

## SUMMARY OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: 5-16 MAY 2008

Delegates to the sixteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16) convened at UN headquarters in New York, US, from 5-16 May 2008, to review the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. In addition to this review, CSD-16 delegates participated in dialogues with Major Groups, reviewed implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation. A High-level Segment was also held from 14-16 May, with nearly 60 ministers in attendance. A Partnerships Fair, a Learning Center and numerous side events also took place in parallel with CSD-16, with 680 Major Group representatives from 126 organizations participating alongside representatives from UN member states, UN agencies and other international organizations.

The CSD meets annually in two-year "Implementation Cycles," with each cycle focusing on thematic clusters alongside cross-sectoral issues. This approach was outlined in a multi-year programme of work (2004-2017) adopted at CSD-11 in 2003. Each cycle is comprised of a Review Year and a Policy Year. As this was the first year of the third implementation cycle (2008-2009) of the programme of work, CSD-16 focused on reviewing constraints and obstacles to implementation, as well as lessons learned and best practices, in relation to the thematic cluster. CSD-17, which will convene in May 2009, will negotiate policy recommendations based on CSD-16's review of the issues.

Throughout CSD-16, participants highlighted the connections between the session's thematic agenda and both the current food crisis and climate change – two issues that have captured global attention. CSD-16's review of the issues highlighted the drivers of food prices, including land degradation, high energy costs, climate change, poor harvests, speculation in agricultural commodities, inequitable terms of trade, decline of investments

in agricultural development, and increased production of biofuels from food crops. Speakers also tied their discussions to upcoming meetings, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization's High-level Conference on Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, and ongoing processes, particularly the Doha Round of negotiations in the World Trade Organization and its treatment of agricultural subsidies, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The outlines of possible policy issues emerged in the CSD-16 Chair's Summary, but events between CSD-16's end and CSD-17's opening, including the UN General Assembly's discussions of NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), on 22 and 25 September 2008, respectively, and the follow-up conference on Financing for Development in Doha, Qatar, from 29 November - 2 December, may offer further foundations for policy directions that UN member states will take up at CSD-17.

In addition to these thematic issues, delegates adopted a decision indicating that in the future SIDS Day should not be held in parallel with other discussions. The CSD's first

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review of its own decisions, focused at this session on the CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation, identified areas for improvement, although the session ended without clear instructions on whether CSD-17 would develop related policy recommendations. On the final day, CSD-17 briefly met to elect its Bureau. Gerda Verburg, Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands, was elected Chair of CSD-17.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CSD

The Commission on Sustainable Development emerged from Agenda 21, the programme of action for sustainable development adopted in June 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the “Rio Earth Summit.” Agenda 21 called for the creation of the CSD to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, enhance international cooperation, and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the local, national, regional and international levels. In 1992, the 47th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 47/191, which established the CSD’s terms of reference and composition, organization of work, relationship with other UN bodies, Secretariat arrangements, and guidelines for the participation of Major Groups. The CSD is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and its decisions are forwarded to ECOSOC for the latter body’s action. The CSD has 53 member states, although all UN member states are invited to participate in its sessions. The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), serves as the CSD’s Secretariat.

The CSD held its first substantive session in June 1993 and has convened annually since then at UN headquarters in New York. During its first five years, the CSD systematically reviewed the implementation of all chapters of Agenda 21. In June 1997, five years after UNCED, the 19th Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS-19), also known as “Rio+5,” was held to review the implementation of Agenda 21. Negotiations produced a Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. Among the decisions adopted at UNGASS-19 was a five-year CSD work programme organized around sectoral, cross-sectoral and economic thematic issues.

**CSD-8:** The eighth session of the CSD met from 24 April to 5 May 2000. Participants addressed: integrated planning and management of land resources; financial resources, trade and investment and economic growth; and sustainable agriculture and land management. The decision on land resources addressed the importance of a holistic approach to sustainable development, including integrated watershed management and the application of an ecosystem-based approach that takes into account the necessary balance between environmental conservation and rural livelihoods. The decision on agriculture recognized the important place of agriculture in society for food and fiber production, food security and social and economic development.

**WSSD:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development met from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and the

Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. In their consideration of desertification, delegates agreed to call on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly to designate land degradation as a focal area of GEF and to consider the GEF as a financial mechanism for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The JPOI chapter on the Sustainable Development of Africa affirms the international community’s commitment to support sustainable development in Africa, through addressing the special challenges by taking concrete actions to implement Agenda 21 in Africa, within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). On water and sanitation, the JPOI includes an agreement to halve by 2015 the proportion of people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water and lack access to basic sanitation. In relation to water resources, delegates adopted the following commitments: to launch a programme of action to achieve safe drinking water and sanitation goals; mobilize international and domestic financial resources, transfer technology, promote best practices and support capacity building; promote and provide new and additional financial resources and innovative technologies to implement Chapter 18 of Agenda 21; and develop integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans by 2005. A section on means of implementation calls for, among others, the fulfillment of World Trade Organization (WTO) members’ commitments, notably on market access, and the fulfillment of a commitment to comprehensive WTO negotiations initiated under the Agreement on Agriculture, aiming, inter alia, to phase out all forms of export subsidies.

**CSD-13:** The thirteenth session of the CSD took place from 11-22 April 2005. Building on the outcomes of CSD-12 (the Review Year of the first two-year cycle), CSD-13 focused on policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. On water, delegates agreed to call for, among others: accelerating progress toward the water access goal through increased resources from all sources; developing and transferring low cost technologies; enhancing cooperation among riparian states and supporting basin-wide initiatives in Africa; improving water demand and resource management, especially in agriculture; and accelerating the provision of technical and financial assistance to countries needing help to meet the 2005 target on integrated water resource management (IWRM). Delegates also agreed to text calling on governments and UN agencies to provide sanitation, recognizing interlinkages and the positive impacts of sanitation on poverty reduction.

### CSD-16 REPORT

CSD-16 Chair Francis Nhema, Minister of Environment and Tourism (Zimbabwe), opened the session on Monday, 5 May, and urged delegates to address the thematic issues on CSD-16’s agenda in an integrated manner.

Delegates then formally approved Vice-Chair-designates Tri Tharyat (Indonesia), Sasa Ojdic (Serbia) and Melanie Santizo-Sandoval (Guatemala). Bureau member Daniel Carmon (Israel) was elected along with Chair Nhema at the first meeting of CSD-16 in 2007. Delegates also approved the CSD-16

provisional agenda and organization of work (E/CN.17/2008/1). Grenada, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), supported by Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), stressed that the parallel scheduling of SIDS day and the review of CSD-13's decisions on water and sanitation should not be seen as a precedent.

Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, stressed that the world food crisis threatens to unravel gains by exacerbating poverty. He said CSD-16's discussions would contribute to efforts to address the food crisis, including the 20 May 2008 special session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the June 2008 summit convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Delegates then heard reports on intersessional events and activities including:

- International Conference on Water Technologies and Water Control, Tel Aviv, Israel, October 2007;
- Seventh Global Forum on Sustainable Energy, Vienna, Austria, November 2007;
- Beijing International Conference on Combating Desertification, Beijing, China, January 2008;
- Oslo Policy Forum on "Changing the Way We Develop: Dealing with Disasters and Climate Change," Oslo, Norway, February 2008; and
- High-level Round Table on International Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Caribbean SIDS, Bridgetown, Barbados, March 2008.

Following these presentations, CSD-16 delegates began their review of the agenda items. Parallel sessions met during the first week to consider the thematic cluster of issues. During the second week, delegates met in parallel sessions on Monday, 12 May, for "SIDS Day" and the review of CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation, which continued on Tuesday, 13 May. The High-level Segment convened on Wednesday, 14 May, and continued until Friday, 16 May. Following the conclusion of CSD-16, CSD-17 convened briefly to elect its Bureau. This report summarizes the discussions throughout the two-week meeting.

### **THEMATIC CLUSTER FOR THE THIRD CYCLE 2008-2009**

Delegates at CSD-16 conducted their review of the implementation of the thematic cluster for the 2008-2009 cycle from 5-9 May in parallel thematic discussions that focused on each issue as well as integrated consideration of agriculture and rural development, and drought and desertification. Each half-day's review was opened with a series of panel presentations, which provided expert views on the issues to be addressed. CSD-16 delegates opened the session with an "overview of progress towards sustainable development."

#### **OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** On Monday, 5 May, CSD-16 Chair Nhema invited Kathleen Abdalla (Officer-in-Charge, Division for Sustainable Development) to present the Secretary-General's overview of progress towards sustainable development (E/CN.17/2008/2). Christopher Flavin (Worldwatch Institute) discussed the 2008 State of the World report, which focused on innovation for sustainable economies. Delegates then

offered opening statements. Discussion focused on the danger of not achieving the MDGs. Many developing country delegates called for new and additional finances, and for development partners to implement commitments in the Monterrey Consensus.

