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CSD INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP MONDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 1999

Delegates to the *Ad Hoc* Working Group (AHWG) on Consumption and Production Patterns and Tourism met during the morning and afternoon to elect Co-Chairs, adopt the agenda, and discuss past and possible future actions on consumption and production patterns.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Delegates elected Navid Hanif (Pakistan) and Sandor Mozes (Hungary) as Co-Chairs. Co-Chair Hanif said the meeting will produce two distinct documents, a Co-Chairs' summary and possible elements for a CSD decision. He stressed that the AHWG's role is not to negotiate but to ensure that the views expressed are presented in a balanced, fair manner.

UNEP highlighted the outcome of the 20th Governing Council, which addressed the major issues on the CSD-7 agenda. He also said the 1998 Nairobi Declaration is relevant for the CSD's work. Delegates then adopted the agenda and programme of work (E/CN.17/ISWG.1/1999/1).

OPENING STATEMENTS

JoAnne DiSano, Director of the UN Division for Sustainable Development, introduced the Secretary-General's review of changing consumption and production patterns (E/CN.17/1999/2). She noted that UNGASS stressed the need to move from conceptual to more practical work. Ongoing work includes trend analysis, development of operational indicators, and assessment of impacts on developing countries from changes in developed countries. New initiatives could include assessment of the impacts of globalization, increased engagement of the private sector, and efforts to take social factors into account.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA reported on an expert meeting entitled "Sustainable Consumption Patterns: Trends and Traditions in East Asia" held in January 1999 on Cheju Island, Korea and sponsored by the Norwegian and Swedish Governments. Major themes of the meeting included the impact of globalization and rising income levels on the sustainability of consumption patterns, as well as the potential role of traditional lifestyles and cultural values in promoting sustainable consumption patterns. The potential impact of the financial crisis on the sustainability of consumption patterns was also discussed.

NORWAY reported on an expert meeting held in Kabelvåg, Norway. The aim of the meeting was to bring together experts from both developed and developing countries to explore positive experiences on cleaner production and more sustainable consumption both in industrialized and developing countries.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

GERMANY, on behalf of the EU, drew attention to the unsustainable consumption and production patterns harming the natural environment world-wide. He said a majority of these problems are caused in industrialized countries, while the most severe environmental impacts are felt in the poorest regions of the world. Industrialized countries therefore must continue to take the lead in finding ways to change unsustainable consumption and production patterns. The CSD should invite: all relevant stakeholders to develop and implement awareness programs; Industry to develop, *inter alia*, cleaner technologies and environmental best practices; and Governments to, *inter alia*, set explicit policy objectives to ensure that minimum consumption needs are met.

GUYANA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, welcomed the Bureau's attempt to make the deliberations action-oriented and anticipated that concrete outcomes would address the issues of all Member States of the UN. She expressed regret that the debate on sustainable consumption and production has thus far failed to produce tangible results and concrete action. She proposed attention on the issues of resource management and cleaner production, and on possible concrete actions to address the specific problem of urbanization. Without blaming developed countries, she stated that excessive over-consumption in the North and poverty-related problems in the South are both unsustainable. Therefore, structural changes are crucial in both instances. She welcomed the proposal for national and regional studies concerning destructive patterns of consumption and production, notably in the areas of energy use. She said it will be through investment in skills, technologies and promoting efficiency that developing countries will eradicate poverty. She drew attention to the influence of globalization, trade liberalization and consumption patterns of developed countries on developing countries. She proposed addressing resource management and cleaner production, globalization and its impact on consumption and production patterns, cleaner technologies and urbanization.

Noting that the burden on the environment has not decreased in most fields, JAPAN said the country's Central Council on Environment has recommended a shift from information dissemination measures to "social systems" type measures including economic



instruments and regulatory measures with some substantial enforcement. CANADA outlined three guiding principles: the need for pragmatism; integrated agendas across global and domestic institutions and activities; and the need for shared responsibility amongst governments, industry, consumers and civil society. Canada emphasized: improving energy and resource efficiencies; government expansion of recycling; front-end support for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to implement sustainable production processes; ensuring that urban community infrastructure is designed for sustainable production and consumption; and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs).

SWITZERLAND said the Secretary-General's reports omitted references to the positive effects that changes in consumption patterns in developed countries can have on developing countries and the complexities and importance of pricing goods to include ecological costs, especially transport costs. She said the CSD should focus on the provision of a sound basis for policy development, the promotion of cleaner production and eco-efficiency, and consumer education and information. SAMOA, on behalf of AOSIS, highlighted the increasing reliance on fossil fuels and the challenge of changing patterns of fossil fuel consumption in developed countries. CHINA said global environmental degradation is mainly caused by consumption and production in developed countries, which should take the lead in addressing the issue. He said environmental indicators may not alter the volume of consumption but might be used to protect trade.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported focusing on: analytical and research work, assessing the effectiveness of proposed measures, improving legal and economic mechanisms, establishing constructive partnerships, exchanging information, and developing educational programmes.

NEW ZEALAND endorsed the consensus text agreed during consultations facilitated by Co-Chair Hanif (Pakistan) on the incorporation of language on sustainable consumption into the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. He noted disturbing trends in global fisheries and agricultural industries and called for the development, analysis, and sharing of information and data and for a balanced focus on both consumption and production. On sustainable consumption he noted the burden on developing countries and acknowledged the importance of technology transfer and capacity building.

CHILE indicated the need for economic, financial and social stability to achieve sustainable consumption patterns in developing countries. He noted that greater participation by civil society, adequate economic and regulatory frameworks, and environmental impact assessments were key to achieving sustainable production and consumption patterns. He highlighted the role of women's organizations in promoting sustainable consumption in Chile.

The US said the Secretary-General's report failed to mention action on chemicals. He objected to global modeling and said any such efforts should be on subregional or national levels. He also suggested highlighting the OECD's 1996 Council Recommendation on Improving the Environmental Performance of Governments and a Council Resolution on Improving the Environmental Performance of the OECD. MEXICO, on behalf of the Rio Group, said the Secretary-General's report confined its analysis to national consumption and production patterns, disregarding the global context. He said the report does not address the impact on developing countries' economies of instruments for changing consumption and production patterns. He said eco-labeling must be based on country specific conditions and subject to multilateral trading system rules. He said not all subsidies have negative effects and suggested identifying which may be supportive of sound environmental policies.

NORWAY indicated its strong and continuous interest in cleaner production and sustainable consumption. He said better consumption and production patterns are important for both affluent and poor nations. He noted that technology transfer and better policies were key

to achieving sustainable consumption and indicated that Norway would continue to support greater cooperation between developed and developing countries to that end. SUDAN indicated that in spite of the CSD's interest since 1992 in sustainable consumption and production patterns, it had not identified ways and means for cleaner production and had not addressed the impact of globalization on consumption and production patterns. He stressed the need for clearer views on the matter. He underscored the importance of different traditions, cultures and social values, particularly in developing countries, for sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

AUSTRALIA said it was necessary to change current consumption and production patterns and industrialized countries should take the lead. In this context, Australia will host an OECD Workshop on Eco-Efficiency in Sydney (15-18 March 1999) followed by a roundtable involving all stakeholders to promote eco-efficiency. INDONESIA said that, since globalization presents opportunities and challenges should be widened to include consumer protection, wider safeguards for consumers and overall protection of the environment. The exchange of information in policy implementation and on best practices would help in arriving at the right decisions.

IRAN noted that eighty percent of the world's population is responsible for less than one-third of global consumption while 20 percent consume more than two-thirds. He said oil exporting countries will be among the states adversely affected by changes in consumption and production. He said the priorities of such countries are being downgraded and marginalized by market distorting economic instruments and energy taxes, which dilute the economic competitiveness of oil exporting countries. BRAZIL's strategy on sustainable consumption and production is guided by the principle that sustainable consumption is an essential part of sustainable development. She outlined activities undertaken, including important legislation, and welcomed the negotiations to incorporate sustainable consumption in the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection. INDIA suggested ensuring minimum consumption through programmes that address nutritional, educational and health needs of women, guarantee employment to the rural poor, and literacy programmes. He outlined national activities, including the use of solar photovoltaic cells, and stressed the importance of education, consumer awareness and social values.

Consumers International, for the NGO CAUCUS ON SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION, stressed the need for access to information and participation in decision making. He said several items in the draft text of extended UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection based on proposals from São Paulo have suffered disquieting amendment. He supported the UN Guidelines, called for the necessary instruments to make them effective, and proposed annual consultations on ongoing work on consumption and production.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Prompted by CSD Chair Simon Upton's commitment to an action-oriented session in April, Ireland is taking soundings in the corridors to test the level of support among delegations for the establishment of an intergovernmental coordinating body for initiatives on oceans. With over thirty international mechanisms involved in oceans management and research, there is a belief in some quarters that it is time to bring more coherence to the issue. At least two papers addressing such an approach are expected to be tabled at the Intersessional next week.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

TOURISM DISCUSSION: Following the introduction of reports from the Secretary-General and relevant intersessional meetings, delegates are expected to discuss the issue of tourism during morning and afternoon sessions in Conference Room 4.