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**CSD INTERSESSIONALS
26 FEBRUARY - 16 MARCH:
SECOND SESSION OF THE AD HOC
INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT: 26 FEBRUARY - 2 MARCH 2001**

Three intersessional meetings will be held in preparation for the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-9): the second session of the Open-Ended *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development (Expert Group) from 26 February to 2 March; the Working Group on transport and atmosphere from 6-9 March; and the Working Group on information for decision-making and participation and on international cooperation for an enabling environment from 12-16 March.

The second session of the Expert Group begins today at UN Headquarters in New York. Established by the UN General Assembly to prepare inputs for CSD-9, the Expert Group will focus on key issues relating to energy for sustainable development including: accessibility of energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, advanced fossil fuel technologies, nuclear energy technologies, rural energy and energy-related issues in transportation.

The Expert Group will consider a report of the UN Secretary-General entitled "Energy and sustainable development: options and strategies for action on key issues," which has taken into account views expressed by governments during the intersessional period. The Expert Group will further consider regional institutions and endeavors, share success stories in the promotion of energy for sustainable development, and propose options for strengthening regional and international cooperative efforts with consideration to the outcome of regional meetings and events organized during the intersessional period. Based on the discussions, the Expert Group will produce a report for adoption by CSD-9.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CSD AND THE EXPERT GROUP

The CSD emerged from Agenda 21, the programme of action adopted by UNCED in 1992. Agenda 21 called for the creation of the CSD to: ensure effective follow-up of UNCED; enhance international cooperation and rationalize intergovernmental decision-making capacity; and examine progress in Agenda 21 implementation at the local, national, regional and international levels. In 1992, the 47th session of the General Assembly set out in Resolution 47/191 the CSD's terms of reference, its composition, guidelines for the participation of non-governmental organizations, the organization of work,

the CSD's relationship with other UN bodies, and Secretariat arrangements. The CSD held its first substantive session in June 1993 and has since met annually.

In June 1997, five years after UNCED, the General Assembly held a Special Session (UNGASS) to review implementation of Agenda 21. Negotiations produced a Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. Among the decisions adopted at UNGASS was a new five-year CSD work programme, which identifies sectoral, cross-sectoral and economic sector/major group themes for the subsequent four sessions of the CSD. Overriding issues for each year are poverty, and consumption and production patterns.

CSD-6 met from 20 April to 1 May 1998. Participants considered the economic theme of industry and the sectoral theme of strategic approaches to freshwater management. They also reviewed implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and discussed the cross-sectoral themes of technology transfer, capacity building, education, science and awareness raising.

CSD-7 met from 19-30 April 1999 to consider the economic theme of tourism, the sectoral theme of oceans and seas and the cross-sectoral theme of consumption and production patterns. Participants also prepared for the UNGASS review of the Barbados Programme of Action.

CSD-8 met from 24 April to 5 May 2000. Participants considered the economic theme of sustainable agriculture and land management, the sectoral theme of integrated planning and management of land resources and the cross-sectoral themes of financial resources, trade and investment and economic growth. The conclusions and proposals in the final report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests were also discussed, as were preparations for Rio+10. The decisions adopted by CSD-8 included the report of the first session of the Open-Ended *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy for Sustainable Development held from 6-10 March 2000.

THE CSD AND ENERGY: The multi-year programme of work for the CSD, adopted by UNGASS in 1997, mandates CSD-9 to consider the sectoral theme of atmosphere/energy. The Special Session recognized the complexities and interdependencies inherent in addressing energy issues within the context of sustainable development and mandated the utilization of an Expert Group. At CSD-7, the Open-Ended *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development was formally established to prepare inputs to CSD-9. Governments, civil society and other major groups, including the private sector, were called upon to actively participate in the preparatory process.

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First Session of the Expert Group: The First Session of the Expert Group met in New York from 6-10 March 2000. The Expert Group considered reports of the UN Secretary-General on "Energy and Sustainable Development: Key Issues," and on "National Submissions," and produced a Co-Chairs' summary of the discussions. Delegates also agreed on an intersessional programme of work and a provisional agenda for their next session prior to CSD-9.

