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CSD HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 18 APRIL 1995

PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNDP Administrator **James Gustave Speth** said national policies are being transformed since UNCED despite serious backsliding on commitments by industrialized countries, particularly on financial resources. The developing world has begun to implement Agenda 21 in earnest. Yet, the proliferation of instruments since UNCED has been problematic for governments. UNDP is leading a task force to address this emerging concern. Speth sought the views of delegations and added that capacity building for sustainable development must be a priority for multilateral technical assistance agencies and others, including NGOs. UNDP has assisted in disseminating information through its Capacity 21 programme. He highlighted the importance of sustainable agriculture and land-use planning, which is at the heart of Agenda 21 concerns about food security, rural development and women's participation.

The CSD then heard presentations on national strategies and experiences in Agenda 21 follow-up.

Bolivia: Alejandro Mercado, Under-Secretary of Development Strategy, presented Bolivia's progress report on implementing Agenda 21. UNCED sent a clear message that without environmental management, development will not be possible. He traced unsustainable policies to historical factors, notably colonization, which replaced agricultural rotation systems with "consumption abuse." Other historical factors include inefficient agricultural trade, indiscriminate exploitation of wood and pollution. Bolivia's approach to sustainable development includes commitments to: economic growth, incorporating environmental costs; rational use of natural resources; social equity and participation; recognition of cultural diversity; and governability incorporating decision-making capacity and democratization. Reforms under way address the Constitution, education, capitalization, popular participation to facilitate redistribution of political and economic power, forestry, land rights and environmental law.

Unsustainable forestry practices have resulted from an inadequate institutional model for timber resource exploitation. Among actions to be taken is a new forest law that comprehensively addresses forest ecology. Bolivia is establishing a national system of protected areas, promoting conservation of wildlife and germplasm, and managing water basins. The Pilcomayo Basin, which is shared by Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, is a subject of an inter-governmental agreement.

India: N.R. Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, described Agenda 21 implementation in India. Recent constitutional amendments have empowered local self-governing bodies to take decisions at the local level. One-third of the seats are reserved for women. India has set up a Planning Commission and National Development and Environmental Councils. India's environment is taxed by heavy industrial and commercial demands, with 50% of the country's energy needs being met through coal and fuel wood, although alternative energy sources are actively promoted. Development is carried out with due regard for the needs of local communities in forest areas. India has shifted from forest-based development to regeneration, conservation and sustainable harvesting. NGO involvement has also been key to India's sustainable agriculture practices. Despite the environmental impacts, India's green revolution has increased food production. Some of India's rural development programmes address: wage employment; water treatment; community health; rural youth training; and integrated rural development. India has over 50 environmental laws, including provisions for eco-labeling, and numerous fiscal incentives to promote sustainable development, such as 100% deductions for pollution abatement equipment.

Poland: Professor Maciej Nowicki, Adviser to the Minister of Environmental Protection, presented Poland's progress report on Agenda 21 implementation. In the transition to a free-market economy, sustainable development has become a national priority. Poland's fundamental environmental and economic issues include restoration of industrially damaged regions, preservation of pristine areas, and protection from unsustainable development. Czeslaw Wieckowski, Director of the Department of Ecological Policy, outlined national strategies for environmental conservation with the participation of civil society. Poland will have to spend more than US\$1 billion annually up to the end of the century to achieve its sustainability goal. Poland is developing an ecological education system with NGO participation. The objective of sustainable development enjoys wide political consensus, which has enabled progress over the past five years. Professor Nowicki said that the mechanisms established at the beginning of Poland's economic transition must now be assessed. Industrial production is increasing, with a stabilization in coal and steel production. Energy consumption, after a 1990-91 decrease, has stabilized over the past three years, with energy savings achieved by industry. These developments will have environmental consequences: water discharges have been reduced and protected areas have increased by 150%. Problems remain regarding the promotion of sustainable agriculture and the increase in transport use. The prevention of a water shortage resulting from climate change is also a concern. In the long term Western-style consumption will be the main obstacle to sustainability in Poland.

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Uganda: Mr. Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha, Director of Environment Protection, presented Uganda's National Environment Action Plan (NEAP), which identifies environmental problems and provides a framework to integrate environmental concerns into national development plans. The NEAP provides a legal framework for: creation of rights and obligations; environmental impact assessments; protection of fragile ecosystems; and the establishment of the National Environment Management Authority.

Another component of the NEAP is the Investment Plan, which covers: capacity building in environmental management; resource productivity; biodiversity conservation; environmental education and public awareness; and environmental health and pollution management. Action plans are being prepared for water, wetlands, forests, wildlife, biodiversity, agriculture, mining, climate change, population, drought and desertification. Raising awareness of environmental issues remains a priority, and the government requires the inclusion of environmental education in school curricula. Uganda will produce a national "State of the Environment" report every two years, and district environmental profiles are being prepared. Uganda is also cooperating with Tanzania and Kenya to solve the problem of water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria, and that while the process of formulating the action plans has progressed well, implementation remains a problem.

