

## UNCCD CRIC 23

### Closing Statement of the EU and its 27 Member States

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Ms. Executive Secretary,

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The EU and its 27 Member States would like to express their sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of the Republic of Panamá for hosting CRIC23 and we thank everyone who contributed to the outcomes. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the UNCCD Secretariat, the CRIC Bureau and the CRIC Chair for their strong efforts and to all delegates, observers, and organizers who contributed to making this session conclude successfully.

We welcome the good discussions this week on reinforcing the implementation of the Convention and on the best ways for strengthening our efforts to combat desertification, land degradation and drought as well as enhancing resilience to these phenomena and safeguarding people's wellbeing. These efforts include methods and tools for evaluating results, developing accompanying measures and supportive initiatives, and supporting gender-responsive and transformative action.

However, we deeply regret that we have not been able to address and discuss the interim report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework and Consideration of priorities for science-policy guidance, which are existential topics for the future of the Convention. The EU and its 27 Member States would like to reiterate their commitment to multilateralism and dialogue.

Regarding science policy guidance we welcome progress in the preparation of the third Global Land Outlook and we should ensure its proper visibility to maximise its use by all relevant stakeholders. We also welcome the progress made on the fast-track assessments as well as on collaboration and interaction with existing and new relevant organizations and networks.

With regard to the Future Strategic Framework, we believe it should be ambitious, science-based and inclusive, and build on the Convention's mission and established commitments. We hope that the Intergovernmental Working Group will provide reflections and considerations on its feasibility and implications of any potential elements.

The current environmental crises are increasingly impacting people's wellbeing. Desertification, land degradation and drought impacts are inextricably related to climate change and biodiversity loss. Synergies, coordination and collaboration for effectively addressing their impacts are essential. We cannot afford duplications of our tools, instruments and platforms and must fully exploit their complementarities.

This applies in many areas, for example capacity building, where we need a clear strategic framework, including for engagement with the CBD regional Scientific and Technical Cooperation Centers and other organisations.

This applies to mobilizing resources from all sources, where the financial institutional landscape is already very complex and fragmented. In this context, we are looking forward to the resource mobilisation Toolbox being prepared by the Global Mechanism.

This applies to monitoring and reporting, including interoperability of reporting platforms and innovative tools based on satellite earth observation and systems that serve for reporting under multiple conventions.

At this CRIC, we saw many inspiring examples also at national level, such as the Nature Pledge developed by Panama, our host.

We recall the statement delivered at UNFCCC COP30 in Belém by the five current and incumbent COP Presidencies of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD fostering non-state actor engagement.

The EU and its Member States strongly support the involvement of civil society organisations in the UNCCD processes and implementation as they bring direct feedback from the ground. We recommend taking inspiration from established practices for inclusivity, transparency and openness common under many other conventions, including for contact groups. We understand that we need to continue discussions in order to find a way forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We remain committed and open to work with all parties to deliver on the objectives and the ambitions of the Convention. We are looking forward to meeting you at COP17 in Ulaanbaatar. The European Union and its 27 Member

States remains fully committed to contribute to enhance the Convention implementation at all levels.

Thank you for your attention, looking forward to next steps.