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CSD-5 HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 8 APRIL 1997

Delegates to the fifth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-5) elected Dr. Mostafa Tolba (Egypt) as Chair of the session and heard opening statements and reports on intersessional activities during the morning. The High-Level Segment began in the afternoon. Sixteen ministers and ambassadors and three NGOs made statements regarding the report of the *Ad Hoc* Intersessional Working Group.

OPENING SESSION

CSD-4 Chair Rumen Gechev (Bulgaria) opened CSD-5. He called for a reconfirmation of the definition of "sustainable development" as it emanated from Rio and for a balance of actions so the economic, social and environmental components can reinforce each other. He noted the importance of: greater efficiency, including through new technologies and the elimination of subsidies; intensive cooperation with the business community; new and strengthened partnerships; and political will to implement commitments.

Delegates elected Dr. Mostafa Tolba (Egypt) as CSD-5 Chair. He noted that the concept of sustainable development is still very debatable. He noted challenges with regard to climate change, biodiversity, desertification, ODA, technology transfer, protection of the ozone layer, consumption patterns, population and poverty.

Joke Waller-Hunter, Director of the DPCSD Division for Sustainable Development, emphasized that CSD-5 is a special session, as it serves as the "PrepCom" to UNGASS and will determine its outcome and success. The Special Session must reaffirm the highest levels of support for sustainable development, recognizing the interdependence of its economic, social and environmental components and reaffirming the developmental dimension of sustainable development. She said UNGASS should emphasize to the UN system, the World Bank, IMF and WTO the need for partnerships at national, regional and global levels. She stressed the need to send a solution-oriented document to UNGASS.

Delegates nominated Vice-Chairs Monika Linn Locher (Switzerland) from the Western European and Others Group and John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) from the Latin American and Caribbean Group. The provisional agenda and organization of work (E/CN.17/1997/1) were adopted.

Derek Osborn (UK), Co-Chair of the CSD's *Ad Hoc* Intersessional Working Group, invited delegations, in their role as creators and leaders of political will, to strengthen the Co-Chairs'

draft with new proposals for action and implementation. He also reported on work with his Co-Chair, Amb. Celso Amorim (Brazil), on the draft preamble, expressing personal and political commitments to implementation and partnership.

Dr. Manuel Rodriguez (Colombia), Co-Chair of the IPF with Sir Martin Holdgate (UK), presented the IPF's report to the CSD. He expressed concern about persistent differences between developing and developed countries, including conflicting interpretations of UNCED agreements. He outlined the options recommended in the report, including the establishment of a forum to monitor and assist implementation and possibly to consider the need for a convention, or creation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. He stressed the importance of the proposals for action recommended by the Panel.

Birgitta Dahl, Chair of the High-Level Advisory Board, presented the results of the most recent Advisory Board meeting, which provided detailed recommendations on energy, transportation and water. The Board also highlighted the need to assume personal and collective responsibility for changing lifestyles. It stressed democracy as the most efficient basis for sustainable development, the need for an integrated strategy for sustainable energy development, and the phase-out of subsidies for energy production and consumption, particularly fossil fuels.

UNEP Executive Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell stated that now is the time to consider how best to equip and empower UNEP to realize its potential as the UN voice for the environment. She reported that the nineteenth session of the UNEP Governing Council, in addition to taking decisions on chemicals and the marine environment, decided to establish a forum for environmental ministers as part of UNEP's governing structure. She highlighted ways that UNEP could advance sustainable development strategies for energy, freshwater resources, oceans and tourism.

Mohamed El-Ashry, CEO and Chair of the GEF, requested delegates' support for a substantial GEF replenishment. He said significant results can be made in four areas: population growth; integrated land and water resource management; sustainable energy strategies; and the reform and strengthening of national and international institutions for sustainable development.

Maurice Strong, Chair of the Earth Council, reported on Rio+5. Recommended actions include: support for local Agenda 21s and national sustainable development mechanisms; new and effective delivery systems for financial assistance; GEF replenishment at a higher level; and support for UNEP.

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HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Delegates offered a range of ideas during the High-Level Segment. SWEDEN highlighted local initiatives, the Factor-10 productivity initiative and sectoral integration as key to implementation. The UK said governments must measure implementation. ARGENTINA stressed the need to incorporate environmental costs in resource pricing, notably water and energy. WEDO said the issues of nuclear materials, arms, war, energy and environmental health are interlinked.

ARGENTINA called for an early meeting of UNEP's new intergovernmental body and preparation of guidelines. The UK and GERMANY said governments must make the new governance structure work. SWEDEN called for a revitalized UNEP. The US supported the new UNEP mandate, but expressed "guarded optimism."

