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United Nations Environment Assembly
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Draft resolution on combating sand and dust storms*

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 70/195 of 22 December 2015, 71/219 of 21 December 2016, 72/225 of 20 December 2017, 73/237 of 20 December 2018, 74/226 of 19 December 2019, 75/222 of 21 December 2020, 76/211 of 17 December 2021, 77/171 of 28 December 2022 and 78/158 of 19 December 2023 on combating sand and dust storms.

Recognizing that in the past few years, exacerbated sand and dust storms as a major challenge have inflicted substantial socioeconomic damage on the inhabitants of the world's arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas, especially in Africa and Asia, thus underscoring the need for coordinated action and prompt measures address this challenge and reduce its impact notably in the most exposed regions,

Stressing the need to enhance cooperation at the global and regional levels, with a view to combating sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts, and affirming that resilient action to combat and prevent sand and dust storms requires a better understanding of their severe multidimensional impacts, including deterioration of people's health, well-being and livelihoods, increased desertification, land degradation and deforestation and loss of biodiversity and land productivity, and their negative impacts on sustainable economic growth,

Recalling United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions 1/7 of 27 June 2014 on strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in promoting air quality, 2/21 of 27 May 2016 on sand and dust storms and 4/10 of 15 March 2019 on innovation on biodiversity and land degradation and the UNEA resolution 5/5 of 2 March 2022 on nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development and the CBD COP decision 14/5 that adopted the voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction,

Acknowledging the work done by other United Nations system entities, including the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing drought and/or desertification, especially in Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization, in addressing sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts,

Welcoming the adoption of decision 26/COP.15 of 20 May 2022 by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at its fifteenth session, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in which the Conference of the Parties urged a proactive approach to enhance cooperation at all levels to address the causes and impacts of sand and dust storms,

Emphasizing the relevance of the efforts of and cooperation by Member States at the regional and international levels to control and reduce the negative impacts of sand and dust storms on human settlements in vulnerable regions,

* The present document has not been formally edited.

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 72/225 of 20 December 2017, 77/171 of 28 December 2022 and 78/158 of 19 December 2023, which noted the first and second International Conferences on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, held in Tehran from 3 to 5 July 2017 and 9 to 10 September 2023, and taking note with appreciation of other ongoing initiatives by various countries to combat sand and dust storms, especially at the regional level,

Acknowledging the efforts made by the United Nations Environment Programme to fulfil the request addressed to the Secretary-General in General Assembly resolution 70/195 to prepare, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations entities, a report entitled “Global assessment of sand and dust storms” on Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and Asia, to the General Assembly,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, subject to the availability of resources, to support Member States and members of UN Specialized Agencies through the UN Coalition on Combatting Sand and Dust Storms, among others, in collaboration with relevant United Nations conventions, and entities and other partners and stakeholders in addressing the challenges of sand and dust storms, as appropriate, building on the “Global assessment of sand and dust storms” stipulated in General Assembly resolution 70/195 of 22 December 2015;
 2. *Also invites* Member States to build capacity on research, modelling and early warning systems aimed at minimizing the impacts of sand and dust storms on ecosystems and livelihoods;
 3. *Invites* Member States to enhance sharing of best practices and knowledge on all relevant aspects of combating sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts, as appropriate, including the socio-economic impact of sand and dust storms and the impacts on ecosystems and human health and well-being, paying special attention to people in vulnerable situations;
 4. *Calls upon* Member States to further implement practises, measures, and policies responsive to the needs of women and girls to combat sand and dust storms and to ensure the equitable, inclusive, effective, meaningful and informed representation and participation of women at all levels to ensure the empowerment of women and girls;
 5. *Also invites* Member States to promote cooperation, as appropriate, including through:
 - (a) Preparing and implementing, programs and wherever possible action plans at the regional, and subregional levels as appropriate on a voluntary basis;
 - (b) *Promoting* research, technical and scientific collaboration among existing regional centres and, while avoiding duplications with existing centers, setting up new ones, for enhanced preparation and implementation of programs and action plans referred to in para 4.a.;
 - (c) Requesting the Executive Director of UNEP, subject to the availability of resources, to organize a workshop, involving Member States, Members of UN Specialized Agencies, technical and financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders in the sidelines of UNEA-7, to explore possible gaps and areas for improvement to address Sand and Dust Storms and their adverse effects at the regional and sub-regional levels;
 - (d) Promoting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;
 - (e) Addressing sand and dust storms through integrated practical interventions at the policy, institutional and technical levels, as appropriate;
 6. *Invites* Member States and regional development banks to contribute financial resources towards regional initiatives and projects to address the challenges of sand and dust storms;
 7. *Requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of financial and human resources to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.
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