

# **Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives**

## **United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)**

### ***Nairobi Kenya***

***Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014***

### ***Summary***

The meeting for OECPR (Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives) was attended by delegates from 97 Countries, Civil Society and Religious Groups in Nairobi Kenya.

The Delegates deliberated on issues of climate change. It was noted that climate change posed a challenge to sustainable development. Countries were already experiencing extreme weather and this is impacting on food productivity. Each country made a presentation on issues that they felt affected their countries most. Some of the issues highlighted by countries were: Chemicals and their effect on child development, air pollution, ecosystems and biodiversity, illegal trade and drug trafficking, wildlife and timber and rule of law. During discussion a suggestion was made that there should be an environmental law.

### ***Day 1***

BK Pratibha Patel and BK Dorcas Alusala attended the official opening as Observers at the OECPR.

The Open-ended meeting and the 126<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was opened by **H.E. Ms. Julia Pataki, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania, Acting Chair of the CPR to UNEP**. She welcomed the delegates to this important meeting and imparted her best wishes for productive discussions. She presented the agenda, which was adopted by the group.

**Alexander Juras, Chief, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch, UNEP**, provided an overview of the OECPR in preparation for United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). This is the first time that Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) have been permitted to participate in the Committee of Permanent Representatives. This opportunity is both unique and timely, because a topic of the OECPR is how UNEP can better engage with MGS.

The new chair for CPR **H.E. Mr. Sunu M Soemarmo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Indonesia** was elected for the period until June 2015.

**The Executive Director of UNEP Mr. Acheim Steiner**, in his presentation of major events and progress since November 2013, highlighted the reports 6 major items as follows:

1. Climate Change..... Climate and Clean Air Coalition has 76 partners.
2. Resource Efficiency.....Sustainable Consumption and Production was emphasized.
3. Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste.....industrialization and chemical accident prevention and preparedness.
4. Disasters and Conflicts.....war torn and fragile States.
5. Ecosystem Management.....waste water, water quality, Green economy and sustainable development.
6. Governance.....Poverty-Environment Initiatives in some countries, UNEP live that will provide data access to both the public and policy makers

The report also reviewed examples of best practice policies being implemented by countries and conditions for success on a sector by sector basis.

UNEP announced that the Climate Technology Centre and Network was officially opened for business and ready to assist developing countries.

Most of the countries spoke on Green Economy and Sustainable development. Ministers also believe that civil society can give significant assistance.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) meeting to be held in June 2014 will be important to review the work done so far. It was felt that outcomes from UNEA should be negotiated ones.

UNEP should stress efficiency and effectiveness, which is key as expansion takes place. Broad based participation is encouraged to strengthen delivery of goals.

Other issues discussed included:

- Protecting Wildlife and Timber
- Illegal Trade
- Chemical and Waste Management



BK's Pratibha Patel and Dorcas Alusala in one of the sessions



Sister Pratibha met with the Executive Director of UNEP Mr Achiem Steiner and introduced the BK's and also the One India project briefly and presented the catalogue for One India.



Executive Director of UNEP Mr. Achiem Steiner

**UNEP Chief Scientist Jacqueline McGlade** made a presentation on the effect of pollution on the environment.

Delegates were requested not to use the word 'CAN' in reports but use 'COULD' as it sounds more positive. Also not to use the term 'Planetary Boundaries' as it sounds political rather than environmental. The environment is natural and 'Boundaries' are political and manmade.

### **Day 3**

Issues of concern included environmental law, right to health environment and rule of law. It was suggested that environmental law lays the foundation for demographic governance. UNEP is based place to promote issues of environmental law. UNEA should take lead in this and coordinate information related to the environment. It was noted that many countries still have no legislation on environmental law. There were calls to strengthen science policy interface.

Some of the delegates we held discussions with were: Damaso Luna Corona – Assistant Director-General for sustainable development, Mexico and B. Salacakau of the Republic of Fiji-High Commissioner to South Africa, Accredited non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of Angola and Non-resident High Commissioner to the Republic of Botswana and Henry K. M. Kyemba of the Rotary International, District 9200 and Primary Representative to United Nations Environment Programme. The discussions centred around values and environment.

### **Day 4**

BK's had a discussion on values and environment with Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director – UNEP and Kare Chawicha Debessa, State Minister, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Environment and Forest and Kelebert Nkomani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to UNEP and UN-HABITAT. The discussions focused on values and the environment.



Deputy Executive Director UNEP with BK's Pratibha Patel and Dorcas Alusala



State Minister, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia with BK's Pratibha Patel and Dorcas Alusala



Ambassador and Permanent Representative to UNEP and UN-HABITAT, Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe with BK's Pratibha Patel and Dorcas Alusala



From the left, Delegates from Algeria, Burkina Faso and Mali with BK's Pratibha Patel and Dorcas Alusala

## **Day 5**

A Major Stakeholder Group Meeting was held between 9am and 10am. The group discussed the agenda for the UNEA meeting in June. The group highlighted areas of concern that needed to be addressed in June, some of which are listed below.

1. Science-policy interface
2. Chemicals and waste management
3. Illegal trade and timber
4. Good governance and rule of law
5. Economic growth and empowerment
6. Greening economic activity and growth
7. Innovation and infrastructure

The group felt that United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) is an opportunity to facilitate global agreement on how to deal with environmental problems and UNEP and UNEA should take the lead role to ensure sustainable consumption and production globally.



*Group Photo of Major Group of Stakeholders*

It was recognised that humanity was confronted with increasing resource constraint as a result of unsustainable production and consumption patterns. There is need to promote lifestyles that lead to sustainable development. Respecting human rights and conserving the environment is one way to secure sustainable development. The key for sustainable development goals is to provide equal opportunity for all through economic policies that are designed to avoid environmental

degradation. During Major Group Stakeholders meeting Sister Pratibha introduced the institution to the group. Groups wanted to know more about yogic farming which she shared with them.

During plenary government representatives gave their presentations. Illegal trade in the form of wildlife poaching and drug trafficking and timber harvesting were highlighted including climate and sustainable development as some of the issues to be presented to UNEA in June.



UNEP Nairobi

### ***List of acronyms .....***

CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GC	Governing Council
GMGSF	Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum
HLPF	High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
MGFC	Major Groups Facilitation Committee
MGS	Major Groups and Stakeholders
MGSB	Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
PoW	Programme of Work
SGB	Secretariat of the Governing Bodies
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme