

## **CSD-13 Briefing**

UN Headquarters, New York  
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On Tuesday afternoon, 1 February 2005, delegates at UN headquarters in New York were briefed on preparations for the upcoming thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) and its intergovernmental preparatory meeting. The briefing was presented by CSD-13 Chair John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda).

Chair Ashe opened the meeting at 1:15 pm, reporting on discussions during the fourth meeting of the CSD-13 Bureau held earlier in the day. He explained that the Bureau had discussed the organization of work, and announced that the 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai of Kenya and World Bank President James Wolfensohn had accepted invitations to participate in CSD-13. He also noted plans to discuss the CSD-13 themes of water, sanitation and human settlements in the context of disaster prevention and preparedness, reflecting a desire to make CSD as topical as possible. Regarding national statements at CSD-13, he reminded delegates that the three minute time limit would need to be strictly observed.

Chair Ashe then reported on the Bureau's discussions on CSD-13's outputs, highlighting that the Bureau had reaffirmed that there would be a negotiated outcome containing policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation of commitments in water, sanitation and human settlements contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well the Millennium Declaration. He added that there would also be non-negotiated outcomes and that voluntary commitments that are announced at the session will be posted on the CSD website (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/csd13.htm>).

Chair Ashe then invited comments and questions. Responding to a request from the US for further clarification on the non-negotiated outcomes, JoAnne DiSano, Director of the UN Division for Sustainable Development, drew attention to a diagram provided on the CSD website on the organization of work that she said reflected the wish to delineate the differences between the negotiated output and other outcomes. She highlighted the various organizational arrangements designed to capture the range of important matters that will be considered at CSD-13, including the time allocated for regional perspectives to be presented. She said the Secretariat would seek to ensure that the entire range of positive developments and outcomes from CSD-13 are captured.

In response to a question on arrangements to link CSD-13 with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Chair Ashe announced that the Swedish Government would be hosting a lunch with ministers to discuss the MDGs in the context of the thematic issues on the agenda at CSD-13. On a query about the planned panel of finance ministers, Chair Ashe confirmed that the panel would take place on Monday afternoon, 18 April 2005, that the World Bank would be involved, and that UNCTAD would be asked to provide input to the panel.

The US reminded participants of the agreement made at CSD-11 that policies should help mobilize action at all levels, and stressed that the package of outputs from CSD-13 should reflect this agreement by catalyzing actions and producing innovative reforms. He said he would study with care a new document from the Bureau that Chair Ashe had indicated will be available on the CSD website shortly.

Thanking participants for their attendance, Chair Ashe closed the meeting shortly after 1:30 pm.

The next meeting of the CSD Bureau is currently scheduled for 27 February 2005. It will take place immediately prior to the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for CSD-13, which will be held from 28 February to 4 March. The CSD-13 session will take place from 11–22 April. All meetings will be held at UN headquarters in New York.

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Upcoming *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* coverage of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development:  
<http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd13/>

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