

## CSD-14 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 1 MAY 2006

On Monday morning, CSD-14 began its consideration of the thematic cluster for the 2006/07 cycle – energy, industrial development, air pollution, atmosphere and climate change. After completing the election of officers and adopting the agenda and organization of work, delegates made general statements, heard reports on intersessional activities, and commenced thematic discussions. Interventions focused on an overview of progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and on the Mauritius Strategy for Small Island Developing States.

### OPENING PLENARY

The Plenary opened with an announcement that Chair Aleksi Aleksishvili, Georgia's Minister of Finance, was unable to attend due to a series of shocks to the Georgian economy, including an increase in gas import prices. Vice-Chair designate Azanaw Abreha (Ethiopia) was invited to take the Chair and was confirmed as the African region's representative on the CSD Bureau (the other Bureau members having been elected in 2005). Vice-Chair Yvo de Boer (Netherlands) was invited to act as Rapporteur.

In a written statement, Aleksishvili indicated that the work of the Session had been organized to review issues following a more integrated approach than in previous sessions. Guyana, for the CARICOM and RIO Groups, cautioned that the programme was inconsistent with CSD-11 decisions to treat all themes on an equal basis. CUBA expressed concern that the organization of work at CSD-14 would lead to an unbalanced treatment of the issues. Delegates adopted the agenda and organisation of work (E/CN.17/2006/1). CUBA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted the limitations of the consolidated nature of the Secretary-General's report on the themes for the second cycle.

**INTERSESSIONAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:** Zhang Yishan, China, reported on the UN Symposium on Hydropower and Sustainable Development held in Beijing in October 2004, and presented the Beijing Declaration on Renewable Energy for Sustainable Development adopted at the International Renewable Energy Conference in November 2005. Ellen von Zitzewitz, Germany, described the outcomes of the Bonn International Conference on Renewable Energies held in June 2004.

Ton Boon von Ochssee, the Netherlands, described the Energy for Development Conference, held in Noordwijk in December 2004, noting the importance of widening developing countries' access to energy and mainstreaming energy in

development processes. Cheng Shuifeng, China, reported on an International Symposium on the Integrated Implementation on Sustainable Development Goals held in Nanchang in May 2005, outlining practical ways of advancing sustainable development. Ricardo Ulate, Costa Rica, presented the outcome of the Costa Rica Meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production, held in September 2005, highlighting links with poverty eradication. Sharon Lee Smith, Canada, reported on UNFCCC COP-11, held in Montreal in November/December 2005, citing the launch of two processes for considering further action beyond 2012, and agreement on the Marrakesh Accords. Nassir Bin AbdulAziz Al-Nasser, Qatar, presented on the International Symposium on Natural Gas and Sustainable Development, held in Doha in February 2006, underscoring the importance of natural gas in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Emphasizing the role of clean energy in meeting growing energy demands and the current lack of investment, Jamal Saghir of the World Bank reported on the World Bank Energy Week in Washington DC, in March 2006. Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan, briefed on the Baku symposium on Energy Efficiency and Sustainability held in March 2006, which adopted the Baku Declaration, highlighting the role of energy efficiency in attaining the MDGs. Reporting on Climate Change and Sustainable Development – An International Workshop to Strengthen Research and Understanding, which took place in New Delhi in April 2006, Siddhartha Behura, India, noted the need to integrate climate change concerns into sustainable development strategies. SOUTH AFRICA noted that the African Ministerial Conference on Hydropower and Sustainable Development convened in March 2006 had addressed the role of energy in meeting the MDGs. UNEP reported on the Ninth Special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum highlighting, *inter alia*, the importance of changing existing patterns of energy provision and the simultaneous need to expand the availability of energy services. FAO reported on a Mountain Partnership, noting communication challenges among different partners/stakeholders.

### GENERAL STATEMENTS

Vice-Chair Azanaw Abreha invited delegates to make general statements on progress in Agenda 21 implementation, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI. These statements continued into the afternoon. Jose Antonio Ocampo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, emphasized continuity in CSD work cycles, and noted interlinkages among all issues.

CHINA emphasized the importance of creating an enabling environment for trade and investment to achieve sustainable development. INDONESIA said improved access to energy can promote poverty eradication, and cited the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. South Africa, on behalf of G-77/CHINA, noted the importance of identifying the barriers and constraints facing all countries so that policies and practical measures can be identified during CSD-15. Austria, for the EU, called for an emphasis on means of implementation, cross-cutting issues, such as sustainable consumption and production, and corporate social and environmental responsibility. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) called on states to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and for greater urgency in supporting SIDS' national action plans.

Zambia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, set out the challenges for African countries under each of the themes for CSD-14 and CSD-15. He called for the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation in policy processes.

