

Thank you Madam / Excellency,

The delegation of Bangladesh associates itself with any constructive effort to better govern the issue of environment because we are the frontline state in terms of any adverse impact. Likewise we supported the initiative to explore the possibility of having an instrument in any form which might help to reduce the existing gaps among different environmental instruments and in international environmental laws in general. Given the preparatory time, size and the mandate, we believe that Secretary General's report is a helpful input to our effort. Hence, if we are really serious to examine the likelihood of reducing the gaps, we must base our work on certain principles. We consider the principles mentioned in the report are very general in nature which are already accepted under the existing legal regimes and are useful to start with for our mandated task and there is no bar to propose additional principles at later stages in our future negotiations of this working group. Regarding the question of duplicating the principles, we would state that all the principles may be mentioned in many other instruments but we do not see any reason for which they can not be mentioned here if they facilitate our work. We can also add special and differential treatment or flexibilities to these principles under certain circumstances. So, we may continue to present argument but we do not support at this stage deletion of any particular principle without any compelling reason.

For example Madam we can mention the principle 'polluter pays'. As a developing country we always prefer that differential treatment should be applied for the developing countries and the LDCs to this principle due to their level of development and resource constraints. For the principle 'Right

to a clean and healthy environment', for the developing countries we have to equally balance it with 'Right to development'. But all these additional arguments do not nullify the original principles.

Madam Chair,

Since we are on the first day of discussing the report we would say that as per our consideration the report is not a scientific thesis with exact figures and numbers and taking into consideration the volume and allocated time for preparation of the report, the report had done well to mention the apparent gaps. It is only natural that the lists of principles and gaps are not exhaustive and as expected it did not go into the lengthy analysis of the origins of the gaps. It also did not suggest the ways and means of reducing the gaps because for that we are here to discuss. So we believe that we should focus more on the intent and content of the report rather than its structure or any uncertain issue from future. The report is merely a tool and we have to accept that all our answers are not to be found in the report.

Thank you very much.