

CSD 19 HIGHLIGHTS WEDNESDAY, 11 MAY 2011

On Wednesday the high-level segment of CSD 19 began. In the morning delegates convened in plenary session and in the afternoon in a multi-stakeholder dialogue on policy options, practical measures and the way forward. The Working Groups convened in the afternoon to continue addressing, under Working Group 1, chemicals, and under Working Group 2, the preamble, and negotiations continued into the evening. Delegates also participated in various side-events.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

OPENING SESSION: Opening the high-level segment, Chair László Borbély (Romania) called for delegates to “spare no effort, constructive spirit or creativity in finding concrete solutions” to the CSD 19 themes.

UN Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang, on behalf of Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, called for CSD 19 to mount a concerted effort to conclude negotiations to launch the 10YFP “without delay,” as an important contribution to Rio+20.

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment, said harnessing consumption and production patterns is important to achieving truly sustainable development, and thus CSD 19 agreement to establish the 10YFP will be an essential milestone on the road to Rio+20.

Jeffrey Sachs, Earth Institute, said the world faces a global ethics crisis, and finding the path to sustainable development will require a technological roadmap, a global carbon levy and regional cooperation, as global institutions are not fast enough.

Ashok Khosla, President, IUCN, said Rio+20 needs to review 40 years of unfulfilled commitments and explore genuine alternatives to current practices, such as “blue technologies,” green economy, new institutions of governance and SCP.

Argentina, for the G-77/CHINA, stressed the need for: transportation improvements for poverty eradication; multinational industries to use the same environmental and health standards when based in developing countries; hazardous waste inventories and bioremediation technologies; developed countries to take the lead in the implementation of the 10YFP; and broadening stakeholder participation in mining policy. She expressed concern with attempts to delete MOI throughout the text, recalling that CSD 11 mandated these elements.

Hungary, for the EU, called for an economy-wide sustainability model with social benefits, and reiterated the EU’s support for: a 10YFP transitioning to a green economy; decoupling the economy from environmental degradation; the Basel Convention on waste; increased reduction and reuse in the mining sector; and a strengthened legal system for chemicals.

Indonesia, for ASEAN, emphasized linkages between CSD 19 and the UNCSO 2012 outcome, and highlighted the need for implementation and working towards green economies in accordance with national objectives and priorities.

Sudan, for the ARAB GROUP, with AOSIS, underscored the importance of providing financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building to developing countries for the implementation of 10YFP. CHINA committed to play a constructive role in the process leading to Rio+20, and highlighted that each country should perform its respective duty to promote sustainable development, and strengthen cooperation. SAUDI ARABIA highlighted the importance of reducing emissions of wastes and pollutants, and more efficient use of natural resources, while relying on existing programmes and priority areas, including through the Marrakech process.

IRELAND said that the focus on the 10YFP offers the opportunity to create a common vision and an action-based approach on the sustainable use of natural resources.

MONTENEGRO pointed to the need to consider the development needs of individual countries and regions in order to effectively implement decisions to be adopted at CSD 19.

MOLDOVA highlighted the importance of environmentally sound management of transport, mining, chemicals and wastes.

ISRAEL urged the development of green economy, innovation, catalyzing ecological demand and reevaluating development indicators. SOUTH AFRICA emphasized political will, poverty reduction, means of implementation, and South-South and North-South cooperation.

MEXICO said that CSD 19 is an opportunity to develop new mechanisms for action, and reported on national implementation programmes. CHILE emphasized exploitation of resources in a responsible and sustainable manner, and GABON described his country’s efforts in various fields, in particular sustainable mining.

KAZAKHSTAN spoke on national priority issues of security, effective energy use and sustainable development. The PHILIPPINES said CSD 19 should be a starting point for ambitious political commitment and urged a supportive international environment for developing countries. JAPAN expressed thanks for international support after its recent disaster, and noted that his country hosted conferences on chemicals, biodiversity and mercury.

SWITZERLAND stressed that programmes on chemicals, waste management and 10YFP should be operationalized immediately after CSD 19. INDIA stressed the role of transport and called on developed countries to take the lead on SCP.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE ON POLICY OPTIONS, PRACTICAL MEASURES AND THE WAY FORWARD:

In the afternoon, Chair Borbély opened the multi-stakeholder dialogue highlighting the need for open and frank discussions with all stakeholders.

HUNGARY, for the EU, said stakeholder involvement is a major value-added of CSD and stressed the importance of acting on the 10YFP. The US said that major groups should have been allowed to speak more during CSD 19 negotiating sessions, and asked to hear from the FAO about its follow-up to CSD 17 outcomes on sustainable agriculture. The UNFCCC underscored the need to fully implement the Cancun Agreements and the importance of SCP for climate change. The UN OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS mentioned its report on the role of space technology in transport and SCP.

WOMEN called for involving women and youth in all levels of planning and implementation of the CSD 19 themes. CHILDREN AND YOUTH called for a 10YFP that provides a decisive vision, easily translated into action, with clear targets and indicators to review progress. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE underscored more democratic governance in sustainable development, including more speaking time for major groups in CSD. She called for clear limits and targets on mining production and development of “no go” zones such as sacred lands. NGOs offered to work with UN agencies and governments to implement on a large scale at least 1,000 projects worldwide related to the CSD 19 themes.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES stressed the role of municipalities in implementing CSD 19 themes such as waste management, and in the purchasing power of cities in implementing green procurement programmes. TRADE UNIONS expressed concern that the CSD 19 mining text might not adequately stress ratification of ILO standards on work in mines.

UNDP referred to the importance of broad multi-sectoral policies, green economy and links to Rio+20, and UNIDO voiced commitment to implement 10YFP programmes. UNEP called for endorsement of 10YFP programmes and noted its close involvement in SCP and other CSD 19 themes.

SOUTH AFRICA lamented weak implementation of JPOI, especially in eradicating poverty of vulnerable groups, and urged that UN agencies address these issues more actively, especially in regard to women. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY emphasized its role in dissemination of new technology, and referred to good governance, rule of law, protection of intellectual property rights, and fight against corruption. The SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITY dwelt on importance of research in implementing CSD decisions, and FARMERS highlighted food sovereignty, food security and agriculture infrastructure.

WORKING GROUP 1

CHEMICALS: Working Group 1, facilitated by Vice-Chair Silvano Vergara Vásquez (Panama), reconvened on chemicals following two informal contact groups on the theme chaired by Lee Eeles (Australia) on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. Eeles reported that chemicals MOI remained an outstanding issue. The MOI debate centered on whether chemicals MOI should be relocated under the broader MOI text, favored by developed countries, or retained in the chemicals text. The G-77/CHINA insisted that chemicals MOI be negotiated within the chemicals “package,” since many chemicals MOI issues had been removed from paragraphs with the understanding that the chemicals MOI section would remain. She also recalled language in Agenda 21 stating, “MOI should be addressed in every cycle and for every relevant issue.” The EU, with CANADA, responded that they preferred not to negotiate under “conditions,” as implied by a decision that no text would be

moved. Lack of consensus on how to approach MOI resulted in an impasse in the negotiations. Vice-Chair Vásquez agreed to consult the Bureau on this issue and report back in the evening.

Delegates commenced negotiating the MOI text informally, to work on less controversial aspects of the MOI language and those unrelated to placement. On strengthening the MOI for the sound management of chemicals, delegates agreed to include reference to the Rio principles and the WSSD goals related to chemicals management in the chapeau.

On support, the G-77/CHINA proposed that financing be “adequate, predictable, accessible, sustainable, new and additional,” which the US requested bracketing. Responding, CANADA inserted that the support be “in the interim” to enable capacity building, but also to infer developing countries and countries with economies in transition take on the responsibility in the long term.

WORKING GROUP 2

PREAMBLE: Facilitated by Vice-Chair Abdelghani Merabet (Algeria), Working Group 2 continued discussions on the preamble of the Chairman’s negotiating text.

Delegates agreed to the paragraphs on: implementation of measures and actions recommended at CSD 19 should be consistent with international obligations, including, where applicable, WTO rules; recognizing the urgency and reaffirming its commitment to reaching a successful and timely conclusion of the Doha Round of WTO negotiations with an ambitious, balanced and development-oriented outcome; and emphasizing the urgent need to increase efforts at all levels in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner to address all thematic issues of the cycle and enhance implementation of policy decisions.

Delegates also agreed on the texts on: recognizing that sustainable transport and mobility are important for sustainable development; expressing concern that developing countries in particular are facing challenges in the environmentally sound management of wastes, including a lack of resources and access to appropriate technologies; recognizing that environmentally sound waste management is important for human health; and expressing concerns that many developing countries lack the necessary resources and capabilities to shift to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

IN THE CORRIDORS

After negotiating until midnight on Tuesday, the discussions on the chemicals section of the Chair’s draft heated up on Wednesday morning during informal negotiations, resulting in a standoff between US, Switzerland, EU, and Japan - who bracketed the entire paragraph on chemicals MOI and requested moving it under other parts of the broader text - and the G77/CHINA, who refused to unpackage it. MOI appears to be an issue for other themes as well. One observer was baffled that each theme appears to be “doing its own thing” with MOI, while another retorted “placement won’t change the meaning of MOI.”

Meanwhile the much-touted multi-stakeholder dialogue ended abruptly after an hour: despite gentle prodding from the Chair, there were no more speakers. It seems the signing of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources from the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in the same time slot, occupied quite a number of ministers, who were conspicuously absent from the dialogue. The other reason cited by a delegate is that participants were saving debating energy for the roundtables on Thursday, as these promise to be more focused and productive than two-minute interventions in a large room on very disparate subjects.