TANZANIA reviewed its energy crisis highlighting, *inter alia*, the difficulties of replacing technologies using ozone depleting chemicals. ICELAND called for attention to alleviating the negative aspects of a carbon-based economy. JAMAICA noted the increased frequency and intensity of storms and other natural disasters, and the importance of risk reduction and mitigation. TURKEY said it was a major energy importer and called for diversification of sources, including hydropower. AUSTRALIA emphasized the role of partnerships, as well as good governance and liberalized trade. CANADA stressed improving energy efficiency, and offered to share his country's expertise. JAPAN underlined sharing information and examples of best practice. KUWAIT called for increased investment in energy-related sectors. SWITZERLAND called for a change in consumption and production patterns. SOUTH AFRICA invited the CSD to consider integrating a five-year review into its organization of work, since CSD-15 marks the fifth anniversary of the WSSD. The US called for a focus on governance, finance, technology, and partnerships, emphasizing best practice, measurable results, and expanding networks of implementers.

ITALY announced plans to launch a Global Bioenergy Partnership and steering group to support investment, remove barriers and promote the efficient use of biomass. PALAU called for a UNDP presence in his country and other SIDS to counter their remoteness and support their effective engagement with partners. The SOLOMON ISLANDS noted that policy solutions for least developed countries (LDCs) had not been matched by resources, and called for a standing group to continually monitor implementation of sustainable development. BRAZIL offered to share its ethanol fuel technology with other developing countries and called for a reduction in trade barriers on sustainable energy sources. TUVALU urged the early development of renewable energy supported by a new global renewable energy fund and an insurance mechanism for SIDS.

### THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS

On Monday afternoon, delegates convened in a parallel session on "improving access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services." The thematic session, facilitated by Vice-Chair Yvo de Boer, consisted of panel presentations and discussions focusing on improving energy access in urban and rural areas, and on gender issues.

**IMPROVING ACCESS IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS:** Roderick de Castro, Mirant Foundation, identified barriers to bringing modern energy services to communities in the Philippines, highlighting obstacles relating to technology, policy and financing.

Jyoti Parikh, Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRAD), suggested differentiating energy services based on the needs of different groups. Olav Kjørven, Energy and Environment Group, UNDP, highlighted political commitment and the need to link carbon financing to the MDGs.

In the ensuing discussion, several delegates highlighted the need for multi-stakeholder and community involvement. The EU said basic access to safe energy should be a development priority. INDIA emphasized the need to remove political and legal barriers to achieve energy for all. CANADA stressed the importance of good governance.

NORWAY underscored the value of energy sector reform. The US drew attention to public-private partnerships, and CHINA outlined reforms and legislation to optimize energy systems and reduce consumption. The World Health Organization (WHO) called for a firm political commitment on energy access that incorporates health concerns. FARMERS and TRADE UNIONS highlighted technology access and transfer.

**GENDER AND ACCESS TO ENERGY SERVICES:** Elizabeth Cecelski, Energy, Environment and Development, Germany, highlighted the plight of many women in developing countries, supported gender mainstreaming, and stressed the significant impacts of indoor air pollution due to "primitive" cooking fuels. Rose Mensah-Kutin, ABANTU for Development, Regional Office for West Africa, expressed concerns about institutional, economic and political barriers facing women in accessing clean and safe energy.

In the ensuing discussion, participants stressed the implications of energy sources for women's health, incomes, and educational opportunities. The US highlighted the matrix of solutions developed by the UN outlining best practices and lessons learned. TANZANIA emphasized biomass options and, with UNDP, stressed the need for government intervention to attract private sector investment. WOMEN highlighted the importance of an enabling environment and removing barriers to women's participation in decision making. The NETHERLANDS said the first priority should be household energy, and noted the Dutch Government's work to help realize access to modern energy for 10 million people by 2015. SOUTH AFRICA emphasized awareness raising in rural areas. NORWAY said the discussion should be broadened to include children, the elderly and the disadvantaged.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

In the first minutes of CSD-14, delegates noted with some irony that "energy security" – a prominent issue on their agenda – was one of the contributing factors to a national emergency in Georgia which had come between them and their absent Chair, Georgia's finance minister Aleksishvili.

On a more substantive level, some concern was heard in developing country circles over the Secretary-General's report. One delegate inferred that the integrated format of the report had blurred the issues being addressed in the current cycle, including means of implementation. Several delegates observed, ruefully, that the work programme lacked balance and that energy is likely to get the lion's share of attention. This emphasis seems to be supported by those who view energy as a particularly critical issue in search of a UN platform.

In other corridors exchanges, South Africa's proposal to start a five-year review process of WSSD at CSD-15 raised speculation as to how CSD could reorganize its work programme to accommodate this.