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UNCSD INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 2012

During the second day of informal consultations, UNCSD delegates continued their first reading of the zero draft. They offered amendments and initial comments on other amendments for Sections III and IV (Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication and Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development).

CONSULTATIONS ON THE ZERO DRAFT

III. GREEN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION:

The G-77/CHINA clarified that their proposal to delete paragraph 33 on the creation of an international knowledge-sharing platform was based on their preference to include related text in Section V, on the framework for action, rather than in Section III. Co-Chair Kim explained that there is still no clear consensus on whether all the frameworks for action currently in the zero draft should be put in one place. The EU said the framework for action and the green economy should be clearly linked. He also stressed the need to take into account countries' specificities when transitioning to a green economy.

On paragraph 40, on encouraging business and industry to develop green economy roadmaps for their respective sectors, NEW ZEALAND proposed deleting reference to "concrete goals and benchmarks." NORWAY supported retaining a reference to the promotion of the Global Compact's principles on Corporate Social Responsibility. The US suggested replacing a call for green economy "roadmaps" with "strategies." SWITZERLAND supported EU-proposed text about capturing the real costs of goods and services, to inform the choices of companies and consumers. AUSTRALIA highlighted sustainable consumption and production, supporting EU-proposed text calling for innovative market-based mechanisms to create incentives for companies. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed the establishment of a global green jobs center to promote knowledge exchange. The EU preferred the term "green and decent jobs."

On paragraph 41, on voluntary national commitments and actions by State actors and stakeholders, the EU said all stakeholders, not only national governments, should promote green economy policies.

On paragraph 42, on support to developing countries for building green economies, including in technology development, transfer and access, the EU expressed reservations regarding New Zealand's proposal on "applicable community protocols and procedures," and the Holy See's proposal "to implement

guarantees...to respect local and traditional knowledge," saying matters relating to intellectual property are dealt with under the Nagoya Protocol. CANADA suggested moving the entire paragraph, possibly to Section V. SWITZERLAND proposed replacing the references to "middle income countries" with "economies in transition," supported the EU proposal on catalyzing private investments, and suggested merging proposals from the EU, JAPAN and NEW ZEALAND on financing. NORWAY and SWITZERLAND questioned the placement of the EU proposal to have the UN Secretary-General make concrete suggestions on the nature and scope of commitments in the section on green economy. On subsidies, CANADA proposed qualifying the subsidies to be eliminated with the term "inefficient."

SWITZERLAND, supported by NEW ZEALAND, called for deleting Moldova's proposal for a mechanism to protect developing countries from investments in old, obsolete technologies. MOLDOVA supported the EU proposal on collaborative research on green technologies and services, eco-innovation and public-private partnerships to develop green solutions accessible to developing countries and the poor.

NEW ZEALAND supported the US call to delete text on creating Centres of Excellence as nodal points for green technology R&D. She suggested the EU proposals on leveraging the contribution of the private sector, sustainable public procurement, internationally harmonized standards and social and environmental responsibility should be moved to Section V.

On paragraph 43, about measurement of progress, LICHTENSTEIN said this should be coordinated by the UN in order to maintain coherence. CANADA rejected language on targets and timelines. SWITZERLAND highlighted the importance of measurement, and the relationship of these targets to "beyond GDP" indicators. The US did not support a roadmap or timelines, suggesting that states can make their own commitments. She requested consistent use of the term "transition," not "transformation," to a green economy, and proposed deleting references to a "just" transition. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested deletion of the whole paragraph, saying it pre-determines the discussion of sustainable development goals. He requested that indicators and a roadmap be addressed in Section V.

IV. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

The G-77/CHINA reviewed their suggested amendments for this section and noted proposals on, *inter alia*: identifying weaknesses or gaps that affect full implementation of Agenda 21; addressing fragmentation, overlap, competition and conflicting agendas among UN agencies, funds and programmes; affirming

a commitment to construct a new international economic order (NIEO) that is more fair, equitable and inclusive; strengthening the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and Barbados Programme of Action on small island developing States (SIDS); ensuring that developed countries implement their responsibilities regarding means of implementation (MOI) in multilateral environment agreements (MEAs); implementing commitments related to Africa's development needs; and reviewing and monitoring progress of Agenda 21 implementation.

On governance at all levels, the EU supported calls by New Zealand, Norway and the G-77/China to add "effective" before governance, and agreed with Canada's reference to "subnational" in the list of governance levels. He suggested, *inter alia*, deleting references to common but differentiated responsibilities and human-centered development. He said some G-77/China proposals on international financial institutions (IFIs), financing, technology, capacity building and SIDS should be moved to Section V. He stressed that the EU's proposal on voluntary peer reviews should be the cornerstone of IFSD reform. He supported New Zealand's proposal on regular reviews and Switzerland's on assessment of policy impact. He opposed the G-77/China proposal on NIEO, as well as the proposal on developed country implementation of MEAs.

