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WSSD PREPCOM II HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2002

The morning Plenary to continue discussion of the Chair's *List of Issues and Proposals for Discussion* was cancelled to allow for regional consultations. Parallel afternoon sessions met to hear a panel on the role of the media in sustainable development and, in a session that lasted into the evening, to continue providing comments on the Chair's *List*.

INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

PrepCom Vice-Chairs Lars-Göran Engfeldt (Sweden) and Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria) co-chaired the discussions.

OCEANS, MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS: China, for the G-77/CHINA, suggested an integrated approach to sustainable use of fishery resources, and promotion of productivity and biodiversity of wetlands, mangroves and rainforests. Spain, for the EU, called for the establishment of a network of coastal protected areas, and monitoring of the status of oceans. Papua New Guinea, for AOSIS, urged support for the Singapore Declaration and, with AUSTRALIA, BARBADOS, FIJI, MAURITIUS, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and TUVALU, supported the contents of the "non-cluster."

TUVALU proposed a programme for the sustainability of protected areas that allows enhancement of food security, and called for the establishment of stationary anchorage facilities in lagoons and reefs. AUSTRALIA urged improvement in the national capacity to manage Exclusive Economic Zones. SOUTH AFRICA, with NEW ZEALAND and MAURITIUS, supported strategies to address over-fishing. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported deleting "unclear terms" such as global public goods and global commons. The US said effective coastal zone development depends on freshwater and healthy oceans. ECUADOR presented supplementary text on mechanisms to prevent the utilization of species illegally caught in reserves.

CANADA added improved regional cooperation, science-based assessment on the state of the oceans, and partnerships, and, supported by AUSTRALIA and the US, an ecosystem-based integrated management approach. JAPAN proposed a provision on implementing the International Maritime Organization conventions on marine safety and prevention of marine pollution. EGYPT emphasized: access of coastal countries to scientific research carried out within their national and regional marine jurisdictions; and, with NEW ZEALAND, a reaffirma-

tion of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea as the legal framework for ocean management. With ICELAND and NORWAY, he said language referencing the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Consultative Process on oceans prejudged the results of the 57th UNGA. ICELAND supported regular comprehensive assessments on the state of oceans and, with NORWAY, objected to references to global commons. NORWAY stressed compliance with current obligations, adding that marine and ocean management transcend fisheries. IRAN emphasized the launch of a global initiative on waste management and disposal, and the conduct of regional-level environmental impact assessments.

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION: This "non-cluster" comprises sub-clusters on: finance; transfer of technology; and science, education and capacity building.

Finance: China, for the G-77/CHINA, proposed references to trade as a financing instrument, mention of specific financing measures, and expansion in scope and coverage of the Highly-Indebted Poor Countries initiative. Spain, for the EU, stressed domestic resources as primary sources of sustainable development financing, national strategies for sustainable development as key instruments, and innovative mechanisms.

AUSTRALIA said discussion on finances would preempt the Monterrey Financing for Development (FfD) outcomes. Noting that the establishment of an environment fund was rejected at Rio, and the GEF had proved incapable of financing sustainable development, ZIMBABWE underscored the need for a trust fund, called for realization of ODA targets, and debt cancellation. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for targeting funds to specific purposes. INDONESIA emphasized trade and market access, carbon taxes, and debt relief and reduction. TUVALU described their national sustainable development trust fund. MEXICO proposed incorporating sustainable development considerations into private investment promotion initiatives. The US called for integrating FfD outcomes into the WSSD process, stressed sound domestic macroeconomic policies, and supported science-based decision making.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA, with AUSTRALIA, supported streamlining GEF procedures to select and fund projects. NORWAY called for reaching 0.7% of GNP for ODA, a strong focus on health, and establishing a climate for private investment. KYRGYZSTAN supported finance, including for countries with economies in transition (CEITs), and debt for sustainable development swaps.

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Transfer of Technology and Science, Education and Capacity

Building: On these issues, South Africa, for the G-77/CHINA, introduced paragraphs to address intellectual property rights, productivity, and development of regional centers of excellence for technology, and suggested a “significant allocation” of ODA to sustainable development education. Spain, for the EU, emphasized: investment in knowledge; development and application of scientific and technological sustainable development capabilities; improvement of policy and institutional frameworks at all levels; and international cooperation on science and technology in human resource capacity building. He objected to a proposal to provide developing countries access to publicly-owned environmentally-sound technologies.

The FAO emphasized capacity building in all sectoral areas, and suggested establishing a trust fund for preserving genetic resources. JAPAN suggested a new sub-cluster on information for decision making, and new paragraphs on environmental education networks and on global observing systems. ZIMBABWE called for a technology transfer framework. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for technology transfer to CEITs. Canada proposed creating a tenth major group to embrace education.