Regarding consumption and production patterns, COLOMBIA expressed concern that the gap between extremes of wealth and poverty continues to widen and that not all nations place the same effort in modifying consumption patterns. The EU called for a new initiative on eco-efficiency to address unsustainable production and consumption patterns.

Regarding financial issues, the G-77/CHINA called on developed countries to reaffirm their commitment to reach the 0.7% target by 2000 at UNGASS. Supported by the THIRD WORLD NETWORK, he cautioned against the assumption that FDI can substitute for ODA and stressed the need to ensure that FDI reaches marginalized and least developed countries and is invested on a long-term basis. He called for a multilateral regime for FDI to assist in the pursuit of environmentally sustainable development. MOROCCO called for new and additional resources, noted falling ODA rates and said private sector resources only assist some countries and do not advance sustainable development goals. The US said the CSD should make clear to the private sector that investment must aim for sustainable development while encouraging sustainable capital investment.

JAPAN stated that developing countries should bear the primary responsibility for their own development with the assistance of developed countries. The THIRD WORLD NETWORK said the WTO is the "antithesis" of sustainable development and global partnership. He stated that the CSD must reassert the primacy of global partnership and the right to development, should set up a mechanism to channel globalization towards sustainability, and should press to make the WTO more transparent and accountable.

GERMANY said UNGASS must produce a clear political signal for an adequate replenishment of the GEF. COLOMBIA noted that GEF resources have been transferred from other aid programmes and sources and are not new and additional.

Regarding technology transfer, the G-77/CHINA said there has been too much emphasis on the rights and protection of IPR holders since UNCED. He called for the initiation of publicly funded projects, particularly regional technology centers, and the creation of a clearinghouse for ESTs. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA offered to fund a feasibility study on the transfer of publicly-owned technology.

On atmosphere, ZIMBABWE called on all ministers present to attend the high-level segment of FCCC COP-3. The EU and JAPAN stressed the importance of reaching agreement on legally-binding commitments for greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions at COP-3. The EU proposed a 15% reduction by 2010 and urged other industrial countries to commit to similar targets. Beyond this target, GERMANY advocated a 10% reduction by 2005 as a "realistic, achievable and urgently needed" target. The US said UNGASS should call for realistic, achievable and legally-binding

emissions targets for developed nations, including maximum flexibility in reaching targets and the participation of all countries. The UK called for a North-South partnership of self interest, pointing out that developing countries will be the least able to combat the effects of climate change. POLAND recounted national efforts, which have led to reductions in particle and GHG emissions.

On freshwater, the EU proposed a global water initiative to ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation for all within ten years. FRANCE called for action to address potential conflicts between countries over emerging water-sharing issues.

On energy, the EU called for a common strategy for a sustainable energy future. The US said the CSD should lead an effort within the UN system to develop a programme of action for sustainable energy use.

Regarding forests, PORTUGAL, FRANCE and GREECE advocated the establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to initiate a global forest convention. JAPAN emphasized the need for a framework to follow up on the results of the IPF, but expressed skepticism regarding the usefulness of establishing an INC at this time. The US did not support a convention, but focused on improving national government accountability, building local and national capacity for sustainable forest management and promoting responsible private sector activities through voluntary codes of conduct.

On oceans, PORTUGAL underlined the importance of creating a code of conduct for coastal zones and advocated increased support for ocean research. JAPAN called for measures to prevent oil spills and for greater scientific knowledge for marine conservation measures. The UK called for confirmation of the CSD as the central coordinating body on ocean issues and said fisheries discussions must address more than the allocation of an increasingly scarce resource. GREECE stressed the issues of coastal management and marine pollution and highlighted their connection to sustainable tourism.

Regarding toxic wastes, the UKRAINE underlined the seriousness of the problem of nuclear safety, storage, transportation, transboundary movements and burial of radioactive wastes. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA expressed concern at the transfer of radioactive wastes from the Taiwan Power Company to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

IN THE CORRIDORS

In anticipation of the high-level consideration of forests on Thursday, delegations and NGOs are actively lobbying in attempts to sway parties on the pending question of an international forest convention. Bilateral consultations involving States who occupy polar positions on the convention question are expected to be conducted in hopes that they will pave the way for agreement on this issue at CSD-5 or at UNGASS. Last week, the US released a seven-point plan on forests. It reportedly highlights the importance of assessment, capacity-building, forest biodiversity protection and private sector involvement, although it has not been tabled at the CSD.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT: The High-Level Segment will continue discussing the report of the *Ad Hoc* Intersessional Working Group during the morning and afternoon in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

SIDE EVENTS: Check "CSD Today" for today's side events.