Regarding the role of the CSD, speakers suggested devoting time to action-orientated discussion, and highlighted the Africa-European Union (EU) Strategic Partnership focused on sector partnerships and dialogue. Many said CSD-16 provided an opportunity to explore the obstacles to implementation and the unique opportunity CSD-16 provided for the practical exchange of information. One delegate highlighted Africa's constraints to benefiting from various international commitments, and said the CSD is the global platform to review and measure progress. Several delegates emphasized the need to enhance the weight of the CSD within the UN institutional framework, and to consolidate its interactions with ECOSOC.

Regarding barriers to sustainable development, speakers cited the need to address issues such as non-tariff barriers to trade and the need to address subsidies and commercial practices.

Noting the current food crisis, one Major Group stressed increased agricultural productivity and efficiency, innovative agricultural technologies and good management and another suggested a farmer-centered agricultural model. One delegation stressed that the food crisis provides an opportunity to reform the global agriculture sector. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05256e.html>

#### **THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS:**

**Agriculture:** On Monday afternoon, 5 May, delegates met in a parallel session to discuss agriculture. CSD-16 Vice-Chair Santizo-Sandoval chaired this discussion and panel discussions followed the introduction of the document (E/CN.17/2008/3) by the Secretariat. The panelists highlighted: the importance of agriculture in achieving poverty alleviation and sustainable development, the need to invest in rural infrastructure, and the role of agro-forestry in achieving sustainable agricultural development. Delegates underscored that agriculture is fundamental to poverty reduction, and increased agriculture productivity benefits the income of the poor. Delegates identified obstacles and constraints, including limited land and water resources, escalating production costs, the stalled Doha Round, and rising food prices.

Delegates stressed: capacity building; appropriate technologies; partnerships in sustainable agriculture; adoption of adaptation and mitigation measures in addressing climate change; more investment in agriculture; improved and appropriate use of irrigation systems; provision of special assistance to farmers, assistance for agriculture, especially for African countries, and stabilization of food prices globally; attention to income distribution and market distortions, and better access to markets for developing countries. Recognizing the rapid rise of food prices, the US, Australia and France announced their increased contributions for food aid.

Regarding biofuels, views expressed included: opposing production of fuels using food commodities; highlighting serious negative impacts some biofuels have on food security; support the use of treated water in producing biofuels; and expressing

willingness to join in the discussion on the issue. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05256e.html>

**Rural Development:** On Tuesday morning, 6 May, CSD-16 discussed rural development; CSD-16 Vice-Chair Ojdanic chaired the session. Panel discussions followed the Secretariat's introduction of the report (E/CN.17/2008/4). Panelists highlighted: the need to involve women in community activities and decision-making; obstacles faced by the rural poor and indigenous people; links between rural energy availability and productivity; and vulnerability and systemic changes that address power relations and have the confidence of the poor. One panelist announced that a network of women agricultural ministers would be launched during the second week of CSD-16.

Delegates stressed: an integrated approach and a conducive international development environment; integrated and sector-wide approaches; diversification of rural economies and enhanced rural development; institutional development; traditional knowledge of dryland communities; the use of toolkits with financial mechanisms and market strategies; data collection, and environmental and economic indicators to assess development; financial assistance for developing countries; empowerment of women, rural planning, decentralization, and access to markets by farmers; water and sanitation; information sharing; banking services; education; and poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Several countries described their strategies, policies and actions taken towards achieving sustainable rural development. One regional group highlighted its policy of promoting the multifunctional role of agriculture. One delegation described areas of its official development assistance (ODA), including projects in mountain areas and empowerment of women. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05257e.html>

**Agriculture and Rural Development:** On Tuesday afternoon, 6 May, delegates met to discuss the interconnections between agriculture and rural development. Panelists stressed: developing rules, lifting restrictions and distortions, ending subsidies and achieving full liberalization in agricultural trade; expanding developed countries' aid programmes; considering the future potential of genomics; honoring the Doha Round and Uruguay Round commitments by developed countries; and developing methods to reverse downward spirals in agricultural productivity, land degradation and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.

Several countries outlined their policies, initiatives, plans, programmes and experiences in agriculture and rural development. The multifunctional role of agriculture was stressed, as was the need to conduct a scientific review of the benefits and threats of biofuels. One delegation noted the impacts of foreign occupation. Delegates underscored: a revolution in rural development involving youth; economic sufficiency; a change in consumption patterns; data gathering on, *inter alia*, land use change and greenhouse gas impacts; the need for a competitive agricultural sector with high-scale production; use of agricultural insurance as a strategy to spread risks; new water technologies; the importance of waste water treatment, water

reuse and recycling; the need to further develop national fishery industries and infrastructure; and a conducive international environment for agricultural development. A summary of this discussion is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05257e.html>

On Wednesday morning, 7 May, CSD-16 participants continued the discussion on agriculture and rural development. Panelists emphasized: research and development; South-South trade; linking domestic and global food markets; rural finance; leadership training; and multi-sectoral partnerships in Africa.

Delegates highlighted: extension services through public-private partnerships; integrated climate adaptation responses in agriculture; open trade policies; support to improve developing country sanitary and phytosanitary measures; targeted efforts in key areas to increase productivity; equitable sharing of resources; elimination of subsidies; the need to increase investment in agriculture; the benefits of cooperatives; youth-empowering education; market-oriented agricultural reforms; micro-financing for rural areas; the role of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in combating poverty and achieving the MDGs; value of regenerative agriculture; the enhancement of international cooperation to address climate change; an integrated approach to agricultural development; the role of women and youth; international assistance for rural development programmes; provision of basic services and housing and financing; and investment in technology and research.

Some delegations described their countries' strategies, policies, programmes and measures in agriculture, rural development and trade. Japan announced a contribution of US\$100 million for food aid.

Regarding biofuels, divergent views were expressed, including: calling for a halt in biofuel production; supporting sustainable production and use of biofuels, and conducting lifecycle analyses and developing certification standards. FAO said it was analyzing the costs and benefits of biofuels, supporting scientific analysis of biotechnologies, and advising countries during the upcoming planting season. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05258e.html>

**Drought:** On Wednesday, 7 May, delegates discussed comprehensive drought response and mitigation. The Secretariat presented the Secretary-General's report on drought (E/CN.17/2008/6). Panelists emphasized the importance of early warning system development and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction's role (including through the Hyogo Framework for Action on building resilience) in drought preparedness, as well as risk management. A number of countries stressed building the capacity of local communities and technology diffusion, to manage drought risk and reduce vulnerability, in particular of indigenous people and others highlighted scarcity of water in Pacific SIDS. Delegates discussed protecting nomadic pastoralists from becoming refugees and the migration of agricultural workers. A summary of the discussion is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05258e.html>

**Desertification:** On Wednesday, 7 May, delegates discussed desertification. The Secretariat presented the Secretary-General's report on desertification (E/CN.17/2008/7), following which delegates called for: a global partnership to combat desertification, the full implementation of the UNCCD; and additional funding and strengthening of this Global Environment Facility (GEF) Focal Area in the next replenishment. Support was expressed for the Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework for the UNCCD. Delegates noted the link between desertification and climate change, and synergies stressed among the three Rio conventions. Some warned of desertification's threat to international security, and its impact on migration. There were calls for action under the UNCCD on mitigation and adaptation, and for integrated water resource management (IWRM) programmes. A summary of the session is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05258e.html>

**Drought and Desertification:** On Thursday, 8 May, delegates discussed the linkages between the causes and impacts of climate change, drought and desertification, and biodiversity loss. Calls were made for adopting proactive and holistic measures to address land degradation. Desertification was noted as a factor in food insecurity, and national and regional arrangements were emphasized. The potential of drylands for agricultural development, by turning them into an economic asset was also stressed. Delegates highlighted the importance of human resources, participation of communities and indigenous people, multistakeholder approaches and collaboration with grassroots actors, in particular women. The benefit of employing traditional and local knowledge was highlighted, as well as new technology, capacity building and rapid early warning systems. Some speakers drew attention to the need for conflict resolution when resource disputes over resources arise. A proposal was made to combine monitoring, early drought warning and data collection under a single national authority. Delegates referred to sustainable work conditions and protection of workers in the agricultural sector and delivered warnings of increased migration. A summary of the discussion is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05259e.html>

**Land:** This discussion was chaired by Vice-Chair Tri Tharyat, following an introduction of the Secretary-General's Report (E/CN.17/2008/5) by the Secretariat, on Wednesday, 7 May. The focus on Wednesday morning was livelihoods, climate change and land use, integrated land use planning management and their information systems and tools. Delegates highlighted concerns related to land more generally, such as competing demands, land conversion, and a "new land rush" by commercial interests, as well as narrower aspects such as its value for food, cultural identity and soil, which speakers noted is scarce and vulnerable. Some participants highlighted new land initiatives, including a broader framework on cadastral systems being registered with the International Standards Organization, a learning approach to land tenure and land use planning, and the use of scenario models that integrate cultural and traditional models. Among the recommendations were: education programmes; farmland improvement; land consolidation; high-density housing schemes

and the establishment of an inter-agency land coalition. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05258e.html>.