The Co-Chairs' summary of the discussions highlighted the agreed priority areas for consideration by CSD-9: accessibility of energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, advanced fossil fuel technologies, nuclear energy technologies, rural energy, and energy and transportation. The summary included language on technology transfer, capacity building and mobilization of financial resources, noting, *inter alia*, the need to remove constraints and barriers to the effective transfer of energy technologies, the role of education and awareness raising among end-users to promote the acceptability of many environmentally sound energy technologies and the need for additional financial resources for sustainable energy. On international and regional cooperation, the Co-Chairs' summary called for an intensification of international cooperation, both North-South and South-South, in order to create environmentally sound, cost-effective and affordable energy systems and to promote energy efficiency.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In recent months a number of meetings and events have been held on energy and sustainable development. Key events are outlined below.

WORLD ENERGY ASSESSMENT: The World Energy Assessment (WEA) was launched on 20 September 2000. The WEA serves to inform discussion and debate on sustainable energy, and is sponsored by the UN Development Programme, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the World Energy Council. The WEA report focuses on linkages between social, economic, environmental and security issues relating to energy and on the compatibility of different energy options with objectives in these areas, and serves as informal input into the CSD-9 process. The WEA process is consultative, with drafting teams and a peer review process involving members from all parts of the world, as well as an interactive website.

SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: This committee, which was established by the UN Economic and Social Council in July 1998, consists of two subgroups dealing with energy and water resources. The second session of the Committee was held from 14-25 August 2000, in New York, with matters under discussion including: review of trends and issues relating to energy development and use in the context of sustainable development; energy and the residential sector; renewable energy, with an emphasis on solar power; new financial mechanisms and economic instruments, as well as strategies to speed up investment in sustainable energy development; and coordination of energy activities within the UN system.

VILLAGE POWER 2000 CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS: The Village Power 2000 Conference and Workshops took place from 4-7 December 2000, at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. The event explored ways to advance rural transformation by improving access to modern clean energy services for: income generation; community needs in health and education; and residential use.

Participants discussed issues including: a new vision for rural transformation and poverty alleviation; renewable technologies for global markets; the linking of energy and rural development; the scaling-up of rural energy services; traditional fuels and household energy; and methods to ensure equitable benefits from rural energy services.

FIRST MEETING OF THE GLOBAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY – RURAL ENERGY: PRIORITIES FOR ACTION: The first meeting of the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE), developed from outreach efforts relating to the WEA, was held from 11-13 December 2000, at the headquarters of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria. The meeting addressed Rural Energy: Priorities for Action, and participants convened in a series of plenary sessions to consider: linkages between rural energy and sustainable development; enabling frameworks for attracting investment for rural energy; lessons learned; financing issues; challenges and opportunities of regulatory reform; innovation; and the way forward, including a work plan for the GFSE.

AD HOC INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON ENERGY: Established by the UN Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development in 1998, the *Ad Hoc* Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy facilitates coordination and cooperation among UN entities in the area of energy. It builds on previous work by the informal Inter-Agency Group on Energy, and is elaborating a common approach to the sustainable energy agenda for input into the CSD-9 process. The Task Force met three times in 2000 and prepared background papers highlighting synergies and visions of UN agencies and programmes in the area of energy, and compiled case studies by UN agencies and programmes, which will be available at the second session of the Expert Group.

REGIONAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE EXPERT GROUP: Meetings that feed into the Expert Group work were held in all UN regions during the course of the past year. The Symposium on Arab Energy Policies and Strategies was held in Beirut, Lebanon, from 2-5 October 2000, and in Amman, Jordan, from 23-24 October 2000. The Meeting of Energy Ministers and Authorities of the Member States of the Latin American Energy Organization was held in Asunción, Paraguay, from 13-14 October 2000, and the Tenth Annual Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy of the Economic Committee for Europe was held in Geneva from 31 October to 2 November 2000. The Asia-Pacific Regional High-level Meeting on Energy and Sustainable Development was held in Bali, Indonesia, from 23-24 November 2000, while the African equivalent was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 10-13 January 2001. The Alliance of Small Island States held a meeting on climate change, energy and preparation for CSD-9 in Nicosia, Cyprus, from 15-19 January 2001. Reports on the outcome of these meetings will be made available at the second session of the Expert Group.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

The Expert Group will meet at 10:00 am in the ECOSOC Chamber. Delegates will hear opening statements by the Co-Chairs and are expected to adopt the agenda and the organization of work. The report of the Secretary-General on "Energy and sustainable development: options and strategies for action on key issues" and of the Co-Chairs' draft negotiating text will be introduced. Delegates will start informal discussions of the draft negotiating text at 3:00 pm.