

## CSD-12 Briefing

UN Headquarters  
Wednesday, 25 February 2004

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Amb. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Vice Chair of the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-12), briefed delegates on preparations for CSD-12 at UN headquarters on Wednesday afternoon, 25 February 2004 at 4:00 pm. The purpose of the briefing was to receive comments and concerns delegations may have about the work programme for CSD-12 so that the Bureau can adequately address them at its next meeting on Monday, 1 March 2004.

In his introductory remarks, Amb. Stagno explained that this meeting was held at the request of delegations at the previous briefing on 23 January. Governments requested the opportunity to express their views on the programme of work for CSD-12. Over the past month, there have been meetings and informal consultations to hear governments' views. He referred to the annotated ["Organization of Work during CSD-12,"](#) which had been distributed at the 23 January briefing. He explained that meetings in Conference Rooms 1 and 2 will be open to all participants and are of equal significance to the intergovernmental process. Conference Room 1 will focus on review of progress and implementation. Conference Room 2 will focus on case studies, lessons learned and best practices. Major Groups will be welcomed in both conference rooms and will be given the opportunity to speak at the discretion of the Chair. Statements during the first week should be on themes highlighted in the [Secretary-General's reports](#). During the High-Level Segment, statements should focus on issues that have emerged during the meeting. The ministers are expected to provide the political perspective and guidance for the policy year (CSD-13). Amb. Stagno then opened the floor for comments.

Qatar, on behalf of the G-77 and China, raised a number of points, including that: the participation of Major Groups should be consistent with the UN Rules of Procedure and CSD practice; statements from member States should be given priority over Major Groups; Major Groups representatives should be from both developed and developing countries; the Secretariat should inform delegations how the spokespersons for Major Groups are chosen; and the summary report should differentiate between member States and Major Groups. He also requested that the High-Level Segment be open to Heads of Delegation who are not at the ministerial level. He wanted clarification about the time allotted for discussion of all subjects, the presentation of the summary of the High-Level Segment on 30 April, and the modalities of the regional meetings. Among other things, he expressed concern about maintaining the intergovernmental nature of the meetings and the possible duplication of statements in Conference Rooms 1 and 2. Cross-cutting issues should be discussed with the sectoral issues, and documents should be translated into all UN languages. The programme of work should be consistent with Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Finally, with regard to the first three days of CSD-12, which will be acting as the Preparatory Committee for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action

for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS PrepCom), he urged that the Bureau distribute the work programme as soon as possible.

Ireland, on behalf of the European Union, said that since CSD-12 is the first review session, they are committed to getting it off to a good start. She noted that since this is a review year, the CSD needs to hear from all stakeholders. The most important issue is the outcome and providing a basis for CSD-13.

Belize, on behalf of SIDS, wanted the work programme to reflect that the SIDS PrepCom is an integral part of the CSD.

The United States complemented the Bureau and the Secretariat on the innovative and balanced programme of work. He was pleased that the Secretariat plans to post all statements on the CSD www site, but also urged that the Secretariat post information from the partnerships fair, the learning center and other meetings as well. He stressed the importance of hearing from expert practitioners and Major Groups during the meeting, as well as the importance of public-private partnerships. He further noted that it is good to have the High-Level Segment at the end and emphasized interactive dialogue. With regard to the SIDS PrepCom, he said that he hopes the three days are fruitful so that delegates will be able to focus on water, sanitation and human settlements during the subsequent two weeks. Finally, he stressed the need for continuity between CSD-12 and 13.

Mauritius echoed Belize in saying that the programme of work for the SIDS PrepCom should not be seen as being separate from CSD-12.

The Chair responded that this will be reflected. The Bureau has not yet discussed the programme of work for the SIDS PrepCom because the last Bureau meeting took place before the conclusion of the SIDS Interregional Preparatory Meeting in the Bahamas on 30 January 2004.

Switzerland expressed admiration for the interactivity and innovation in the work programme. He requested information about: the rationale for statements during the first week; how the panel discussions will be organized and who will speak; and the relationship between the three themes on 26-27 April (they should be discussed in a cluster). He also stressed the importance of the participation of Major Groups.

Ireland, on behalf of the EU, attached importance to the success of the SIDS PrepCom and urged delegates not to spend too much time on statements and procedures. She asked the Secretariat to distribute the negotiating document as soon as possible.

Croatia wanted clarification on the modalities for the regional meetings, the matters to be discussed in the officials' statements during the first week, and the nature of the statements at the High-Level Segment in order to prepare those coming in from capitals. Croatia also asked if Heads of Delegation who are not ministers could participate in the informal meetings during the High-Level Segment.

Amb. Stagno then responded to the comments:

- Written statements can be distributed and put on the www site.

- Only ministers will participate in the closed informal ministers-only meetings, including the breakfasts.
- Priority will be given to States over Major Groups in determining the speakers during the first week.
- The Bureau shares the concern about achieving a balance between Major Groups from developing and developed countries.
- The Bureau will be meeting with Major Groups to ensure that the spokespeople for Major Groups are representative of their constituents.
- There will be a differentiation in the report between statements from States and those from Major Groups.
- All Heads of Delegation will be able to speak at the High-Level Segment, but if three ministers come from one country, they will all get to speak because they have shown their commitment to sustainable development by coming.
- There will be sufficient time for interactive discussion on all three themes and on 29-30 April there will be time to deal with the entire thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements.
- Everything on the agenda is consistent with Agenda 21 and the JPOI.
- All of the Chair's summaries will be presented in formal sessions.
- The Bureau is working with the regional economic commissions on the modalities for the regional meetings and will have more information available soon.
- The activities in both Conference Rooms 1 and 2 are both part of the intergovernmental process. To avoid repetition, the flow from each room is aimed to allow those with a particular interest to go from room to room to discuss each issue. If delegates follow instructions there will not be duplication between the officials' statements and the High-Level Segment.
- The cross-cutting issues cannot be separated from the thematic issues if we want an integrated approach.
- All documents will be translated into all UN languages.

In response to a request for clarification on some comments made about the partnerships fair, Qatar ceded the floor to Iran, who expressed concern about a topic on the programme of work for the partnerships fair that says "fundraising for partnerships." The CSD is not the place for fundraising, just for exchange of information.

Amb. Stagno agreed with this point and said it will be reflected in the revised organization of work. In response to Switzerland's comment, Stagno said that the Bureau has not addressed the organization of panels yet but will probably deal with them at the next Bureau meeting on Monday, 1 March.

Iran, on behalf of the G-77 and China, reiterated that the participation of Major Groups should follow the UN Rules of Procedure, the meetings should focus on the interlinkages between the themes, there should be time in the first week to reflect on overall Agenda 21 and JPOI implementation, and the integrated approach should include cross-cutting issues and should address the three pillars of sustainable development.

There were no further questions or comments so Amb. Stagno thanked everyone for their input and closed the briefing at 5:05 pm.