The discussion on Thursday, 8 May, focused on access to productive resources and poverty reduction, land tenure and financing for integrated land management. Concerning access, delegates urged: decentralization; recognition of the multiple uses of land; respect for agro-ecological and ecosystem principles; the use of electronic cadastral systems to improve transparency and data management, while paying attention to information access by vulnerable groups; and research in emerging issues. Poverty concerns focused on: appropriate land rights; support for consensual land practices and the establishment of grievance mechanisms; social dialogue and the empowerment of stakeholders to deal with land degrading commercial interests; and concerns for women, small farmers and land owners. Delegates also considered the complex nature of the financial architecture, the tension between biofuels and food production, the knowledge gap between financial and sector ministries, and the possibility of accessing GEF and climate change adaptation funds for sustainable land management. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05259e.html>.

**Africa:** On Thursday afternoon, 8 May, delegates began consideration of Africa in relation to the thematic issues, with a focus on sustainable development, globalization, and industrial productivity and competitiveness. Chair Nhema chaired the session and the Secretariat introduced the Secretary-General's report on Africa (E/CN.17/2008/8). Most highlighted the constraints faced by small-scale farmers, including women: a lack of insurance and of a value-added tiered agriculture; low productivity; non-integration in the commodity value chain; social and economic inequalities; and market failure. Proposals included: improved terms of trade with developed countries in agriculture; shifting to intensive agriculture; and focusing on access to sustainable energy. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05259e.html>.

Delegates convened in plenary on Friday morning, 9 May, to discuss Africa in the context of climate change, sustainable tourism, protecting and managing the natural resource base and infrastructure development. They considered the energy situation in Africa, resilience of its cities, and Africa's vulnerability to climate change. Attention was drawn to the high potential for investment in tourism and energy development. Some highlighted the need to factor climate change vulnerability into their national development plans, and a proactive approach to climate change adaptation. While some delegates underlined economic growth as a precondition for poverty reduction, others argued that economic growth leads to poverty reduction, but agricultural growth reduces hunger.

In the afternoon, delegates examined Africa's agricultural potential, research and development, regional integration, investing in Africa, development cooperation and rural credit and gender equality. On cooperation: some highlighted partnership initiatives and called for increased collaboration between the African Union and the UN; and Japan made a commitment

to raise issues of trade and agriculture at the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in May 2008 and the G-8 meeting in July 2008. There were calls for an "Africa Green Revolution," research, good leadership, and relevant models and concepts to advance agricultural development. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05260e.html>.

**Inter-Linkages and all Cross-Cutting Issues:** This discussion took place in parallel sessions on Friday morning and afternoon, 9 May, and was chaired by Vice-Chair Santizo-Sandoval (Guatemala). The morning discussion was dedicated to social, economic and environmental dimensions of the thematic issues and their inter-linkages, as well as national, regional and global characteristics, with a view to enhancing coherence and consistence in the implementation of cross-cutting issues, including the means of implementation. The afternoon discussion considered international cooperation in developing, deploying and disseminating new and innovative technologies and other issues that help to achieve multiple impacts and objectives in the thematic cluster of issues, including the means of implementation.

Concerns about education, science, technology and communication elicited several proposals, including institutionalizing best practices, conducting farmer training, strengthening scientific and educational institutions, and applying space-based technologies and applications in relation to the CSD-16 themes. Recommendations on governance highlighted country stability, sound economic policies, democratic governance, the rights of women and the poor, and the freedom of association and collective bargaining, in rural areas. Concerning consumption and production patterns, participants discussed the institutional and policy initiatives in place, and concerns about nutrition and children. Many developing countries emphasized issues of finance, technology transfer, capacity building, and the need for trade opportunities. Delegates emphasized proposals on coordination and cooperation and synergies among the Rio conventions, linking sustainable development to poverty reduction or eradication strategies, and strategies that include reporting, planning, participation and monitoring. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb05260e.html>.

**REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES:** On the first two days of the CSD, delegates heard brief presentations on the outcomes of the regional implementation meetings (RIM), which were summarized in E/CN.17/2008/12 and Add.1-5, and then engaged in discussions on regional issues. On Monday, 5 May, regional sessions were held for Africa and Western Asia. Issues raised during the African session included the challenges faced in rural Africa and the need for an integrated approach to addressing the underlying causes of poverty and food insecurity. Participants at the Western Asia session discussed recent initiatives such as the Riyadh Declaration on an emergency Arab programme for food security and the need for more attention to desertification. Summaries of these sessions are available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05256e.html>

On Tuesday, 6 May, regional sessions were held for Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Issues raised during the Asia and the Pacific session included the competition that biofuel production poses to food production and the need to balance food and energy security. The discussion about the Latin American and the Caribbean RIM included emphasis on applying International Labor Organization standards and the need for farm-level training. The UNECE discussion highlighted the linkages between consumption and production patterns and economic growth. Summaries of these sessions are available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05257e.html>

### **MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES**

**DIALOGUE WITH MAJOR GROUPS:** On Tuesday, 6 May, Vice-Chair Ojdanic chaired an interactive discussion on the contribution of the Major Groups to the themes of the 2008-2009 review session. Major Groups presented experiences and challenges of small scale agriculture and stressed: increased youth participation in government delegations; partnerships with governments to manage land and resources, and the vulnerability of indigenous people to globalization, industrial crops and climate change, and the challenges of small-scale agriculture. Some Major Groups also stressed: the usefulness of technologies to address pre- and post-harvest losses; aligning farmers and science and technology; and the need to demystify science and transfer knowledge to farmers.

One delegation urged concrete suggestions on youth involvement in sustainable development, and on ways to enhance Major Groups' role in the CSD. Major Groups underscored: the challenge of translating international policy guidelines to the local level and highlighted the need for power and resources at this level; and the need to protect workers because 40,000 workers die each year of pesticide poisoning. One delegation discussed its efforts to include environmental provisions in trade agreements. A summary of this dialogue is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05257e.html>

### **DIALOGUE WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVES:**

The dialogue took place on Friday afternoon, 9 May, and was chaired by Vice-Chair Ojdanic. Major groups highlighted: sufficient funding for agriculture; improved communication between farmers' associations and governments; regulatory frameworks that provide market predictability; the need to collect basic and disaggregated data on local conditions; establishing long-term relationships for partnerships; mobilization of adequate funding; capacity building; a focus on workers; the importance of ecosystem and human rights approaches; and involvement of children and youth at all stages of partnership development and implementation.

Representatives of partnerships initiatives stressed the: active participation of all actors; importance of continuing financing for partnerships; challenge of establishing a long-term vision with short-term benefits for communities; challenges presented by a lack of long-term energy planning and poor coordination among actors; improved access to resources; the need for identification and sharing of lessons learned; food security; strengthening

local governance; and bioenergy lifecycle analysis, labeling and certification internationally. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05260e.html>

### **SIDS DAY**

On Monday, 12 May, CSD-16 Chair Nhema chaired the sessions on SIDS. The Secretariat introduced the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.17/2008/9) and stressed the need for stronger intersectoral linkages. Delegates reviewed SIDS' progress within the context of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the thematic clusters. Delegates heard panel presentations and then engaged in interactive discussion. Many lamented the concurrent scheduling of SIDS Day with other sessions and some urged strengthening the SIDS Unit in DSD. One delegate said the organization of the CSD was a "burning symbol" of the daily barriers faced by SIDS, and stated that SIDS benefit more from activities in the margins of such sessions. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) urged replacing the current consumer culture with a culture of citizenship, and introduced a draft decision committing to hold future SIDS Days without parallel events, and the draft decision was welcomed by several SIDS.

The EU underscored the need to support SIDS in designing and implementing resilience-building strategies. Some SIDS highlighted the need for early warning systems, risk management and measures to enhance resilience and reduce vulnerability. Iceland pledged a contribution of at least US\$1.7 million for SIDS for 2008. India reported that it had contributed US\$70 million to SIDS, in addition to a US\$350 million concessional credit line.

