



## CSD-11 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 8 MAY 2003

Delegates convened in a Plenary in the afternoon for a briefing on the status of negotiations on the draft decision on the future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission. They also met throughout the day and into the evening in two parallel working groups to finalize negotiations on their respective issues. Working Group I considered the CSD's multi-year work programme and the future organization of work, with two contact groups formed to negotiate issues concerning the Annex and the sequence of meetings. Working Group II also established two groups to finalize deliberations on reporting, UN system coordination, Major Groups, partnerships, the Bureau, and SIDS. As of late Thursday evening, negotiations were continuing on partnerships, the programme of work, and the organization of work.

### PLENARY

On Thursday afternoon, delegates met in plenary to hear briefings from the co-chairs of the working groups on the status of negotiations. Noting progress made so far, CSD-11 Chair Moosa urged participants to strive to conclude their work on all outstanding paragraphs.

### WORKING GROUP I

This working group convened in the morning to establish two contact groups, which met throughout the day and into the evening, addressing the programme and organization of work.

**FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF WORK:** This contact group, chaired by Richard Ballhorn (Canada), met to negotiate elements in the future work programme relating to the purpose, outcomes and scheduling of meetings in the multi-year work cycle.

Delegates reached agreement on the scheduling of both the "Review" and "Policy" Sessions and on deleting references to a developed country's proposal that the CSD convene an "Intergovernmental Action Forum." Consensus was reached on holding an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting to discuss policy options and possible action, as well as to prepare input for the "Policy Session."

The contact group could not agree to a proposal by a developed country to refer to the "Review Session" as an "Implementation and Review Session." Delegates were also unable to reach consensus on a proposal by several developed countries that both the "Review" and "Policy" Sessions should mobilize further actions to overcome the obstacles and constraints to implementation. As of late Thursday evening, text on convening a high-level segment during the "Review Session" remained bracketed.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK:** This contact group, which was chaired by Hossein Moeini (Iran), took up the Co-Chair's text distributed on Wednesday, and exchanged views on: the general approach; number of themes in each cycle; criteria for theme selec-

tion; the balance between focus and comprehensiveness when selecting themes; linkages between themes; specific themes for the first two cycles; and the special review cycle. Several developed countries indicated that they would be prepared to agree to an indicative list of themes beyond the first three work cycles, but stressed the importance of ensuring a proper balance between comprehensiveness and focus on a limited number of issues. A developed country group suggested several criteria for choosing themes, such as coherence and manageability, added value, absence of an institutional home for a particular issue, and recent ministerial guidance. Water and energy were continuously mentioned as themes for the first two cycles. A developing country group argued for having a review cycle, while several developed countries expressed doubts on the need for this.

The contact group resumed towards the end of the day to consider a revised Chair's paper. The paper outlines, in introductory paragraphs, considerations which should to guide the CSD's work programme, emphasizing that focal issues should be addressed in an integrated manner, and that their selection in a given cycle does not diminish the importance of other commitments. It also notes that cross-cutting issues should be considered throughout.

On the Chair's new version of the Annex, developing countries proposed merging the "focal issues" and the "cluster of issues" columns into a single numbered "thematic clusters" column. After some debate, a developed country produced a paper that reflected this new approach, and the contact group began negotiating the exact description of themes in each cycle, with developing countries insisting on a closer rendition of their language as previously proposed. As of late Thursday evening, negotiations were ongoing.

### WORKING GROUP II

This working group continued negotiating the Chair's draft decision, and also took up draft decisions on NGO accreditation and on SIDS, with the aim of completing work on all outstanding decisions. While the group successfully completed much of its work, by late Thursday evening a number of paragraphs in the Chair's draft decision remained unresolved.

**REPORTING:** On a paragraph proposed by the G-77/CHINA encouraging further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, delegates agreed to use the exact language agreed in JPOI paragraph 130, which notes the integration of gender aspects, the voluntary basis of work, and national conditions and priorities. The group also incorporated a suggestion to request the Secretary-General to "consider progress made in this regard, including further work on the above mentioned indicators, in the report to the CSD, as appropriate."

On a paragraph setting out various considerations to guide reporting to the CSD, delegates spent considerable time debating a subparagraph outlining the required reporting inputs. Text stating

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that reporting should be “comprehensive” and centered on the “overarching focus of the cycle” remained in brackets. However, delegates did eventually agree that text should refer to inputs from “all levels, as appropriate, including national, subregional, regional and global levels.” They also agreed that a list of organizations, groups, and institutions providing input should be based on a similar list being negotiated by Working Group I.

Delegates then agreed to a number of subparagraphs outlining other considerations that should guide reporting to the CSD, including that: the existing reporting systems should be used to the fullest extent possible and provide the bulk of the information required; reporting should focus on concrete progress in implementation, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development; and country reporting should provide information on the status of NSSDs.

On reporting-related requests to the Secretariat, delegates finalized text on matters related to support for countries in national reporting, and development of reporting guidelines. On a proposal by the G-77/CHINA to refer to “technical and financial” support, the US said the Secretariat provides “expert advisory services,” not financial support. Following clarification from the Secretariat, delegates agreed that the Secretariat would provide technical assistance “through regular and extra-budgetary sources.”

