

CSD 19 HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 2 MAY 2011

The 19th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 19) opened on Monday. In the afternoon, Working Group 1 on transport, chemicals and mining and Working Group 2 on the 10-year framework of programmes (10YFP) on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and waste management convened. Throughout the day delegates participated in a Learning Center, Partnerships Fair and various side events.

OPENING PLENARY

Opening the session László Borbély, CSD 19 Chair and Minister of Environment and Forests, Romania, underscored the need to focus on identifying concrete policy measures, commitments and means of implementation, and called for enhancing linkages between elements of the CSD 19 thematic cluster of transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the 10YFP. Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, stressed the importance of deciding on the Commission's place in the institutional framework in the lead-up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) and the importance of CSD 19's thematic cluster for green economies.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: Chair Borbély announced the nominations of CSD 19 Vice-Chairs Eduardo Meñez (the Philippines), for the Asia Group, and Abdelghani Merabet (Algeria), for the Africa Group, who were elected by acclamation. Vice-Chair Silvano Vergara Vásquez (Panama) will also serve as Rapporteur. Highlighting that discussions on the Chair's draft negotiating text would take place in two working groups, Chair Borbély suggested CSD Vice Chairs Vásquez and Meñez facilitate Working Group 1 and Andrew Golezdzinowski (Australia) and Merabet facilitate Working Group 2. The US urged flexibility in assigning items, including the preamble and crosscutting issues, to different working groups, and urged discussing chemicals and waste in the same group. Chair Borbély suggested adopting the organization of work as proposed with the US proposal to be discussed in the afternoon and the Vice-Chairs coordinating the placement of issues. Delegates adopted the agenda and organization of work without amendment (E/CN.17/2011/1).

OPENING STATEMENTS: Argentina, for the G-77/CHINA, highlighted transport as an important component of sustainable development, and the challenges of the sound management of toxic chemicals and wastes. She expressed support for the 10YFP, but noted the restrictive nature of the Chair's text, and emphasized the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Hungary, for the EU, said the Chair's negotiating document lays the foundation for a successful CSD and urged the adoption of a decision on developing the 10YFP for 2011-

2021. He underscored: effective use of financial resources; a comprehensive approach to transport; sound management of chemicals; a long-term waste management strategy; and a more sustainable approach to mining.

Chile, for the RIO GROUP, said the 10YFP should reflect the needs of developing countries and avoid imposition of conditionalities and trade protectionist measures, and respect the national levels of development. He stressed the essential nature of means of implementation and support for developing countries.

Indonesia, for the ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN), supported the adoption of a well-structured 10YFP with a clear vision, objectives and programmes. Sudan, for the ARAB GROUP, reaffirmed the importance of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), especially on common but differentiated responsibilities. Grenada, for ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (AOSIS), said that 10YFP should be flexible, forward-looking and action-oriented, and should take into consideration the special needs of SIDS.

Fiji, for the PACIFIC ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES, stressed that the 10YFP should consider the protection of marine resources, which is critical to SIDS. Nigeria, for the AFRICAN GROUP, highlighted: identifying means of implementation in the 10YFP; fulfillment of international commitments supporting sustainable development in Africa; and predictable funding. LEBANON, with BOLIVIA, urged developed countries to provide financial resources and technology transfer.

The US stressed the importance of: scientific research and education; utilization of information technology, and information sharing and use; and strengthening participation at all levels, particularly by women. Noting budgetary cutbacks, he said the US is not in a position to make new commitments. PERU underscored Peru's eco-efficiency strategy and supported, *inter alia*, enhanced public institutions for eco-efficiency and the development of school curricula. JAPAN highlighted the importance of the green growth model and underscored that CSD 19 should contribute to Rio+20.

ISRAEL suggested adding a paragraph on sustainable materials management, highlighting the importance of a shift from waste to materials policies. SWITZERLAND said that the 10YFP should develop synergies with chemicals instruments and highlighted the polluter pays and precautionary principles. CAMBODIA stressed: sustainable investment in transport; integrated management of chemicals; decoupling waste management from economic growth; and integrating SCP into green industrialization. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said the draft negotiating text is a good basis for reaching consensus on the thematic cluster but highlighted the need for implementation at national and international levels.

REGIONAL GROUPS: The UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC), speaking on behalf of the five UN Regional Commissions, stressed *inter alia*, the importance of transportation infrastructure and said that the 10YFP should consider lessons of the Marrakech Process on regional approaches, enabling a systemic shift rather than incremental changes.

STATEMENTS BY MAJOR GROUPS: WOMEN called for legally-binding guidelines on social and environmental responsibility, and CHILDREN AND YOUTH called for a systemic change and solid financial mechanisms that support equity, integrity and justice. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES called for addressing the life-cycle of unsustainable mineral production and consumption, and reducing unnecessary mining.