On paragraph 44, on strong governance for advancing sustainable development, some delegations proposed deleting a G-77/CHINA proposal on "the need to strike a balance in reflecting the agreed priorities of the Organization in the allocation of resources to the United Nations regular budget which is to the detriment of the development activities." CANADA supported a US proposal that refers to representing the voices and interests of both women and men from major groups and civil society. He reserved on the EU proposal regarding the mechanism for voluntary and periodic country peer review, while the REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed deleting it and NORWAY supported it. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported an EU proposal on encouraging partnerships among various stakeholders including non-state actors such as the private sector.

NEW ZEALAND suggested revising text requiring "developed countries" to meet their MEA commitments. MEXICO supported reforming ECOSOC with a possible annual Global Environment Ministerial Forum that meets alternatively in New York and Nairobi, and a bolstered UNEP, perhaps even as a new Specialized Agency. SWITZERLAND stressed that paragraph 44 should focus on the general goals for strengthening IFSD.

NORWAY suggested text on implementation of a UN-wide strategy for sustainable development to ensure greater coherence in the UN system. NORWAY and LIECHTENSTEIN supported an EU proposal on broadened and deepened opportunities for active participation of all stakeholders. LIECHTENSTEIN supported G-77/CHINA proposals on addressing fragmentation, overlap, competition and conflicting agendas among UN agencies, funds and programmes, and coordination and cooperation among the MEAs, and supported an EU proposal on strengthening the interface between policymaking and science.

The EU proposed new text on options for reforming ECOSOC and transforming the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) into a sustainable development council (SDC). CUBA summarized its proposals for creating a new Ministerial Forum that would report to ECOSOC, while stressing that it was not trying to contradict any proposals from the G-77/China. SWITZERLAND stressed its proposal for requesting the UN Secretary-General (SG) to convene periodic high-level exchanges on sustainable development during the opening of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). JAPAN called for reforming

CSD and opposed an SDC. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION opposed creating new structures within the UN system. The EU proposed text on the functioning of an SDC, including ensuring full involvement of UN agencies and bodies as well as that of IFIs, the use of a review mechanism of countries' sustainable development performance, and a strong science-policy interface. The EU also proposed text calling on the SG to submit proposals to UNGA to give effect to proposed reforms and the appointment of a high-level representative for sustainable development and future generations.

LIECHTENSTEIN and the REPUBLIC of KOREA supported proposals for an SDC; the REPUBLIC of KOREA also supported Japan's proposed step-by-step approach to strengthen international environmental governance.

The DOMINICAN REPUBLIC supported strengthening ECOSOC's mandate. The EU, US, JAPAN among others proposed deleting a G-77/CHINA proposal for an international technology transfer mechanism under the UNGA.

On paragraphs 51 (UNEP as a specialized agency) and 55 (enhancing access to information and public participation in decision making), the EU highlighted the need for effective participation of non-state actors. On paragraph 52, on the state of the planet, the EU supported retaining the concepts of "carrying capacity" and "planetary boundaries." The EU, US, JAPAN, and others requested deletion of the G-77/CHINA's proposal regarding the IFIs and realigning quotas.

The US, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and CANADA said references calling for UNEP to become a Specialized Agency should be deleted. The US said decisions regarding MEAs can only be taken by each MEA's Conference of the Parties, not by Rio+20. The UKRAINE proposed transforming UNEP into a World Environment Organization that would elaborate a "World Environmental Constitution." On improving coordination among MEAs, SWITZERLAND supported urging further synergies within the chemicals and waste cluster, and suggested the biodiversity cluster might benefit from similar efforts.

The G-77/CHINA proposed deleting a proposal for an ombudsman or high commissioner for future generations. JAPAN supported strengthening UNEP and taking a step-by-step approach to strengthen international environmental governance, opposed by the EU. NEW ZEALAND explained its proposal calling for the UN to become a model of best practice and transformation by setting an example of sustainability. NORWAY supported a strengthened governance model, including universal membership and Executive Board, and said it needs more information on the proposal for an ombudsman.

The US urged governments to prioritize monitoring and assessment of data to guide development decision making. Due to its large scope, KAZAKHSTAN, BELARUS and UKRAINE supported retaining reference to the regional Green Bridge initiative.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As negotiators ploughed through acres of text on the green economy and IFSD, some expressed unease over the prospect of leaving the most intractable issues to the end of the negotiations. One delegate voiced his unease about the many proposals to defer text to the final Section: "it seems they are being deleted, because when you go to that section, alternative paragraphs have been proposed." By late afternoon, concerns over the tedious pace reached a tipping point, as delegates enumerated which text changes they supported and which they rejected. Reminding everyone that "this is a meeting of action," Co-Chair John Ashe requested parties to put forward proposals and textual amendments to the Secretariat in writing, so as to allow for substantive discussions, warning that "the real meat" of discussions still remains to be tackled.