



# Earth Summit Bulletin

Vol. 1 No. 2

Published by Island Press with contributions from the NGO community

3 March 1992

## STRONG DELIVERS KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO PLENARY

### EMPHASIZES AGENDA 21 AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Maurice Strong addressed a packed Plenary session yesterday afternoon, stressing the importance of the work to be undertaken, and completed, by the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee.

As with each of his previous keynote Plenary addresses, Strong outlined his assessment of the process to date and his vision for the future. In yesterday's speech, Strong moved directly to the principal agenda areas that this PrepCom will address, namely the Earth Charter and Agenda 21. He called for "a concerted effort" by the delegates to distill the various government proposals for the Earth Charter, included in PC/WGIII/L8/Rev.1, into a short list of agreed principles. He then went on to introduce the extensive documentation prepared by the Secretariat during the intersessional period (PC/100/Add.1-27) for Agenda 21 and requested that the PrepCom "determine goals, targets, allocation of institutional responsibilities and priorities for immediate action." But he also pointed out that Agenda 21 is not to be written in "tablets of stone," but, rather, it should provide the framework for continuing action after Rio. Strong further emphasized that Agenda 21 chapters will undoubtedly have to be reviewed on an on-going basis after Rio.

Strong reviewed the estimated implementation cost of Agenda 21, while emphasizing that these figures do not represent a "budget" per se. He stated that the total cost of all the programmes would be approximately US\$125 billion per year. This is, in effect, US\$70 billion more than present ODA flows of US\$55 per year. This situation reinforces the need for new and additional financial resources.

He called on countries to agree to firm financial commitments to ensure the prompt implementation of Agenda 21. He suggested the following package of financial measures:

- Replenishment of the Global Environmental Facility at four to five times its present level of funding;
- New funds in the form of an "Earth Increment" to increase International Development Association (IDA) funding;
- Increased funding to UNDP for technology transfer;
- More funding to UNEP, the relevant UN agencies and the Regional Economic Commissions;
- Increased bilateral assistance to developing countries;
- A programme of debt reduction for developing countries;
- Incentives for private investment in sustainable development;
- Private support for NGO programmes.

Strong then referred to the upcoming meeting in Japan to address financial issues. On the question of institutions, he mentioned that any new arrangements should take into consideration the important role of NGOs. He also spoke of the need to coordinate efforts in development and environmental protection within the UN system. Strong also stated that the ultimate test of the success of Rio and the efficacy of Agenda 21 will be the extent to which it is translated into changed policies and practices within countries to achieve sustainable development.

On the issue of NGO participation, Strong noted that more than 1,000 NGOs are now accredited within the UNCED process. He hoped that efforts would be undertaken to ensure that NGO representatives be allowed as observers into the informal meetings.

## PREPCOM HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 2 MARCH 1992

### THE BUREAU:

The Bureau met yesterday morning to discuss a number of procedural issues related to the fourth session. The Bureau is chaired by PrepCom Chair Tommy Koh of Singapore and is composed of the working group chairs, the coordinators of the informal sessions and representatives from regional groupings.

The largest segment of time at the meeting was devoted to the question of NGO access to meetings. Koh, as always, was strongly supportive of the role of NGOs in the preparatory process. He reminded the group of the decision taken in Nairobi at PrepCom I that NGOs would not have a negotiating role. It was his suggestion to the Bureau that NGOs be given free access to both formal and informal sessions, but that they not be allowed to speak at the latter. He raised the possibility that the Chair could temporarily transform informal sessions into formal sessions so that NGOs could be allowed to speak. It was decided that informal-informal sessions would not be open to NGOs. (It is during informal-informal sessions where the difficult country-to-country bargaining takes place.)

A South American country delegate suggested that the PrepCom keep NGOs better informed about the proceedings, in order to avoid NGO frustration and misunderstanding. This generally received support from the Bureau members. Koh asked that the chairs of the working groups and the coordinators of the informal sessions make themselves available for the afternoon briefings sponsored by the NGO Liaison Office of the UNCED Secretariat and that the country groupings appoint a representative to attend those sessions.

There was general grumbling about the evening and weekend meetings and it was suggested that they be avoided if possible. The possibility of swapping the discussions on poverty, scheduled for the third week, with those on the role of major groups, currently scheduled for the second week, was also discussed.

The decisions taken by the Bureau are only suggestions that were presented later in the day to the Plenary in the form of a decision document.

### STRONG'S PRESS CONFERENCE:

Maurice Strong, Secretary-General for UNCED, met with approximately 100 members of the press yesterday morning. In response to a question on the most significant problems to be faced by this session of the Preparatory Committee, he said that of the various substantive issues to be resolved, the single most important issue is finance. He went on to discuss the amount of money necessary to implement Agenda 21 and the Secretariat's suggestion that International Development Association funding be increased through an "Earth Increment" of an additional percentage contribution based on each country's GNP. Strong spoke of the importance of the Tokyo meeting to be held from 15-17 April that will bring together world leaders to develop innovative approaches to deal with the financial needs for sustainable development. Strong does not think that new institutions would emerge from the UNCED process but that existing institutions would be strengthened. He emphasized, however, that form must follow function and that this would be one of the last issues addressed by the PrepCom.

### PLENARY

The fourth session of the UNCED Preparatory Committee commenced yesterday afternoon with the 55th meeting of the Plenary. PrepCom Chair Tommy Koh of Singapore opened the meeting by welcoming the new members into the United Nations

(including several former Soviet republics and San Marino) as well as into the PrepCom.

In his address to the delegates, United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali noted that this is a meeting of historic importance since the task is to negotiate the outcome of a conference with a very complex agenda.