AFRICA AND DESERTIFICATION: South Africa, for the G-77/CHINA, called for separating the issue of desertification from the section on Africa, giving prominence to the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Spain, for the EU, supported the focus on Africa and initiatives led by Africa, such as NEPAD, calling for encouragement of capacity building and both North-South and South-South exchange programmes, as well as prompt ratification and implementation of the UNCCD through national action plans.

INDONESIA requested reference to “appropriate dryland” agriculture and market consideration and access for agro-industry. JAPAN, noting conditions in Asia, said the issue of sustainable development should be dealt with in a global context. The US supported the G-77/China’s proposal to highlight NEPAD, supported expansion of agricultural production and reference to public health issues of industrialization in Africa, noted that desertification is a global problem, and said the GEF should be “a,” not “the,” principal financial mechanism for UNCCD.

CANADA called for encouraging commitments that reflect the principles of NEPAD. MEXICO supported UNCCD as a high priority, noting that desertification affects different regions, including Latin America and the Caribbean. MAURITIUS supported treating desertification as a separate issue, as it is relevant to other countries, placing reference to NEPAD at the opening of the section, and noted that debt cancellation is needed to pull Africa out of economic stagnation. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted a legal issue with “proclaiming” the UNCCD as the primary tool of poverty eradication.

GOVERNANCE: On sustainable development governance, Argentina, for the G-77/CHINA, emphasized evaluating and assigning new functions to the CSD. The EU stressed national sustainable development strategies, and HUNGARY called for meaningful inclusion of other stakeholders at PrepCom III. AUSTRALIA, CANADA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, TURKEY and the US underscored sustainable development governance at the national level. SWITZERLAND suggested considering the precautionary principle alongside sustainable development governance. MEXICO emphasized adopting a long-term perspective and suggested that work on sustainable development governance start at the international level.

MEDIA PANEL

In opening, Moderator Shashi Tharoor, UN Department for Public Information, asked panelists: How can the media create public awareness and build momentum for the Summit, acknowledging that the term sustainable development is not user-friendly? How should the

media support the sustainable development agenda? Does the media only want to cover disasters and events, not “spinach journalism” — stories that are good for you?

James Laurie, Vice President of News and Current Affairs, Star TV (China), noted that the term sustainable development is rarely, if ever, uttered on television, as “it is a phrase without meaning for most people,” although there are numerous stories on elements of sustainable development. Barbara Pyle, former Vice President for Environmental Programming, Turner Broadcasting (US), stressed packaging programmes that profile people immersed in an issue rather than general topics, noting that there is less coverage for Johannesburg than there was for Rio. Simone Duarte, NY Bureau Chief, Globo TV (Brazil), shared that sustainable development is frequently covered in their broadcasts, ranging from prime time newscasts to series on environmental issues and activists and in soap operas, and noted that news is marketed differently in the US. Snuki Zikalala, Executive Editor of News, South African Broadcasting Corporation (South Africa), highlighted their monthly thematic and human interest approach to Summit coverage. Tim Hirsch, Senior Environmental Correspondent, BBC (UK), noted spinach journalism’s risk of lecturing on behavior, and confusion over the term sustainable development, which may be caused by media inattention and government inaction.

In a question and answer session, the audience queried the panel on the role of new media such as the Internet, the need for a proactive media, and the personal responsibility of journalists, and suggested various ways of engaging media in Summit coverage.

In concluding statements, panelists agreed that sustainable development would be a tough sell and is competing with many other news events, saying that a focused and tangible Johannesburg agenda will be more likely to be covered in the news. In closing, Moderator Tharoor commented that the discussion had been “unusually stimulating and insightful.” Tharoor also provided a briefing of the UN’s communications programme efforts to promote the Summit, saying numerous media representatives had indicated interest and enquired about Summit accreditation.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The controversy that has been brewing since Monday, 28 January, over the accreditation of the NGO, International Campaign for Tibet, which was left pending informal consultations due to China’s objection, seems to have come to a head. It appears likely that the PrepCom will vote on the matter Friday, as one of the regional groups is still in favor of the NGO’s accreditation. The reason for the objection is that the NGO, in its charter, calls for the independence of Tibet.

Meanwhile, South Africa held a comprehensive presentation on the logistics for the WSSD, an almost superhuman effort to settle over 65,000 participants at the Sandton Convention Center and other locations. She indicated the facilities that will be at the disposal of delegations and NGOs, parallel events, and cultural and social programmes. The security arrangements for Heads of State and Government promise to be stringent, ensuring at the same time a transparent process for participants.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will convene from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm in Conference Room 1 to hear presentations from Indonesia and South Africa on progress in the preparations for PrepCom IV and the Summit, respectively.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Delegates will meet from 3:00 – 6:00 pm in Conference Room 1 for open-ended informal consultations on sustainable development governance.