A call was issued by several SIDS to establish a special SIDS Fund under the GEF. Reference was made to the GEF Resource Allocation Framework, which "causes injustices" to SIDS, and Mauritius offered support for establishing a UN Environment Organization. Countries underscored the need to fulfill commitments for finance and technology to SIDS, and said the situation of SIDS has been exacerbated by the dismantling of trade preferences and decreasing ODA.

Several developed countries committed to support SIDS in implementing sustainable development strategies, and to addressing the impacts of climate change by: providing financial support through the GEF and other funds, monitoring climate change, implementing projects, exchanging information, and forecasting flood and drought. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05261e.html>

### **REVIEW OF CSD-13 DECISIONS ON WATER AND SANITATION**

On Monday morning, 12 May, delegates began a review of the implementation of CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation. Chair Nhema chaired the session, which began with the Secretariat's presentation of the Secretary-General's report on this theme (E/CN.17/2008/11). Delegates then considered providing access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, building partnerships for capacity building and technology transfer, improving the sustainability of water utilities, engaging stakeholders in implementation, and means of implementation.

In the afternoon, delegates considered IWRM, enhancing water productivity, strengthening water management and governance, and enhancing international cooperation.

Delegates observed that this discussion would represent the first time the CSD had reviewed its own decisions; according to current trends, Africa would realize its MDGs on water and sanitation no sooner than 2076; the implementation of the CSD-13 decision on IWRM was slow, and indicators to monitor change, especially among the poor are lacking; and the inclusion of this issue on the agenda of the G-8 meeting in June 2008 and the TICAD IV meeting in May 2008. Delegates urged consideration of: investment for upgrading and maintaining infrastructure, capacity building, and situations conducive to good governance; transboundary water management; and underscored the indispensability of financial assistance, particularly for Africa. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05261e.html>.

Discussion on this subject continued in plenary in the morning and the first half of the afternoon on Tuesday, 13 May. Participants considered financing water and sanitation services, strengthening monitoring and reporting, scaling up good practices, integrating the water and sanitation agenda in broader frameworks for the realization of the MDGs, and determining the way forward. Delegates underlined the need for partnerships with various configurations, but some cautioned that they are not a substitute for multilateral finance. A number of delegates: shared their experience in implementing IWRM and described outcomes of water or sanitation meetings; called for support for the African Ministers' Council on Water; proposed the upscaling of UN-Water as the institution for monitoring progress on this subject; called for the design, under a UN mandate, of global monitoring and evaluation criteria; and suggested including the issue as a standing agenda item of the CSD. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05262e.html>.

### **HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT**

**THE WAY FORWARD:** On Wednesday, 14 May, and Thursday, 15 May, delegates met in the High-level Segment to discuss "The Way Forward." In his opening address, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that, after 25 years' neglect, the importance of agriculture was back on the agenda due to the current food crisis. He highlighted efforts of the High-level Task Force on food security, and the MDG Africa Steering Group, which is launching a green revolution in the context of NEPAD.

Participants discussed a wide range of issues, among them trade, financing and capacity challenges. Several referred to unsustainable production and consumption patterns in developed countries, while others underscored that some African policies have negatively affected sustainable development, and expressed hope for improved governance. Calls were made for a coherent response addressing the short-, medium-, and long-term effects of the current fuel, food and water crises, as well as the fulfillment of ODA commitments to least developed countries. Some countries urged overcoming sustainable development challenges through reinvigorating the commitment of the international community, focusing on means of implementation,

and honoring obligations of developed countries under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They said developing countries' adaptation efforts must be financially supported. Participants urged strengthening the UNCCD and increased funding for related National Action Plans.

Delegates debated the factors that brought about the food crisis, among them climate change, energy prices, trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, financial speculation in agricultural commodities, and other constraints and barriers. Ministers from developing and some developed countries expressed hope that the Doha Round would be completed soon. The need for increased technical and financial support was also highlighted. One speaker proposed establishing a global early warning system on food security as a means of preventing future food crises. Several countries advocated adoption of environmental standards for all food, feed and fuel agricultural products, and emphasized food as a basic human right. Delegates urged integrating climate change adaptation and disaster reduction strategies in key sector policies. They highlighted the need to enhance agricultural production investment and market access, food security, education, and partnership, and stressed that national implementation efforts be related to the CSD-16 themes. Others emphasized science and education, efficient delivery of information and tools, empowerment of local communities, and securing women's rights and roles as agents of change. Collective responsibility was evoked, as well as increased international cooperation necessary to implement NEPAD and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

Several statements suggested that:

- biofuels have resulted in a reduction in greenhouse gases in only a few cases;
- the food crisis is evidence of the negative consequences of reliance on biofuels;
- biofuels should be used in a manner compatible with food security;
- the use of grains for biofuel feedstock should stop;
- large corporations are benefiting from the current food crisis; and
- biofuel development should be researched and adequate impact assessments undertaken.

Developing sustainable criteria for biofuels under a UN mandate was also proposed. Several countries insisted on an exclusive "SIDS Day" at future CSDs, and strengthening the DSD SIDS Unit. A summary of the discussion is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05263e.html> and <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05264e.html>.

The High-level Segment continued on Friday morning, 16 May. Estonia highlighted efforts to manage agricultural water consumption. Kenya stressed rethinking development strategies to those that can measure development gains in livelihoods. Nicaragua highlighted the agricultural framework from the Managua Summit on Sovereignty and Food Security for Life developed by the Latin American and Caribbean region. Morocco highlighted its cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa in the context of South-South cooperation. Colombia urged

addressing the food crises from a systemic perspective, taking note of the asymmetries between developed and developing countries. Argentina proposed dealing with environmental protection and social justice issues together. Iran highlighted the disruption by climate change of the traditional knowledge, livelihoods and coping mechanisms of dryland communities.

Zimbabwe said, due to drought, her country was a net food importer. She also explained the government is providing communities with training in order to promote rural development. Nepal described efforts to develop agriculture from subsistence farming to small scale enterprises. Kyrgyzstan highlighted efforts to establish a state water administration and to remediate degraded soil. The Bahamas said, due to limited geographical size and archipelagic formation, his country's natural resources required careful management. Australia stressed that food security is best achieved through self-reliance, and said it had recently committed US\$150 million to a three-year programme to meet climate change adaptation needs of Pacific SIDS and Timor Leste. Mexico discussed its efforts to remediate 3.8 million hectares of degraded soil.

Ethiopia said in his country's crop production and productivity had improved through the adoption of appropriate agriculture technologies and inputs. New Zealand highlighted her country's reliance on livestock and agriculture and efforts to reduce greenhouse gases produced by its livestock. Ecuador stressed that most of the wealth of developing countries is used for debt servicing.

Botswana underlined the need for international cooperation for middle income countries as well. Venezuela critiqued persistent global economic inequalities, and described an alternative cooperation model to address the energy and food crises and agricultural financing. Guinea outlined national measures to meet recent global environmental initiatives, such as on climate change and persistent organic pollutants. Bolivia outlined its new "living well" strategy, a vision drawn from its indigenous community, and called for new development models. Belgium committed to increase its ODA to 0.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2010. Poland drew attention to the 14th UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, scheduled for December 2008 in Poland. Italy said CSD-17 should address, *inter alia*, sustainable production of biofuels, synergies of the thematic issues in the context of the UNCCD, and the complementarity of development assistance, trade, environment and forced migration. Belarus proposed that FAO establish tools to enable technology transfer to the developing countries.

Gabon stressed that the rules governing international trade should take into account the principles of open markets and those actions that are keeping developing countries poor. Peru announced its efforts to establish a Ministry of Environment. Tajikistan highlighted his country's efforts to expand microcredit and agriculture. Kuwait called for donor countries to promptly fulfill their funding promises. Libya reaffirmed the need for CSD-16 to emphasize the issues faced by countries under occupation.

Guyana stressed that agriculture is the backbone of the efforts to provide food for all people in the world and called for states to address unjust trade arrangements. Algeria urged states to alleviate debt, liberalize trade, conclude the Doha Round and eliminate subsidies.

Sudan said resolving the food crisis is contingent upon reviving the agricultural sector. Benin expressed its intention to transform the country into a dynamic agricultural power by 2015. The Holy See urged assessing not only the market cost of the food crisis, but the mental, spiritual and other costs as well. Palestine stressed upholding the right to development, especially of vulnerable people. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development called attention to the need to internalize environmental and social costs in economic and crosscutting policies, and to pursue policy coherence and integration, and transparency in the policy process.

