

UNCS D INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: FRIDAY, 23 MARCH 2012

Delegates completed their first reading of Section V (Framework for Action and Follow-up) of the zero draft. Many consultations and side events also took place throughout the day.

CONSULTATIONS ON THE ZERO DRAFT

V. FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION AND FOLLOW-UP:

A. Priority/key/thematic/cross-sectoral issues and areas:

Chemicals and Wastes: The G-77/CHINA proposed text on lack of capacity in chemicals management and disposal among developing countries, particularly in Africa. SWITZERLAND supported a reference to human health. MOLDOVA amended its earlier proposal cautioning against establishment of the chemicals industries in developing countries, to instead “discouraging” investments in “outdated technologies.” NORWAY proposed a separate paragraph on electronic waste, and supported EU text on resource efficiency.

Sustainable Consumption and Production: AUSTRALIA supported a US proposal that would “invite UNEP to adopt the text of the 10YFP as elaborated at CSD-19, making only limited technical changes as required to launch the Framework, at its next Governing Council and to organize the first meeting of the 10YFP in 2013.”

The G-77/CHINA said they would continue to support the need for a global pact. He stressed the need for all countries to take action and for developed countries to take the lead. The EU supported the initial paragraph proposed in the zero draft and said the text should be based on decisions taken at CSD-19. NORWAY and MEXICO supported Switzerland’s proposal on promoting processes for developing labeling schemes and other mechanisms by 2022. MEXICO stressed the 10YFP could be a concrete outcome of Rio+20. The HOLY SEE joined the EU and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA in support of G-77/China amendment on strategies to increase consumption among the poorest segments with a view to meeting basic needs.

Education: On access to quality education, CANADA supported “learning outcomes” in addition to education. SWITZERLAND highlighted the gender dimension, and vocational training. MEXICO drew attention to children with disabilities. NORWAY supported a proposed paragraph by Australia on supporting the work of the Global Partnership for Education. The G-77/CHINA stressed having Rio+20 focus on providing equal access for schooling for girls and promoting universal access to primary education. The HOLY SEE supported G-77/China amendments on access by all to quality education, investing in education and education infrastructure, and the right to education. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported Japan’s

amendment saying access to quality education is indispensable for ensuring human security. On encouraging international exchanges and scholarships, MEXICO added “South-South knowledge exchanges and capacity building for quality training.”

Gender Equality: ICELAND, NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND and others supported a G-77/China proposal to change the title to “gender equality and empowerment of women.”

On women’s contributions, the HOLY SEE proposed replacing “health” with “basic health care,” noting most people in developing countries do not have such access. He requested deletion of references to sexual and reproductive health, and supported Montenegro’s proposed inclusion of “marriage and family relations” in a list of areas in which to promote gender equality. The G-77/CHINA highlighted the importance of gender equality and empowerment of women. He acknowledged progress made but said progress has not been fully realized.

ICELAND suggested new text on raising the proportion of women in leadership positions to at least 40%, with the aim of reaching gender parity. NORWAY suggested text calling for all monitoring frameworks to use gender sensitive indicators and gender disaggregated data.

LIECHTENSTEIN supported an EU proposal on women’s role in food security, Serbia’s proposal on gender perspectives in information society policies, and G-77/China amendments on advancing equality in the workplace. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported a G-77/China amendment on coherent and integrated work of UN agencies on the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women, and joined ICELAND, NEW ZEALAND, CANADA and SWITZERLAND in favoring a Norway text on supporting the mandate and work of UN Women.

Private Sector: SWITZERLAND and NORWAY supported an EU proposal on corporate sustainability reporting. CANADA proposed alternate language encouraging all organizations to disclose their environmental and social performance in accordance with internationally recognized standards. NORWAY supported the EU proposal on encouraging businesses to align their practice with the type of principles set forth in the UN Global Compact.

Sustainable innovation and investment: SWITZERLAND supported an EU proposal on creating incentives for investment in sustainable technologies, innovation and infrastructures.

Correct price signals: SWITZERLAND supported an EU proposal on making prices on products and services reflect true environmental and social costs and benefits.

Mining: CANADA and SWITZERLAND supported Australia’s paragraph on mining, while the US and EU indicated they could work with Australia on its wording.

B. ACCELERATING AND MEASURING PROGRESS:

The G-77/CHINA expressed willingness to explore the option of considering sustainable development goals (SDGs). He said that: SDGs must build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); growth can be useful in pursuing sustainable development; and diversity is a crucial principle.

SWITZERLAND said the SDGs should be developed through a transparent, UN-system wide process, drawing on expert advice and involving member states and stakeholders. The EU proposed that SDGs encompass the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced and synergistic way, to allow for differentiated approaches among countries. He also said the SDGs should be limited in number, and be easily communicable. LIECHTENSTEIN recommended that the SDGs should be possible to translate into national policies, and that the process lead to a robust accountability mechanism. The US said it reserved on this entire section but would engage in the discussion as the proposal evolves.

