

### **Item 3 GD statement**

Thank you Madam President,

The Universal Rights Group thanks the Core Group on human rights and the environment for their joint statement.

The Core Group's leadership over the years has been crucial in clarifying and leveraging the mutually reinforcing relationship between human rights and the environment. The success of those efforts is self-evident in the global momentum we witness today with over 80% of UN member States having legally recognized the right to a healthy environment at national or regional level.

As just stated by the Core Group, over the past six months, senior UN figures, including the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, and the Executive Directors of UNICEF and UNEP have joined a growing chorus of support for universal recognition.

Furthermore, during consultations on our new environmental rights portal, environmental human rights defenders repeatedly stressed the importance of universal recognition of this right to protect their work and their lives.

We therefore appreciate that the Core Group has begun consultations on the recognition of the right to a healthy environment at international level.

However, we reiterate our recent call made in a joint letter to the Core Group and signed by UN independent experts, civil society leaders and academics, urging them to publicly commit to tabling the necessary resolutions before both the Council and the GA by the end of 2021 – in time for the 50th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 2022.

Madam President,

The momentum created by States' growing recognition of the right combined with increasing public awareness of the crucial interrelationship between human rights and the environment means that there is no time like the present.

We therefore once again call on the Core Group to make this public commitment in a press statement following the session or in a joint statement at the General Assembly.

Thank you.