The International Organization for Migration said the relationship between migration and environment has implications for all states and must be addressed in an immediate manner. Syria said the Chair's Summary must reflect the social, environmental and ecological impacts suffered by people under occupation. The FAO described its response to the soaring food prices, including specific projects and a comprehensive programme of action for the UN system.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE: INTERACTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH UN ORGANIZATIONS:** On Thursday morning, 15 May, Chair Nhema chaired the CSD-16's dialogue with representatives of international organizations. Heads of UN agencies underscored climate change as a critical factor that affects food security, and the need for short- and long-term strategies. Speakers suggested forging an effective "land coalition" that can build on synergies among the various UN entities, stressed the need to keep health and well-being being at the center of sustainable development, and highlighted the importance of early warning systems for food security. Regional interagency cooperation, enhancing mechanisms for knowledge sharing, creating interagency and other partnerships to disseminate technology, pursuing sustainable urbanization and land management were also discussed.

Speakers described their work on sustainable development in the context of climate change, and in agricultural development, particularly in Africa, and expressed commitment to protect the world's population from the effects of environmental degradation. One speaker noted that second generation biofuels offer substantial opportunities. Synergies and the delivery of donor contributions based on the Paris Framework were also noted, and France pledged to double its food aid in 2008, to US\$100 million.

Delegates emphasized the need for: the UN system to have a coherent and integrated approach in supporting developing countries to achieve food security; international and regional partnerships; and finding a way to coordinate all the efforts. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05264e.html>

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE: INTERACTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH MAJOR GROUPS:** This dialogue took place on Thursday morning, 15 May, following the dialogue with UN organizations, and was chaired by Vice-Chair Ojdanic. Major Groups representatives underscored women farmers' need for additional knowledge and access to agricultural services, the need for governments to encourage youth to take initiatives and develop accessible water resources, and the heavy impact of climate change on indigenous peoples. Speakers also addressed the need to: give women property rights, a political voice and financial power; provide government and private sector support for implementation at the local level; recognize the International Labor Organization's core labor standards and principles, and the centrality of decent work and green jobs; and to ensure that knowledge and data reach key beneficiaries.

Delegates stressed: challenges for rural farmers and women in combating desertification; the value of programmes for children and youth; the need to transfer extension services and technology to small-scale farmers; the importance of land tenure for indigenous peoples; emergency programmes to resolve the food crisis; the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment; and adapting the agricultural system to climate change. The Netherlands announced that it would invest 50 million Euro, in addition to its ODA, to revitalize agriculture. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05264e.html>

**MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES: Investing in Africa to achieve Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development:** This Roundtable was chaired by CSD-16 Chair Nhema and took place on Wednesday, 14 May. UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha Rose Migiro highlighted the need to provide education, health care, water, sanitation and other basic services in Africa. Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange and Chair of the United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, said water is the key factor for food production and that a new green revolution is needed, and stressed industrial development, political will, financial resources, action and partnership.

Many speakers underscored the importance of NEPAD and its emphasis on Africans taking responsibility for their own development and not having solutions imposed from outside. Speakers called attention to international partnerships and cooperation, such as the EU-Africa partnerships and South-South cooperation, but some said the latter should not be based on the North-South model. Actions such as opening markets to Africa, investing in basic infrastructure, helping African countries attract foreign direct investment, providing capacity building in trade-related areas, removing agricultural subsidies in the Doha Round, and promoting legal empowerment were highlighted. A summary of this roundtable is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05263e.html>

**Inter-linkages among the thematic issues, including adaptation to climate change:** This Roundtable was chaired by Vice-Chair Carmon and took place on Wednesday, 14 May. Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang made opening remarks and cautioned participants that

a piecemeal approach will not suffice in the search for solutions to the food crisis. Participants focused discussion on food security, with some suggesting a food security fund coupled with incentives to farmers, and developing financial institutions targeting small farmers. While delegates agreed with the need to provide emergency food aid, some called for an exit strategy to avoid creating dependency and destroying food production. Participants stressed the risks and benefits of biofuels. Many highlighted the need to look toward second and third generation biofuels that do not use food crops.

Many emphasized the need for enhanced community education to empower local people to take decisions based on local context, increased research on crops, capacity building to deliver technical know-how in remote areas, increased monitoring and data collection, and data accessibility. Numerous speakers mentioned the need for the expeditious completion of the Doha Round and the elimination of commercial barriers. A summary of this roundtable is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05263e.html>

### DISCUSSION OF THE CHAIR'S SUMMARY

**PART I:** The first part of the 31-page Chair's Summary was circulated on Tuesday, 13 May, at 5:00 pm. Chair Nhema reconvened plenary at 5:45 pm for feedback from delegates, while underscoring that the summary aims to reflect the CSD-16 discussions, not to provide a consensus document. The G-77/China requested for time to consult, and provided feedback mid-afternoon on Wednesday, 14 May.

Delegates' comments included suggestions to add references that they said were missing from the text, to correct factual flaws, and to clarify nuances, with a view to reflecting that specific propositions were only agreed by "some" delegations, and identifying points that needed greater emphasis. There was some discussion about a reference suggesting the need for "a new paradigm" in IWRM, and whether this would be discussed at CSD-17. The US and Canada clarified that the proposal for the discussion was made by "some" delegations. A summary of these discussions is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05262e.html> and <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05263e.html>.

**PART II:** On Friday, 16 May, Part II of the Chair's Summary was distributed at 3:00 pm, and delegates reconvened an hour later to offer comments. CSD-16 Chair Nhema highlighted that it covered statements made during the High-level Segment.

The G-77/China said the summary required strengthening or inclusion of references to: the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; international cooperation; means of implementation (in relation to each theme); climate change; agricultural infrastructure; impact of drought; security of land tenure of indigenous people and women; terms of trade; capacity building; technology transfer; science, research and education; and targets on water and sanitation. The EU said the summary provided a fair reflection of the discussion and was a useful basis for work at CSD-17.

Switzerland, supported by the Russian Federation, said text on biofuels should indicate that only second generation biofuels have environmental benefits and called for evaluating biofuels' competition with food and its social effects. Switzerland also

proposed adding references to the added value of the water and sanitation review and the need for related commitments at CSD-17 and recognition of the role of UN-Water. Namibia suggested addition of text noting that the "primary roles of women" in agriculture need to be recognized.

Australia, Brazil, the Russian Federation, Mexico and Thailand all identified causes for the current food crisis in addition to the text's reference to the neglect of agriculture. Australia also suggested adding reference to the UNCCD's Ten-year Strategic Plan in the section on desertification.

Argentina said: references to agricultural subsidies and climate change should be added; the summary could not be used as a basis for negotiations next year; and additional discussion would be required in the G-77/China.

Colombia said text on biofuels should reflect positive national experiences and broader benefits. South Africa emphasized indigenous knowledge systems. India said references to the impacts of climate change on all of the issues need to be strengthened. Egypt said the CSD's mandate does not include "environmental governance," which was referenced in the text on the importance of good governance.

### CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The Chair's Summary is divided into Parts I and II.

**PART I:** The 31-page Chair's Summary, Part I, begins with a section on the opening of the session, summarizing the opening statements, the organization of work and highlights of the intersessional events held between September 2007 and April 2008.

A summary of the overall review highlights the keynote speech by Christopher Flavin, WorldWatch Institute, and summarizes the views from the general statements, such as the satisfaction expressed by countries with the Secretary-General's reports.

The summary is then divided into sections on each of the thematic issues: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa. The introduction provides highlights on: the sources of the information provided at CSD-16; the timeliness of the CSD-16 themes; the range of issues discussed; the relevance of each theme; the socioeconomic status of Africa; and the need for a conducive environment.

The discussion on obstacles and constraints and lessons learned and best practices is organized around the six themes – agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. The list includes the following:

- Agriculture: poverty; unsustainable natural resource use and rapidly rising prices of basic foods; growing scarcity of some foods; and climate change and climate variability;
- Rural development: the need to organize rural populations in improving their livelihoods and the adoption of holistic and integrated approaches;
- Land: the importance of integrated management of land and water resources, taking into account all uses;
- Drought: the limited progress in mobilizing long-term investments constrains drought mitigation and drought leads to a vicious cycle, soil exposure, erosion, land degradation and desertification;

- Desertification: inefficient water use in irrigated agriculture has depleted freshwater bodies; and conflicts, wars and restricted access aggravate the impacts of land degradation and lead to desertification;
- Africa: a heavy dependence on primary commodity exports, and a low level of African staple crop yields compared with the world average; and reference to the African Union's adoption of poverty eradication as its core mandate.

On means of implementation, the Summary highlights investment in research and development, a successful and timely conclusion of the Doha Round of international trade negotiations, and technology.

On interlinkages and cross-cutting issues, the Summary states that no single thematic issue can be addressed in isolation, and that inequalities in production and consumption patterns exist within and among countries. It highlights, among other issues, concerns about gender, youth, public-private partnerships, and capacity building.

