

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine
at the Third substantive session of the ad hoc open-ended working group
established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/277 of May 10, 2019
“Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”**

My delegation welcomes the contribution that has been made thus far by the ad hoc open-ended working group and wishes to thank the Chairs for their efforts to provide an inclusive summary of the debate. In particular we welcome the need that has been identified for an open, transparent and inclusive discussion on the way forward.

The proposal that the international community work towards a Global Pact for the Environment has come at a critical time for humanity and for the planet. Over the last six months we have seen reports on chemicals, resource use, biodiversity loss, and of course the Global Environmental Outlook, that have helped communicate the urgency of addressing a suite of environmental problems.

It is clear from the deliberations of the open-ended working group so far that improvements in the implementation of environmental law are needed across the board. This will require an ongoing conversation among ourselves on the most appropriate ways forward. In this respect, we see a great deal of value in these negotiations and in the opportunity the Pact proposal has created to consider how to strengthen the implementation of environmental law.

With regard to the text that was originally circulated by the Club des Juristes, which inspired the current process, my delegation particularly welcomed the reference (originally Article 19) to the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts. Therefore, we would very much welcome consideration of the legal framework protecting the environment in relation to armed conflicts in this process, and in any future outcomes from it, including a Global Pact for the Environment. This would also align well with UNEA resolution UNEP/EA.2/Res.15. The resolution urged states to comply with their relevant obligations under international humanitarian law, but also to implement all applicable law able to contribute towards this important objective.

We believe that environmental protection in relation to armed conflicts is relevant to any consideration of “gaps” in international environmental law. Protection throughout the cycle of conflicts can be provided by international humanitarian, environmental, human rights and criminal law. And, while this is a matter currently on the agenda of the International Law Commission, in our view gaps in implementation and compliance are just as important as gaps in coherence between different legal regimes.

It is also the case that conflicts and insecurity can profoundly damage environmental governance in affected areas, with often lasting consequences for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. As such we believe it vital that this objective form part of future deliberations in this process. We would like this process to complement the ongoing work of the International Law Commission on the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts, just as the proposed Pact and this process as a whole can complement processes and debates on shared environmental problems elsewhere.

Finally, we note the approaching 50th anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the potential for the outcome from this process to reaffirm collectively the importance and urgency of protecting our common environment.