NORWAY, supported by NEW ZEALAND, proposed text that calls for developing a set of SDGs that should, *inter alia*, build on the successful aspects of the MDGs. On what the sustainable development goals could include, NORWAY proposed, *inter alia*, sustainable energy for all, food security and sustainable water management, and called for the establishment, by the Secretary-General, of an expert mechanism to elaborate and refine the goals before their adoption by member states.

JAPAN said it would be premature to agree on themes and sectors for SDGs at Rio+20. JAPAN, supported by AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND, stressed that SDGs should not divert countries from meeting the MDGs nor prejudice the setting of post-2015 development goals. MEXICO stressed that the SDGs must reflect all three pillars of development, be universal and applicable to all countries, but with differentiation according to development levels, and be subject to a regular follow-up exercise.

ICELAND proposed that SDGs should treat gender and sustainable land management; NEW ZEALAND proposed oceans; and KAZAKHSTAN, supported by BELARUS, proposed ecosystem preservation and sustainable energy for all.

C. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION: Finance: The EU said, *inter alia*, all countries have responsibility for sustainable development, both public and private resources are needed, development financing is an important part of the range of sources, the EU intends to meet its ODA commitments, and the private sector plays an important role.

SWITZERLAND suggested references to Financing for Development and the Busan process. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA stressed aid effectiveness and the Busan meeting. The G-77/CHINA said, *inter alia*: the MOI text should be in a separate section; all frameworks for action should be incorporated into this section; and agreement on the document hinges on providing a framework on the means of implementation.

SWITZERLAND supported Canada's proposal on improving the effectiveness and quality of aid based on the fundamental principles of national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. JAPAN, the EU and SWITZERLAND supported a new opening paragraph proposed by Norway that recognizes that both public and private sources are essential for financing sustainable development. CANADA and NEW ZEALAND said Rio+20 is not the appropriate forum to discuss debt relief, and proposed deleting a related proposal.

The US and EU supported Norway's proposal reaffirming the commitment to the UN Convention Against Corruption. The EU, SWITZERLAND, CANADA and NEW ZEALAND supported Japan's amendment recognizing that a number of emerging economies have become important providers of South-

South Cooperation. SWITZERLAND, NORWAY, CANADA and NEW ZEALAND supported a US amendment reaffirming the central and critical role of the private sector and international financial institutions in implementing measures to help the global community achieve the objectives of sustainable development.

Science and Technology: The REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed text on a global scientific platform to coordinate international research collaboration. The US said this section is important for the means of implementation, and said she would need to work on the wording of proposed amendments regarding technology transfer.

The G-77/CHINA discussed his Group's proposals, including on a call for the immediate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, which SWITZERLAND supported. KAZAKHSTAN supported the G-77/China's proposal to add "technology transfer, research and development" to the title, and proposed adding references to middle income countries. He also supported, along with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, Belarus' proposal regarding a global fund for voluntary contributions by states, civil society and private sector to facilitate technology transfer.

MEXICO proposed requesting the World Intellectual Property Organization and UNEP, and other relevant organizations, to identify options for a facilitation mechanism, consistent with existing patent protection systems, to disseminate key clean technologies to developing countries, and added text regarding support for existing regional centers for technology transfer.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA, CANADA, JAPAN, SWITZERLAND and NEW ZEALAND supported a US proposal indicating that technology transfer should be on mutually agreed terms and conditions.

Capacity Building: The US and CANADA expressed preference for the co-chair's text. The US supported a paragraph on participation and representation of scientists from developing countries to strengthen scientific capacities in these countries.

Trade: The US proposed text emphasizing the need to resist protectionist tendencies and to rectify any trade-distorting measures already taken that are inconsistent with WTO commitments and obligations. The G-77/CHINA called for, *inter alia*: increased market access, progress in the Doha Development Agenda, inclusiveness and participation, and enhancing capacity through international support. On supporting the eventual phase out of market distorting and environmentally harmful subsidies, CANADA supported a proposal by Australia and Japan to replace "fossil fuels" by "inefficient fossil fuels."

Registry/compendium of commitments: On a proposed registry or compendium of commitments, the G77/CHINA requested deletion. The US preferred calling it a "compendium of commitments," welcoming voluntary commitments. SWITZERLAND supported the compendium as an accountability framework.

IN THE CORRIDORS

At the end of a very long week, topped off by working until 11:15 pm on Friday night, delegates completed their "first reading" of the draft outcome document. Amidst much bracketing, some thought hope glimmered: a proposed zero net land degradation goal raised expectations in desertification circles, for example, while others noted that text on a long-awaited 10-year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production remained in the negotiation text. In a week characterized by tedium and occasional confusion as delegates ploughed through acres of textual amendments, interest heightened late Friday afternoon as delegates and observers packed into the conference room for the initial discussion on the proposal to establish a process on SDGs. Some indicated that the comments could feed into an informal meeting on SDGs on Saturday, to be hosted by Colombia.