Several continuing challenges are identified, including:

- the escalation in food prices;
- mobilization of long-term investments in infrastructure;
- the creation of new strategic partnerships;
- the need to diversify the rural economy;
- unsustainable use of land and water resources;
- synergies between the three Rio conventions; and
- funding for the UNCCD.

A section on regional discussions highlights, among others:

- In Africa, high levels of poverty and vulnerability to climate change, the need for national- and regional-level solutions and for capacity building, as well as the potential for investing in the drylands to reap benefits from climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- In Western Asia, water scarcity and supply, drought and desertification challenges, population growth and access to technology;
- In Asia and the Pacific, economic diversity and dynamism, the potential to strengthen inter-regional cooperation, the impact of climate change, and the potential to improve biofuels for energy;
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, a concurrence in economic growth and environmental degradation, except in the Caribbean, and climate change impacts especially on the Caribbean region; and
- In the ECE, the need to make agriculture and farming more sustainable.

A section on SIDS Day highlights the CSD-13 decision to dedicate a full day to discuss progress in the implementation of various strategies relating to SIDS during each session of the CSD. The summary of the discussion includes references to the expressions of regret that an exclusive SIDS Day was not designated at CSD-16 and the slow implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and the Mauritius Strategy, due to human and technical constraints. SIDS' structural constraints such as size, vulnerability to climate change, potential for tourism as a

growth sector, and need for international partnerships are also highlighted. The text also notes the proposal to strengthen the SIDS Unit in the Division for Sustainable Development.

A section on the review of the CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation highlights the emphasis that the review of this issue by the CSD should go beyond stocktaking, underlines that climate is a major challenge for many countries, and outlines the range of issues considered. On providing access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, the summary draws attention to: the importance of access to safe drinking water and sanitation services in poverty alleviation; positive progress made in water access, but a falling behind in the sanitation targets; the obstacle of water treatment facilities; the need for investment; and calls for support for building local institutional capacities.

With regard to building partnerships for capacity building and technology transfer, the Summary underscores the value of partnerships in policy formulation and implementation, notes successes in cooperation, stresses the need to up-scale best practices and promotes access to low-cost, environmentally sustainable water use and supply technologies. A section on improving the efficiency of water utilities refers to: the absence of the required legal and institutional environment for the operation of cost-effective utilities; the need to invest in hydraulic infrastructure and maintain the existing infrastructure; and the need for information exchange on best practices.

In a section concerning engaging stakeholders in the implementation process, the Summary emphasizes stakeholder participation in decision-making processes.

The highlights of strengthening monitoring and reporting focus on:

- insufficient data-gathering, analysis and prediction for water resource management, and monitoring IWRM implementation;
- the need for context-specific monitoring methodologies, and for collaboration with relevant entities;
- the need for monitoring and follow-up of the decisions; and
- a proposal for increased monitoring role for UN-Water.

The Summary underlines that, concerning IWRM: it is an essential tool for managing water resources; it requires strong stakeholder participation; it should integrate the three pillars of sustainable development; and water is a technical, institutional as well as a political issue. The text also notes that some countries suggested the need for a new paradigm in IWRM.

On the issue of climate change and water issues, the Summary suggests that mainstreaming climate change and its impacts into water management planning processes will facilitate adaptation.

A section on CSD-16's interactive discussion with Major Groups is organized around obstacles and constraints, lessons learned and best practices, means of implementation and continuing challenges. On obstacles and constraints, the Summary highlights, *inter alia*: poor communication with governments, land rights, credit, and technology; the need to address the food crisis and, to this end, the conduct of studies; and agricultural policies and enabling environments, including inappropriate agricultural practices. On the lessons learned and

best practices, the Summary notes many examples of successful case studies and partnerships, and an emerging energetic youth force that intends to hold governments accountable.

Regarding the means of implementation, the Summary emphasizes the need for smallholder farmers' access to a variety of services, the management of competitiveness, recognition of rights, and a consideration of the social issues. Lastly, the Summary identifies poverty as the continuing challenge, emphasizing that it is increasingly urbanized.

**PART II:** The second part of the Chair's Summary reviews, in five pages, the discussions held during the High-level Segment and includes sections on the Secretary-General's opening statement, the Ministerial roundtables and points relating to the thematic and cross-cutting issues, including the following.

- Agriculture: the need for new investments informed by traditional and scientific knowledge; increased technology transfer and capacity building; strengthened institutions and practices; support for sanitary and phytosanitary compliance; reorganized role of women in agriculture; and the development of sustainability criteria for biofuels.
- Rural development: the need for increased investment in infrastructure and domestic public investment; new and innovative sources of finance; diversification of rural economies; increased rural finance; and strengthening of local authorities.
- Land: the need for improved land management capacities; integrated approaches; improved land tenure; and measures to protect the landless poor.
- Drought: the need for a risk-based approach; development of water-conserving technologies; informed selection of crops; drought early warning and monitoring systems; and index-based weather insurance.
- Desertification: the need for adequate funding of the UNCCD; sustainable grazing strategies; monitoring of desertification trends; and climate observation systems to observe and disseminate data.
- Africa: the need for broader support for implementation of NEPAD; increased investments in agriculture; expansion of irrigation networks; extension of rural infrastructure; diversification and industrial development through value addition; and improved rural health care.
- Review of Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation; the need for the dedication of an exclusive day of the CSD to SIDS; development of effective land use strategies; and development of sustainable tourism.
- Water and sanitation: the need for increasing the share of national budgets devoted to water and sanitation; increased ODA; advancing the implementation of IWRM; and development of demand management measures.

The summary of the discussions on "The Way Forward" identifies a broad range of issues to be addressed during the CSD-17 Policy Year. These include:

- Developing agriculture and rural development is essential to eradicating poverty;
- Redressing the historic neglect of agriculture;
- Strengthening global development partnership, and active

engagement of Major Groups;

- Creating greater policy coherence and coherence of donor support for agriculture;
- Promoting progress in sustainable development through good governance, including environmental governance;
- Providing greater policy space to governments to address sustainable development;
- Improving market access for agricultural exports, emphasizing the timely conclusion of the Doha Round;
- Taking account of the cross-cutting nature of the themes on the agenda;
- Addressing means of implementation including finance, scientific knowledge, technology transfer, and capacity building; and
- Encouraging South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation.

### **CLOSING PLENARY**

The closing plenary convened late Friday afternoon, 16 May. Chair Nhema first invited delegates to consider a number of documents, with a view toward their adoption. In introducing the "Proposed strategic framework for the period 2010-2011: subprogramme 4, Sustainable development" (E/CN.17/2008/14), the Secretariat noted that the proposed biennial programme will be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-eighth session. Its recommendations thereon will be transmitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session for consideration in the context of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2010-2011. Chair Nhema opened the floor for comments, but none were offered. The Commission took note of the Strategic Framework relating to subprogramme 4.

Delegates then considered the "Adoption of the decision on Review of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation" (E/CN.17/2008/L.3), which decides to devote one day of its review sessions to review the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, and that the one day should be devoted exclusively to the review of the Strategy. This was adopted by acclamation without amendment. The provisional agenda of CSD-17 (E/CN.17/2008/L.2) and CSD-16 report (E/CN.17/2008/L.4), as introduced by Rapporteur Ojdic, were also adopted without amendment.

CSD-16 Chair Nhema then opened the floor for closing comments. Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the G-77/China, highlighted: international cooperation, implementation, capacity building, meeting the MDGs, and the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies. The EU said CSD-16 had conducted a successful review of the CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation, and highlighted the need for immediate action to respond to the current food crisis and policies on adaptation to climate change, including measures to combat desertification and improve water management.

Iraq, on behalf the Arab States, said paragraph 17 of the Chair's Summary, Part I, did not accurately reflect the views of the G-77/China and the Group of Arab States, especially about the economic, social and environmental constraints of people living under foreign occupation. AOSIS said action is most

important. Canada said CSD-16 had underscored the need for the global community to work collaboratively to find solutions in ways that do not compromise sustainability.

China expressed its deep gratitude to the UN and governments for the sympathy they had expressed for the devastating earthquake that had taken place in China during CSD-16. Israel committed to sharing its expertise and knowledge. The Russian Federation said this meeting had laid a solid foundation for the work next year, which would lead to the adoption of important decisions concerning concrete actions at CSD-17.

Thomas Stelzer, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, said the meeting had identified obstacles and constraints in the thematic areas, the statements contained a lot of country information, and the Chair's summary contained the outcome of CSD-16. He committed the Secretariat to do its utmost to make CSD-17 a success.

Farmers stressed the positive roles they play in agricultural development and the fight against poverty. The Scientific and Technological Community committed to disseminate knowledge and expertise to increase food production. Business and Industry highlighted collaborating with communities and farmers, international action, partnerships and voluntary approaches.

