that what was good for the planet was good for business. Leading scientists and business men shared how they were contributing towards a sustainable environment. Some of them show-cased their technology in the booths which included solar systems, clean water sources and clean cook stoves. The Astronomists demonstrated that there was only one planet that sustained life, and that was earth.

It was noted that this is an opportunity to interface science-policy and business. Policy makers should find a way to communicate to businesses. The fourth UNEA meeting will be held 11-15 March 2019.

Report in Pictures



UNEP headquarters



Sister Hilal at the welcome message in Kiswahili



Theme of the meeting



Group photo for the Faith Based Organizations



Sister Pratibha presenting



Sister Pratibha handing literature to Erik Solheim, the Executive Director of UNEP



Sisters Pratibha & Dorcas during Sessions



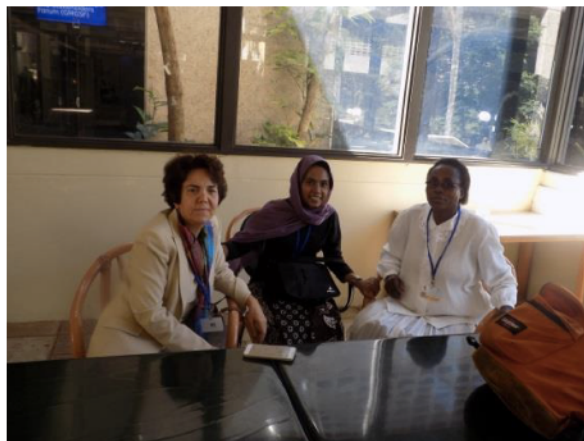
Sisters Pratibha & Dorcas with the Indian High Commissioner



Sister Hilal sharing a point with participants



Sisters Hilal & Dorcas during group discussion,



Sisters Hilal and Dorcas with H. Khasmy, the Indonesian women Rep.



Sisters Hilal & Dorcas consulting