United Kingdom: John Stevens, Assistant Secretary, Environmental Protection Division, Department of the Environment, reported on the UK's Strategy for Sustainable Development, which looks at both economic development and environmental protection toward the year 2012. The government held consultations in preparing the strategy, including: a seminar at Oxford University; 40 consultative meetings with experts from different groups and sectors; a questionnaire on public attitudes in the *Daily Telegraph*; and consultations with other countries. The resulting strategy examines: the principles of sustainable development; the state of the environment sector-by-sector; the impact on the environment of different sectors of the economy; and different types of policy responses. Some environmental groups were disappointed that the Strategy did not set new targets or policies. The Strategy's alternative approach is to set targets that the government is committed to achieve. The Strategy identifies new indicators for sustainable development and establishes a task force with representatives from all ministries. Strategies on climate change, biodiversity, waste reduction and air quality have been developed. Three new bodies have been established to implement the strategy: the Government's Panel on Sustainable Development, the UK Round Table on Sustainable Development, and "Going for Green," a public awareness campaign.

France then presented the results of a seminar hosted by the French Commission on Sustainable Development that involved the participation of 24 sustainable development commissions in Europe. The meeting enabled representatives from national sustainable development commissions to share experiences.

Finland said that national strategies on sustainable development seem to be powerful tools to promote sustainable development. Finland's national strategy includes sectoral strategies for industry, transport, energy, forestry and agriculture. **China** described its national Agenda 21 and noted that a number of Chinese cities and provinces have their own environmental plans of action.

DAY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mark Hildebrand, UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), introduced the Day of Local Authorities and said preparations began at the second session of the CSD. The moderator, **Jeb Brugmann**, Secretary-General, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, said between 1000 and 1200 local authorities are implementing Local Agenda 21s in 26 countries. **Mayor Luis B. Guerrero-Figueroa**, Cajamarca, Peru, highlighted the need for a decentralized, participatory and democratic model for local decision-making to implement Local

Agenda 21. Expansion of local leadership has improved democracy, urban-rural communication, conservation and recovery of natural resources. **William Pearce**, Head of Strategic Planning Division, Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, Canada, said his formerly polluted municipality won an environmental achievement award in 1994. Using a consensus approach, a task force was set up to conduct consultations with local residents and organizations. He recommended sustainable development indicators that are measurable, credible and valid.

Derek Bateman, Chair, UK Local Agenda 21 Steering Group, said that 60 councils throughout the UK have committed to developing plans. The key elements are: managing and improving environmental performance; integrating sustainable development into policies; awareness-raising and education; involving the public; partnerships; measuring, monitoring and reporting; and indicators. Local Agenda 21 should be a focus for UN initiatives.

Mr. T.P. Magere, Deputy Principal Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, Tanzania, described the project for a Sustainable Dar es Salaam to improve the standard of living. Solid waste management, urban renewal, air quality, liquid waste, the integration of the informal sector into the urban economy and the coastal economy were identified as priority areas. Communities choose their own priority areas and the government provides the infrastructure. Economic structural adjustment programmes take account of social services necessary for economic recovery.

Masami Shibuya, Vice Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, introduced Agenda 21 Kanagawa, a social action programme based on cooperation between local governments, citizens, NGOs and the corporate sector. NGO, corporate and government liaison committees were created to formulate concrete programmes. Agenda 21 Kanagawa has four goals: environmentally friendly lifestyles; a society that considers the environment; a symbiotic social system; and international cooperation on the environment. The prefecture has had problems with pollution and population growth, and is planning a world Conference on Sustainable Cities for local authorities to exchange experiences and to promote environmentally friendly lifestyles.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The Bureau and the Secretariat have been working on the draft decisions to be considered by the three working groups. The first seven decisions were distributed late Tuesday afternoon: science; environment and development in decision making; trade, environment and sustainable development; demographics; financial resources and mechanisms; poverty; and major groups. One that has not yet emerged is the mandate of the intergovernmental panel on forests. The Chair asked interested delegations to submit their proposals by the end of the day Tuesday. While the draft decision on forests is expected to be considered by the working group chaired by Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha (Uganda), some anticipate the establishment of a smaller, informal group.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will hear five presentations on national experiences in integrated land management and sustainable agriculture. These include: Australia's Landcare Programme; Influence of Environmental Measures on Chilean Vegetable and Fruit Exports; Integrated Land Management and Sustainable Agriculture in Hungary; Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Indonesia; and Land Management and Sustainable Development in Morocco. In addition, look for the Secretariat to distribute copies of the remaining draft decisions.

CAPACITY 21 PRESENTATIONS: UNDP will host presentations by The Gambia and Costa Rica on their experiences with UNDP's Capacity 21 programme at 6:00 pm in Room 5.

THIRD WORLD NETWORK FORUM: Today's forum, which will take place at 1:15 pm, will be on patenting of life forms, intellectual property rights and sustainability.