Local Authorities stressed the importance of fostering their role and building their capacity. He cautioned that rural-to-urban migration might become a "human tsunami" if proper action is not taken. NGOs expressed their hope that CSD-17 would produce action-oriented results. Indigenous Peoples said biofuels might cause unprecedented environmental disasters. Children and Youth lauded the countries that had included youth on their delegations. Women called for joint actions.

Chair Nhema thanked delegates for their spirit of cooperation, and the Bureau members, Secretariat and interpreters for their hard work. He said this meeting was a victory for the UN family, and declared CSD-16 closed at 6:07 pm.

## CSD-17 REPORT

Immediately after the close of CSD-16, Chair Nhema called CSD-17 to order and invited delegates to consider the only agenda item: election of the Bureau. Delegates elected Gerda Verburg, Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands, by acclamation as CSD-17 Chair. They also elected by acclamation Javad Amin-Mansour, Iran, to serve as a Vice-Chair. The African, Latin American and Caribbean and Central and Eastern European regional groups did not present candidates, so the other Vice-Chairs will be elected at a later meeting of CSD-17. The Netherlands offered brief words of thanks on behalf of the newly elected Chair, expressing regret that Minister Verburg was not able to attend the meeting.

CSD-16 Chair Nhema gavelled the first meeting of CSD-17 to a close at 6:13 pm.

## A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CSD-16

The agenda for the sixteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development covered a vast, but integrated, terrain: agriculture, rural development, land, drought,

desertification, and Africa. The session came at a dramatic moment – when the global community was facing a human-induced crisis of food prices that are spinning out of control. From the opening of CSD-16, participants highlighted the connections between the session's thematic agenda and the current food crisis. Speakers tied their discussions to upcoming meetings, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization's High-level Conference on Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy. They stressed interlinkages between the barriers and challenges identified and ongoing processes, particularly the Doha Round of negotiations of the World Trade Organization, and its treatment of agricultural subsidies, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The CSD-16 session in many ways was more than a review of options for consideration by CSD-17: it was a rehearsal for upcoming deliberations in international fora on these critical global concerns.

While this 2008 session was not meant to develop the policy options that could move the international community forward, the deliberations contributed some outlines of where UN member states might be willing to take action. However, given the many upcoming intergovernmental discussions on interrelated topics, the CSD-17 negotiations may be influenced by a broader set of ideas and initiatives than those reflected in the CSD-16 Chair's Summary. Yet, the May 2008 deliberations offered an opportunity for the international community to lay the groundwork to address the challenges and opportunities ahead. At the close of the session, participants wondered what the implications of CSD-16 will be in understanding and acting on a crisis that threatens to wipe out many of the hard-won gains made in the battle against poverty. This brief analysis looks at some trends that emerged during CSD-16, the review stage of the 2008-2009 thematic cycle.

### THE FOOD CRISIS

"A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." These words, uttered by the delegate from Grenada at the opening of CSD-16, attested to its timeliness. One experienced an eerie feeling that back in 2003, the CSD, as if in anticipation, had placed the current themes squarely on its 2008 agenda. The food crisis, which brewed slowly and steadily and more recently erupted with spiraling prices, protests and riots in different regions, drove the debates at CSD-16. Indeed, world food prices rose almost two-fold in the last 15 months. The disturbing news is that experts suggest this is not a passing cloud. Speakers noted that the World Bank has predicted the food crisis will persist to 2015.

CSD-16 found itself in the same situation as the 2006-2007 cycle (CSD-14 and 15), when the public focused on energy as the lynchpin of sustainable development. The energy cycle caught the attention of powerful national and corporate interests, as well as countries across the globe. Energy prices endangered both the lifestyles and consumption patterns of the North, and the very livelihoods of people in the South. It swayed countries into action, and meaningful recommendations were debated.

At the time, however, some pundits predicted that the subsequent CSD cycle, in 2008 and 2009, would be a "poor man's round," focusing mostly on the perennial subjects of land

degradation and rural poverty. Arguably, these topics seemed closer to the developing world, with many anticipating stale lamentations over the lack of new and additional financial resources, and counter calls for “good governance.” But it was not to be. The brutal force and disproportional nature of the food tragedy brought delegates together in an urgent attempt to examine its roots and render explicit the barriers and constraints, and prepare for meaningful collective action.

### **THE BIOFUEL CONUNDRUM**

The body of data and science presented at CSD-16 was impressive. The drivers of food prices were named: land degradation, high energy costs, climate change, natural disasters, poor harvests, speculation in agricultural commodities, asymmetrical terms of trade, falling investment in agricultural and rural development, etc. The item singled out for specific attention was the case of biofuels. During the previous CSD cycle, biofuels were promoted by a number of producers as the magical response to swelling oil prices that would offset a part of global fossil fuel consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provide new income to farmers. Voices of warning were drowned out by exuberant proclamations. In a matter of months, however, the situation has changed. Concerns were raised about the contribution of biofuel production to increased demand for food crops and competition for farmland, along with calls for the establishment of biofuel guidelines, to ensure that this fuel source delivers on the promise of climate change mitigation.

“A remedy worse than the disease.” “Genie out from the bottle.” “Are we feeding cars or people?” These were comments heard in the UN’s basement as many participants called for a rethinking of the role of biofuels. Speakers cautioned against undue hastiness in the transition to this new renewable resource, and some suggested that the way forward would need to involve further research into second and third generation options, and the development of international standards. Most agreed that sustainable biofuels should not compete with food or feed crops. For this, more research was suggested on biomass use, and generally on the energy-biofuels-food-climate change equation, lest the world finds itself in a vicious cycle.

### **DESERTED AGRICULTURE**

CSD-16 will be noted as a session that enhanced the recognition of the interlinkages between climate change and land degradation. More than ever before, every farmer’s decision is influenced by weather events and, at a growing rate, by extreme ones. Delegates continuously referred to the need for a radical change in addressing this important, yet neglected, sector. With climate change, agriculture needs to adapt to new conditions if the international community is to ensure food security. Based on population growth forecasts alone, by 2030, worldwide food production will need to increase by 50 percent. In the view of many speakers, rather than piece-meal food aid, long-term solutions and sizeable investments are needed by developing countries, particularly Africa, coupled with technical support for boosting agricultural production. And, according to many, this should go hand in hand with an expeditious completion of the Doha Round, elimination of agricultural subsidies, access to

markets, and capacity building. Strong propositions were also made in favor of the rights and empowerment of rural women and small farmers, especially establishing legal norms that would incorporate security of tenure, and recognizing the universal right to food.

Another important milestone in the CSD history might well be the coming of age of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). In a process that began to consolidate in Madrid at the eighth conference of the parties to the UNCCD, CSD-16 saw the increasing recognition of the inextricable links between drought, desertification and climate change, thus ensuring, with the Convention on Biological Diversity, a genuine interest for synergy among the three “Rio conventions.” The impacts of climate change and other extreme natural events (three major ones occurred during the CSD: a cyclone in Myanmar, an earthquake in China and tornadoes in the US) are critical for the world’s population and food supply, and it exacerbates desertification and drought. Speakers reiterated the utmost importance of protecting drylands ecosystems, and noted that the geography of poverty coincides with the drylands. Thus, they argued, the role and value of drylands needs to be thoroughly explored. While some suggested that rehabilitating the drylands to become productive arable land might be a solution to the food problem, others thought they will be more effective as livestock pastures, carbon sinks or solar energy producers.

CSD-16 saw a new understanding emerging that there cannot be an insulated and cheap way of adapting to climate change that is disconnected from the plight of vulnerable populations living in the drylands. As one veteran observer noted, the industrialized countries are recognizing they might face a “tsunami of migration” from the ever expanding drylands, thus it is in their national interest to proceed at full throttle to fully implement the Convention.

### **SOME PROCEDURAL ISSUES**

Every CSD session raises questions about its method of work. “A political traffic jam, packed with rapidly-read, prepared statements, such as the one I am reading to you right now” – was the tongue-in cheek characterization of the CSD’s proceedings by a frustrated Marshall Islands delegate. True, there were complaints of “few genuinely interactive discussions,” “truncated statements,” and “stilted reporting on national achievements.” Some Major Groups, cowed by time limitations, also fell into this statement mode and sound-bite trap. Although the fifty distinguished panelists and the side events added much value to the debate, the recurring lament of “too little time” provoked participants to suggest, in private, the search for a better dialogue format. As the NGO Major Group noted, although few alternative formats have presented themselves, the CSD “talk shop” needs to become a “workshop.”

Balancing the UN’s intrinsic value of letting all participants “have their say” with the desire to identify concrete, realistic actions for the international community to undertake, has always involved a slow, delicate dance. Whether the CSD’s deliberations contribute positively to assessing progress and identifying further directions, or whether the session’s North-South divisions take

international cooperation backwards rather than forwards, is an elusive and ever-changing yardstick by which some evaluate the CSD's contribution to the international sustainable development debate.