UNCED Secretary-General Maurice Strong then gave his keynote address, which is summarized in this issue of *Earth Summit Bulletin*.

Although PrepCom III decided that this PrepCom would be a negotiating session without general statements, Ambassador Koh requested that the Plenary hear several statements by the visiting environment ministers from Portugal, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Senegal, Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire and the Chair of the Group of 77.

These statements were followed by reports on the progress of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committees (INC) for Framework Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity. Jean Ripert, the chair of the climate change negotiations, reported that a revised text of the convention emerged on Friday and is now available to PrepCom delegates. He is concerned about the large sections of text that remain in brackets and hopes that there is enough time to work out the remaining differences between governments before the Earth Summit.

Vincente Sanchez, the chair of the biodiversity negotiations, reported that the INC made great progress during its last two sessions. Twenty-nine of 43 articles have been agreed upon or are close to agreement. Agreement was reached on the issues of in-situ and ex-situ conservation, sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and institutional mechanisms. The issues of access to technology and transfer were combined in a single article and major progress has been made in solving the disagreements that remain. There is still major disagreement on biotechnology and intellectual property rights. Ambassador Sanchez will elaborate further in his presentation to Working Group I later in this session.

Finally, the Plenary addressed a number of procedural matters. The agendas and programmes of work for the Plenary and the three working groups were approved. The only change made was the elimination of all the night meetings. This issue will be reexamined in two weeks. The schedule for the fifth week of the PrepCom will be adopted later this session.

The Plenary approved guidelines recommended at the morning's Bureau meeting for the participation of NGOs at PrepCom IV. Just before adjourning, the Plenary approved the accreditation of 295 additional NGOs to the PrepCom. 147 of these NGOs are from developing countries. This now brings the total number of NGOs accredited to the PrepCom to over 1,000.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY AT PREPCOM

**TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER:** The Plenary is scheduled to begin negotiations today on the issue of technology transfer. Since both technology transfer and finance are on the agenda, it is not clear how they will be handled. It is possible that the issues will be dealt with subsequently, although they may be discussed in simultaneous parallel informal sessions of the Plenary. The result of negotiations at PrepCom III was a heavily bracketed text on technology transfer. The US is expected to stress the need for technology cooperation, not transfer. Other outstanding issues to be discussed are capacity building, intellectual property rights, access to technology, and concessional and preferential terms of technology transfer.

**FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** The second issue to be addressed in Plenary will be financial resources. The three aspects are: the principle of "new and additional resources" from industrialized countries, the scope of programs for which those new and additional funds would be provided, and the type of funding mechanisms.

Although industrialized countries have in the past pointed to the Global Environment Facility as the main funding mechanism for Agenda 21, there appears to be a move to restrict its mandate to global environmental conventions. This would leave a number of global and national environmental and sustainable development concerns without an appropriate funding mechanism. Look for the United States to propose that funding to developing countries should be tied to their sustainable development plans.

**WORKING GROUP III:** Working Group III did not commence its formal proceedings on Monday, as originally intended. It will, however, commence today with discussion to focus first on such procedural matters as the appropriate negotiating text. There are several documents in question. Document L.8 is the official compilation of governments' views which classifies 136 paragraphs into approximately 20 principles. As well, there are numerous country drafts as well as Document L.6, the proposed negotiating text tabled by the G-77 at PrepCom III. There is a growing consensus among delegations that if Working Group III is to successfully complete the drafting of an Earth Charter text for adoption at Rio, negotiations should, therefore, resume around Dr. Moldan's Reference text. (See *Earth Summit Bulletin*, Vol.1 No.1 for a detailed description of his text). Notwithstanding the general move in this direction, several developing countries maintain that negotiations should resume around Document L.6. These delegations argue that their text is the only one which properly addresses development concerns.

## SCHEDULE OF PREPCOM IV EVENTS

### OFFICIAL MEETINGS

March 3	10:00 am and 3:00 pm	UN Conference Room 4	UNCED Plenary	Open
March 3	10:00 am and 3:00 pm	UN Conference Room 1	UNCED Working Group III	Open
March 3	3:00 pm	UN Conference Room 4	Briefing on Rio Preparations for UNCED	Open

### NGO MEETINGS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

March 3	9:00 am	Labouisse Hall/UNICEF Bldg.	NGO Strategy Session	NGOs
March 3	10:00 am	Labouisse Hall/UNICEF Bldg.	Women's Caucus	NGOs
March 3	11:00 am	Labouisse Hall/UNICEF Bldg.	NGO Plenary	NGOs
March 3	1:00 pm	United Engineering	UNA-USA International Environmental Law Conference	Open
March 3	2:00 pm	to be announced	"Ethics - Equity and Sustainable Development" an address by Dr. Noel Brown - UNEP	Open
March 3	2:00 pm	to be announced	Meeting between NGOs on Official Delegations and Non-Delegation NGOs	NGOs
March 3	3:00 pm	UN Church Center	Regional Caucuses	NGOs
March 3	6:00 pm	UN Conference Room 1 or 4	NGO/Government Dialogues	Open
March 4	1:00 pm	25 Tudor City Place Apt.# 1820	Strategy Session for Canadian NGOs	Canadian NGOs
March 4	1:00 pm	to be announced	UNA-USA Conference on Institutional Issues	Open
March 4	1:00 pm	UNIFEM Building	Native Peoples Council	to be confirmed
March 4	3:00 pm	UN Church Center	Issue Caucuses	NGOs
March 4	6:00 pm	UN Conference Rooms	NGO Government Dialogues	Open