NGOs called for ensuring their full participation in the 10YFP and representation on a stakeholder bureau. LOCAL AUTHORITIES called for strengthening capacity building and linkages between waste and SCP. WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS said trade unions should be included in the Chair's negotiating text. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY supported an institutional framework that allows markets to work for sustainable development. The SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITY said global cooperation for scientific knowledge dissemination is essential. FARMERS highlighted addressing food waste for the improvement of the food system.

WORKING GROUPS

WORKING GROUP 1: Facilitated by Eduardo Meñez (the Philippines), the Group conducted a first reading of the Chair's negotiating text on transport.

In the chapeau paragraphs, the G-77/CHINA proposed amendments stressing the "essential" nature of transport to meet environmental and social needs. He also said developed countries should take the lead in improving the sustainability of the transport sector, including through technology transfer.

The EU proposed developing long-term conditions to allow economic growth without impact to the environment and health. The US suggested adding reference to place-based transport planning and to optimizing modal choices.

On the negative impacts of increasing urbanization and private motorization, the EU proposed adding noise pollution as a negative impact. SAUDI ARABIA proposed deleting "energy security." The G-77/CHINA suggested new text on: ensuring safe, affordable and efficient transportation; financial constraints that lead developing countries to purchase secondhand vehicles; and the "critical role" of the automotive industry.

On the rapid growth of energy use for transport, the US emphasized that it referred to "people and goods." The EU proposed text highlighting the links between climate change mitigation and transportation.

On public and private investments, the G-77/CHINA emphasized investment in international financial and technical support, to which the US added that the topic should be discussed under implementation. The EU stressed that transport also be "healthy" and "accessible" and AUSTRALIA, CANADA, and ISRAEL emphasized support for those with disabilities. CANADA urged that transport be climate change resilient.

On promoting sustainability policies, CANADA recognized that the mix of appropriate policy tools depends on how transportation systems are managed across governments and the US emphasized the need for stakeholder participation at all policy levels.

In the section on policy options/actions needed, the G-77/CHINA underscored promoting access to reliable and affordable energy services and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms. The US suggested mentioning decision-making for sustainability for all communities, and providing transport choices for access to education and health facilities and markets.

The EU called for incorporating transport in climate-financing schemes, and supporting the capacity of developing countries in measuring and reporting.

On shifting to less energy-intensive transport, the G-77/CHINA supported greater innovation in goods movement, particularly for inland and coastal navigation, railways, ports and airports. The EU also supported innovation and integration of technological advances, and the US highlighted the need for market mechanisms and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

On developing and improving transport technologies, the G-77/CHINA emphasized financial and technological support and, with the US, said fuel economy labeling should not be mandatory. The EU supported: qualified mandatory labeling; development of carbon-free energy carriers; elimination of fuel subsidies; and food security. AUSTRALIA requested that the section on trade regulation ensures actions are consistent with members' trade obligations.

WORKING GROUP 2: Facilitated by Andrew Golezdzinski, the working group began a first reading of the text on the 10YFP and delegates agreed to work through the text on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis.

The G-77/CHINA proposed deleting the chapeau paragraphs, while the EU proposed that all but text on sectors and global warming remain. The US asked to delete references to sectors and corporate responsibility, while ISRAEL called for referencing water. INDIA proposed broadening the reference on the impact of sea level rise to developing countries, not just SIDS. CANADA suggested adding text on SCPs potential to reduce environmental degradation and support human development.

On the vision, goals and objectives of the 10YFP, the EU suggested adding text supporting the implementation of global sustainable development commitments and a global alliance between governments and relevant stakeholders on SCP patterns. The G-77/CHINA suggested references to developed countries' trade and investment commitments and the EU, NEW ZEALAND and SWITZERLAND offered amendments regarding references to Rio Declaration principles.

On guiding principles, the EU proposed deleting text on trade measures, while the G-77/CHINA proposed strengthening it, and SWITZERLAND asked to add a reference to accountability and transparency. The EU proposed replacing text on conditionalities with language on SCP enabling leapfrogging toward development. The G-77/CHINA suggested new texts, *inter alia*, on making the 10YFP into a tool to implement sustainable development commitments and analyzing the root causes of unsustainable consumption patterns.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Several delegates were pleasantly surprised with the CSD's business-like opening on Monday morning. While the introductory statements generally followed the patterns established at the review session the previous year, the transition to drafting was swift. Governments clearly did their homework, and, without going into tedious explanations, suggested specific amendments to the Chair's negotiating document. However, as a delegate noted, competing amendments and proposed additions are resulting in an exponentially growing text, a development that could create problems in the last stage of negotiations.

The drafting began against the background of a general concern felt for the fate of the CSD: as a participant observed, if it fails to deliver a set of solid and practical recommendations (some of which might flow into the Rio+20 preparatory process), its standing as an important UN body might drop even further.