On reporting guidelines, the US, supported by AUSTRALIA, said the current guidelines are “cumbersome,” and called for streamlining. Delegates agreed on language reflecting these concerns. Delegates also deliberated on who the Secretariat should consult with, and whether proposals for national reporting guidelines should be submitted to the CSD for consideration. MEXICO stressed consultation with MEA Secretariats, and CANADA, with SWITZERLAND, AUSTRALIA, the EU and US, supported consultation with “stakeholders.” The G-77/CHINA opposed this. Following lengthy discussions, delegates agreed on consultations with “Major Groups, as appropriate” as a compromise.

**UN SYSTEM COORDINATION:** Delegates finalized text on this topic on Thursday afternoon. On a paragraph inviting organizations within the UN system, the GEF, and financial and trade institutions, to participate in CSD’s work, delegates approved, *inter alia*, language recognizing the importance of enhancing collaboration and coordination in all areas, including information exchange and knowledge sharing on all aspects of implementation. On promoting system-wide interagency coordination and cooperation, the group agreed to an EU proposal to request the Secretary-General to report on its activities to ECOSOC and the CSD. On proposals outlining the UN system’s response to sustainable development, delegates supported SWITZERLAND’s proposal to take into account the work of the *ad hoc* working group on follow-up to major UN conferences. The EU proposed language requesting information on the outcome of the ongoing discussions on task managers. Following extensive discussions and clarification by the Secretariat on the function and activities of the Chief Executive Board, this proposal was not included.

**MAJOR GROUPS:** Delegates discussed at length a paragraph designed to enhance contributions from Major Groups through a variety of measures. The G-77/CHINA rejected additional proposals by several countries to refer to scientists, educators, and other stakeholders. Following ongoing differences on references to other stakeholders, delegates agreed late on Thursday evening that the issue may have to be forwarded to the Plenary for consideration on Friday.

After extensive discussions, a subparagraph promoting more active involvement of Major Groups in implementation was approved, with the inclusion of “other relevant stakeholders,” as proposed by the EU and AUSTRALIA. However, as part of this agreement, the EU, US and others acceded to a request by the G-77/CHINA to delete a paragraph specifying various constituencies/stakeholders, such as disabled persons, consumer groups, educators, parliamentarians, media, and the elderly.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** The issue on partnerships was considered throughout the day and into the late evening. The EU said the guidelines presented in the text were not sufficiently comprehensive, and supported “taking into account” the Bali Guiding Principles and General Assembly resolution 56/76. This was opposed by the G-77/CHINA, and delegates agreed on compromise language that “takes note” of the resolution and of work on partnerships undertaken in the WSSD preparatory process. Opposed by AUSTRALIA, the G-77/CHINA proposed that partnerships should “be based on new and additional funds.” Delegates agreed to language reflecting that partnerships should “include mobilizing new resources.” In addition to stressing that partnerships should be designed and implemented in an accountable manner, delegates also agreed to SWITZERLAND’s proposal that partnerships be transparent. However, delegates could not agree to language stating that partnerships should be consistent with national laws, with the G-77/CHINA insisting that they be consistent with national priorities, and the EU, supported by JAPAN and SWITZERLAND, suggesting that they be consistent with sustainable development priorities. Delegates also debated partnerships reporting, with the EU supporting biennial reporting and the US preferring reporting every five years.

**BUREAU:** Delegates discussed this matter on Thursday afternoon. NORWAY and SWITZERLAND, opposed by the G-77/CHINA and US, supported forwarding a clear recommendation on the term of the Bureau. The G-77/CHINA preferred a one-year Bureau. Delegates agreed to forward a separate decision requesting ECOSOC to consider the term of the Bureau, taking into account the CSD’s two-year work cycle.

**SIDS:** John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) reported to the group on successful consultations on a draft decision on preparations for the 10-year review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA). The group adopted the decision.

**NGO ACCREDITATION:** Late Thursday afternoon, delegates in Working Group II took up a draft decision on the status of NGOs and other major groups accredited to the WSSD. The US suggested alternative text, noting that it wanted to ensure that this matter was addressed by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs and not under some new process. The UK, speaking for the EU, stressed the backlog for NGO accreditation and the need to address this in an expeditious way. Following extensive discussions, delegates agreed to an operative paragraph recommending that ECOSOC consider, “in accordance with the established UN rules of procedure and taking note of the ongoing work of the NGO Committee, the status of NGOs, which were accredited to the WSSD, so that the Commission can benefit from their contributions as soon as possible.”

### IN THE CORRIDORS

As negotiations continued late into Thursday night, considerable movement was observed on previously “fixed” country positions with regard to the outstanding elements of the draft decision. Meanwhile, several participants not involved in the closed-door negotiations were reflecting on the successes and effectiveness of the partnerships fair and the learning center. While some welcomed their inclusion in the official session, others were questioning the “low to medium level” of participation in these events, particularly in the learning center, and the decision to include them in what one observer called “an arduous and fairly unexciting programmatic affair.”

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** A Plenary is scheduled to take place in Conference Room 4 at 10:00 am to adopt the session’s decisions.

**ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:** The ENB summary and analysis of CSD-11 will be available online on Monday, 12 May 2003 at: <http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd11/>