### **AN INSECURE TERRAIN AHEAD**

While CSD participants felt a sense of achievement, total satisfaction with the session would be an overstatement. The small island developing states did not have an exclusive day to discuss their issues. The CSD-13 decision on water and sanitation was reviewed, but it remains to be seen how CSD-17 will act on the review. In the view of some, Africa could have been debated at greater length, but organizational hitches, including the low attendance of African ministers, appeared to stymie this focus. Implementation and action, as agreed in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, remain a far-away dream for many who need it most.

On balance, however, CSD-16 must be seen as having attained its objectives. It provided a platform for all stakeholders to jointly address the core of the substantive themes. It took an integrated look at yet another facet of poverty from a sustainable development angle. It allowed international agencies to feel the pulse of governments and civil society, so that the resources of the UN system can be mobilized to assist countries in responding rapidly and practically to the food crisis, especially at the national and regional levels. The Chair's Summary of the debates is necessarily a wish list, and Chair Nhema was careful to incorporate just about every proposal voiced from the floor. In 2009, CSD-17 may well see more action and drama, as current disturbing trends further unfold, and political negotiation takes over. As delegates left Conference Room 4, it was evident that CSD-16 flagged the food crisis as a political security issue, no less important than climate change.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**ECOSOC SPECIAL MEETING ON THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS:** This meeting, which will take place on 20 May 2008, at UN headquarters in New York, will seek to identify short-term emergency measures to feed the hungry, reduce prices and enhance regional and international cooperation. For more information, contact: Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination; tel: +1-212-963-4420; e-mail: [wade@un.org](mailto:wade@un.org); internet: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/GlobalFoodCrisis/index.shtml>

**G8 ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS' MEETING:** The meeting will take place from 24-26 May 2008 in Kobe, Japan. This meeting will convene in preparation for the 2008 G8 Summit, to be held 7-9 July 2008 in Hokkaido, Japan. For more information, contact: Preparatory Task Force for the G8 Environment Ministers' Meeting, Ministry of the Environment; tel: +81(0)3-5521-8347; fax: +81(0)3-5521-8276; e-mail: [G8\\_KOBE@env.go.jp](mailto:G8_KOBE@env.go.jp); internet: <http://www.env.go.jp/earth/g8/en/index.html>

**HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE UNCCD TEN-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:** The UNCCD will host this meeting on 27 May 2008, in Bonn, Germany, with the goal of receiving input

on the Ten-Year Strategic Plan adopted at the eighth Conference of the Parties in September 2007. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int); internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

**FOURTH TOKYO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (TICAD IV):** This meeting, which will convene from 28-30 May 2008, in Yokohama, Japan, will seek to promote a high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners. For more information, contact: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; tel: +81-(0)3-3580-3311; internet: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad/ticad4/>.

**FIFTH AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (ARSCP-5):** This meeting will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 4-6 June 2008. Participants will discuss the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which was approved in March 2005 by the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN). For more information, contact: Cleaner Production Center of Tanzania; tel: +255-22-260 2338/40; fax: +255-22-260 2339; e-mail: [secretariat@arscp.org](mailto:secretariat@arscp.org); internet: <http://www.arscp.org>

**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY AND THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY:** The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is organizing this conference, which will convene from 3-5 June 2008, in Rome, Italy, to address food security and poverty reduction in the face of climate change and energy security. For more information, contact: Office of the Assistant Director-General, Natural Resources Management and Environment Department; tel: +39-6570-57051; fax: +39-6-570-53064; e-mail: [cccb-secretariat@fao.org](mailto:cccb-secretariat@fao.org); internet: <http://www.fao.org/foodclimate/>

**12TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN):** This meeting will take place from 7-12 June 2008, in Johannesburg, South Africa. This session will include a ministerial policy dialogue, amendments to the constitution and status of the general trust fund, and deliberation on matters related to CSD-16. For more information, contact the AMCEN Secretariat: tel: +254-20-7624-289; fax: +254-20-7624-287; e-mail: [amcensec@unep.org](mailto:amcensec@unep.org); internet: <http://www.unep.org/roa/Amcen/>

**EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008: WATER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** This three-month public event, from 14 June-14 September 2008, in Zaragoza, Spain, will take as its theme, "water and sustainable development." For more information, contact: Expo Zaragoza 2008; tel: +34-976-70-20-08; fax: +34-976-20-40-09; internet: <http://www.zaragoza2008.com>

**WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION:** This day is annually celebrated worldwide on 17 June. The theme for 2008 World Day to Combat Desertification, "Combating Land Degradation for Sustainable Agriculture," corresponds with the CSD-16 and CSD-17 thematic agenda items. For

more information, contact the UNCCD Secretariat: tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int); internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

**ECOSOC SUBSTANTIVE SESSION:** The 2008 substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will convene at UN headquarters in New York, from 30 June - 24 July 2008. The session will include a High-level Segment (30 June-3 July), which will involve the first Development Cooperation Forum and second Annual Ministerial Review, the latter of which will address "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development." The session will also involve a dialogue with Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions (7 July); Coordination Segment (7-9 July); Operational Activities Segment (10-14 July); Humanitarian Affairs Segment (15-17 July); and General Segment (18-24 July). For more information, contact: Secretary of ECOSOC; tel: +1-212-963-4640; fax: +1-212-963-5935; e-mail: [ecosocinfo@un.org](mailto:ecosocinfo@un.org); internet: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/>

**G8 SUMMIT:** The Summit will meet from 7-9 July 2008 in Hokkaido, Japan. For more information, contact: Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tel: +81- (0) 3-3580-3311; internet: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/index.html>

**FIRST INTER-MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT:** This meeting will convene from 26-29 August 2008, in Libreville, Gabon. The World Health Organization and UN Environment Programme, in partnership with the Government of Gabon, are organizing this meeting. For more information, contact UNEP: tel: +254-20-624292; e-mail: [Angele.Luh@unep.org](mailto:Angele.Luh@unep.org); internet: <http://www.unep.org/health-env/>

**THIRD HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON AID EFFECTIVENESS:** This meeting will convene from 2-4 September 2008, in Accra, Ghana. Participants will take stock and review the progress made in implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. For more information, contact the Secretariat: e-mail: [secretariat@accrahlf.net](mailto:secretariat@accrahlf.net); internet: <http://www.accrahlf.net>

**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NEPAD:** This meeting will convene on 22 September 2008, at UN headquarters in New York. It will be held at the highest possible political level and is expected to result in a political declaration on Africa's development needs. For more information, contact: internet: <http://www.un.org/ga/62/meetings.shtml>

**HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON THE MDGs (SEPTEMBER SUMMIT):** This meeting will convene on 25 September 2008, at UN headquarters in New York. The September Summit will seek to set the tone for the Doha Financing for Development Conference in late 2008 and to mobilize world leaders to agree on the practical steps needed to achieve the MDGs. The Summit will gather announcements of commitments for concrete initiatives from all participants. For more information, contact: tel: +1-212-963-3125; e-mail: [npls@un.org](mailto:npls@un.org)

**SECOND GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT:** This Forum will convene from 27-30 October 2008, in Manila, the Philippines. The meeting is expected to build on the achievements and recommendations made at the Brussels Forum 2007 regarding policy and institutional coherence in linking migration and development, and will place special emphasis on "Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development." For more information, contact: internet: <http://www.gfmd-fmmd.org/en/press-release/philippines-prepares-way-gfmd-manila-october-2008-report-first-fof-meeting>.

**UNCCD CRIC 7 AND CST 9:** The UNCCD Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) and Committee on Science and Technology (CST) are scheduled to meet from 3-14 November 2008, in Istanbul, Turkey. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int); internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

**FOLLOW-UP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTERREY CONSENSUS:** This meeting is scheduled for 29 November - 2 December 2008, in Doha, Qatar. For more information, contact: Finance for Development Office; tel: +1-212-963-2587; fax: +1-212-963-0443; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

**FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC AND FOURTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL:** These meetings will take place from 1-12 December 2008, in Poznan, Poland. Also taking place during this UN Climate Change Conference will be meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int); internet: <http://unfccc.int/>

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR CSD-17:** Participants will prepare for CSD-17 at this meeting, which will convene from 23-27 February 2009, at UN headquarters, in New York. For more information, contact: DESA Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: [dsd@un.org](mailto:dsd@un.org); internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm>

**CSD-17:** This meeting will convene from 4-15 May 2009, at UN headquarters in New York, to develop policy recommendations for the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. For more information, contact: DESA Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: [dsd@un.org](mailto:dsd@un.org); internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm>