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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SECOND SESSION OF THE AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2001

In a morning session of the *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development, delegates received a new text comprised of views on the draft Co-Chairs' text expressed by delegates until Tuesday evening. A number of delegates expressed dissatisfaction with the text and the negotiation process, which lead the Co-Chairs to conduct, during the lunch break, informal consultations on how to proceed. A briefing session by the UN *Ad Hoc* Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy was also held during the lunch break.

The Expert Group reconvened late in the afternoon. After a discussion on the status of the draft compilation text and procedural matters, the formal session was adjourned. Informal consultations on section F of the text, International Cooperation, followed immediately after the adjournment. The Co-Chairs conducted further informal consultations with smaller groups of delegates in the evening.

MORNING SESSION

Co-Chair Reichl invited delegates to consider the new text compiling the submissions by delegations. She said the text lists the submissions in no particular order, as they have not been discussed. She noted that some submissions may not have been adequately reflected in the text and asked delegates to raise them as they progressed through the document. She said all references to statements by Iran and Sweden in the text should be understood to mean those by the G-77/China and the EU respectively.

The G-77/CHINA, supported by ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ARGENTINA, CHINA, CUBA, INDIA, NIGERIA and SAUDI ARABIA, expressed disappointment with the text and requested the Secretariat to prepare it in the standard UN format.

SAUDI ARABIA said that agreement had been reached the previous day to proceed solely on the basis of a compilation text. The EU said the organization of work, as adopted on Monday, states that the Co-Chairs' negotiating text would be the basis for negotiations and, supported by NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, CANADA and SAMOA, suggested requesting the Co-Chairs to prepare a revised negotiating text. In response, INDIA, with TURKEY and INDO-

NESIA, noted that the programme of work does not mention the discussion of a negotiating text produced by the Co-Chairs but rather by the Expert Group.

NEW ZEALAND said that section F on International Cooperation appears to be the most controversial and, with the US, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, NORWAY, AUSTRALIA and TURKEY, suggested deleting it and inviting delegates to resubmit proposed text for the section. The EU opposed this, stating that this section had not yet been discussed.

Noting the difficulties with drawing parallels between the work of the Expert Group and work in other fora, such as in the climate negotiations, Co-Chair Salamat urged delegates to consider the time pressure and constraints facing the Expert Group.

PRESENTATION ON THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL ENERGY FORUM: Mohammad Al Sabban (Saudi Arabia) gave a brief presentation on the 7th International Energy Forum, which was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 17-19 November 2000. He said energy ministers and delegations from 56 countries and international organizations attended the event. Participants discussed issues relating to, *inter alia*: the global energy outlook; energy, sustainable development and technology; energy industry and market restructuring; and prospects for the producer-consumer dialogue. He highlighted key issues, including: the role of energy prices and energy availability in world economic prosperity; the central role of oil and gas in energy consumption; international cooperation for improving access to energy data; the need for favorable energy, fiscal, investment and environmental relations to support expansion of trade in oil and gas for sustainable world economic growth; and the role of technological innovation and dissemination for the efficient use and production of energy. He said the Forum welcomed a proposal to consider the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Energy Forum in Saudi Arabia.

The meeting was then suspended to allow for informal consultation with delegations on how to proceed.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The Expert Group reconvened at 4:50 pm. The G-77/CHINA repeated its request to the Secretariat to produce a reformatted version of the compilation text. He suggested that section A, on General Considerations, and section B, on General Principles for Policy Action, could be distributed and considered first, with the other

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sections to follow. EGYPT suggested adjourning the formal meeting immediately to allow time for informal negotiations on section F, International Cooperation. Delegates agreed to this, and Co-Chair Reichl adjourned the formal meeting.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

Delegates undertook informal consultations on section F of the compilation text Wednesday afternoon.

SECTION F: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

Message to other intergovernmental bodies: Co-Chair Reichl invited comments on the first subsection regarding messages to other intergovernmental bodies. A regional group supported maintaining reference to messages to the FCCC Conference of the Parties (COP), but said the group was flexible on wording. A developing country expressed concern about giving a balanced view to the COP. Another developing country reiterated that many countries do not support “interference” with the work of other fora. A developed country emphasized consideration of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports.

On sending messages to Rio+10, several developing countries opposed the paragraph, stating that it prejudices the process. A developing country questioned whether it is appropriate to discuss institutional aspects of the UN in the Expert Group.

A regional group reminded delegates that the mandate of the Expert Group is to address international cooperation in favor of increasing access to energy in developing countries. Delegates had no comments on the paragraphs referring to messages to the Financing for Development process and the Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries.

Possible options for guidance to the multilateral system: One developing country stated that there should be coordination within the UN system as a minimum, and said her delegation will be proposing a paragraph on this matter.

One regional group supported continued coordination within the UN, and highlighted proposals and arrangements for improving such coordination. On the *Ad Hoc* Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy, he supported its strengthening, stressing the need for a mechanism for cooperation and calling for specifications of its future activities. He also called for a paragraph urging the international financial institutions and multilateral organizations to integrate sustainable energy issues into their development strategies.

One negotiating group pointed out that its support for the strengthening of the Task Force is contingent upon what is agreed with regard to follow-up. A developing country said there is some value in coordination but more consultation is needed within the negotiating groups.

Co-Chair Reichl suggested that the subsection on international endeavors be discussed on Thursday, and adjourned the meeting.

BRIEFING OF THE AD HOC INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON ENERGY

During the lunch break, the UN *Ad Hoc* Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy provided an overview of its activities. JoAnne DiSano, Chair of the Task Force, said it provides input into the CSD-9 process, and has prepared reports on UN agency activities and programmes in the area of energy, as well as on case studies conducted by UN agencies and programmes. She introduced representatives of member agencies of the Task Force, who presented their work on sustainable energy.

Speaking for the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, JoAnne DiSano stressed its focus on technical assistance and capacity building in partnership with governments.

Thomas Johansson, Energy and Atmosphere Programme, UNDP, underscored the role of energy in fighting poverty and advancing sustainable development, which are the principal objectives of the Programme. Highlighting case studies relating to cleaner production and sustainable energy solutions, Mark Radka, UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, said the efforts are driven by the desire to bring environmental considerations into decision making at all levels.

Cahit Gürkök, Industrial Energy-Efficiency Branch, UNIDO, presented case studies on efforts relating to sustainable energy, including fuelwood replacement and briquetting, micro- and mini-hydro power, and technology transfer.

Alan McDonald, Planning and Economic Studies Section, Department of Nuclear Energy, International Atomic Energy Agency, highlighted work on indicators for sustainable energy development, which he said brings together and further develops indicators from other relevant initiatives.

Noting the importance of energy efficiency, energy pricing and the internalization of external costs, Slav Slavov, UN Economic Commission for Europe, Sustainable Development Division, highlighted the Commission’s regional perspective on sustainable energy. Pranesh Chandra Saha, Energy Resources Section, Environment and Natural Resources Development Division, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, highlighted the need for financial resources and technology transfer to advance sustainable energy development in the region.

William Faries, Global Environment Facility (GEF), provided a number of examples of GEF projects relating to energy. He stressed the role of new institutions and financing services, and the importance of engaging the private sector in the area. Luis Marques, World Solar Commission, UNESCO, highlighted the World Solar Programme and its implementation. Noting the links between energy and sustainable livelihoods, Gustavo Best, Environment and Natural Resources Service, Sustainable Development Department, FAO, highlighted the organization’s efforts relating to renewable energy applications.

Wrapping up the briefing session, JoAnne DiSano highlighted the option of establishing a more formal basis for the Task Force, which she said would enhance the cooperation and coordination of different branches of the UN system with regard to sustainable energy issues.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Frustration prevailed on Wednesday as delegates spent most of the day debating issues relating to the nature of the document that should be the basis for negotiations. Many participants expressed disappointment that – in a situation reminiscent of the Group’s first meeting last year – the focus on the substantial issues, which are critical to all countries and to developing countries in particular, had once again been lost to discussions on process. Some observers said that the delegates do not seem to recognize the limited time the CSD will have to fix the problem, despite the majority of participants already indicating interest in reaching agreement.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Expert Group is expected to meet at 10:00 am in the ECOSOC Chamber. The Co-Chairs will distribute a new version of section A, General Considerations, and B, General Principles for Policy Action, of their compilation text. Discussions will resume based on this text, and a new version of the final sections of the compilation text is expected by the end of the day.