



WSSD HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 26 AUGUST 2002

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) opened today at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa. During the Opening Plenary, delegates heard statements, elected officers, and addressed organizational and procedural matters. Partnership Plenaries were convened on health and environment, and biodiversity and ecosystem management. The Main Committee met briefly to review the outcomes of the informal consultations of 24-25 August 2002. Negotiations reconvened in afternoon and evening sessions of the Vienna setting and in contact groups on means of implementation and institutional arrangements.

OPENING PLENARY

OPENING STATEMENTS: Nitin Desai, WSSD Secretary General, welcomed participants and opened the meeting. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was elected as President of the WSSD by acclamation. President Mbeki highlighted the growing gap between North and South and the impending crisis of poverty and ecological degradation. He called for a practicable and meaningful Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to fulfill the framework of Agenda 21 and emphasized the conference theme of "people, planet and prosperity." He closed by calling for a shift away from the mentality of survival of the fittest and towards human solidarity to realize sustainable development.

Desai stated that the WSSD is the last meeting in a cycle of global conferences held over the past decade. He highlighted the relevance of the WTO Doha Ministerial, the International Conference on Financing for Development, and stressed the importance of addressing social, environmental and economic problems. He underscored the severity of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the need for an integrated approach to achieving sustainable development. He called for the Plan of Implementation to be a medium-term programme for realizing States' commitments in partnership with local actors, NGOs and business.

Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director, UNEP, noted progress since Rio in achieving sustainability, but said new scientific evidence of global environmental change necessitated a quantum increase in efforts. He characterized the WSSD as a summit of implementation, accountability and partnership. Töpfer identified the root causes of global environmental degradation including pervasive poverty and inequities in the distribution of wealth, and therefore underscored the theme of "environment for development." He urged delegates to realize the dream of environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS:

Delegates adopted the provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.199/3) and the provisional agenda (A/CONF.199/1). Dele-

gates elected by acclamation 20 Vice-Presidents: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda for African States; Hungary, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for Eastern European States; Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Peru for Latin American and Caribbean States; and Belgium, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand and Norway for Western Europe and Other States. Vice-Presidents from Asian States, as well as the Rapporteur-General, will be elected after further consultations. Delegates also elected Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma (South Africa) as *ex officio* Vice-President and Emil Salim (Indonesia) as Chairperson of the Main Committee.

PARTNERSHIP PLENARIES

Minister Zuma presided over and Jan Pronk, Special Envoy of the WSSD Secretary-General, moderated the two Partnership Plenaries on health and the environment, and biodiversity and ecosystem management. The Plenaries included presentations by experts and a discussion among a panel of resource persons, followed by comments by States.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: In the opening presentation, David Nabarro, World Health Organization, stated that improved health is crucial to poverty alleviation and sustainable development. He highlighted key objectives, including: ensuring that health systems respond to public needs; broadening inter-sectoral involvement; and securing additional resources. He suggested that partnerships could focus on: reducing poverty and malnutrition; eradicating major diseases; improving access to affordable health services; and improving monitoring, evaluation and capacities for assessing risks.

Discussion among the representatives of Major Groups highlighted, *inter alia*: the need for additional resources; existing partnerships among UN agencies; the need for concerted action at the national level; the importance of reproductive health, population dynamics and gender; and the importance of indigenous knowledge. Experts called for: anticipation of emerging health threats; cross-sectoral cooperation (e.g., cooperation with researchers, utilities, educators and local governments); and attention to childhood health through vaccination, prevention and education programs. It was noted that an additional US\$30 billion could save eight million lives and result in a six-fold return on the investment.

INDONESIA and SENEGAL stressed the need to address emerging and re-emerging diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, and HIV/AIDS, with BANGLADESH highlighting air pollution. NORWAY urged a 2015 target for adequate sanitation. The WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION noted that health is a question of human rights, including access to proper sanitation, education, and safe and affordable health services. CUBA offered technical services to

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help combat *inter alia* HIV/AIDS, and with SWAZILAND called for further financial support. SWAZILAND also questioned "loans for health" as these could mortgage a country's future. The EU highlighted its pledge of US\$ 1 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, while urging developing countries to mobilize their own resources and develop national policies and budgetary frameworks.

FINLAND urged preventive measures to tackle the problem of HIV/AIDS, such as safe sex, especially for men, and production and distribution of condoms. A representative of the TRADE UNIONS stressed improved integration of general and occupational health. SOUTH AFRICA proposed concrete commitments to: development strategies; changes in international trade practices that prevent access to affordable drugs; investment in research for new drugs and vaccines; and meeting the funding targets of the Global Fund.

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT:

Peter Schei, Special Advisor to UNEP, stressed the importance of linkages between the different WEHAB areas (water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity). He highlighted the values of biodiversity and identified numerous challenges to implementation relating to: knowledge and information; integration of biodiversity into markets; human and institutional capacity; biodiversity financing; technology development and transfer; globalization and biodiversity; benefit sharing; and capacity development. He proposed indicative targets in areas such as sector integration; involvement of local and indigenous people; coordination of environmental agreements; capacity building; and reversing the loss of biodiversity.

Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), noted the existence of political, economic, technical and institutional barriers to implementation. He identified the need to ensure *inter alia* that: biodiversity is mainstreamed into relevant national sectoral and cross-sectoral plans; global trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive; quantifiable targets are established; all stakeholders are involved; adequate financial resources are available; and benefits arising from biodiversity are shared equitably within and between nations.

The representatives of Major Groups underscored the need to expedite action on biodiversity protection and to implement what was agreed in Rio and in subsequent international agreements. They supported better coordination among multilateral agreements and with the WTO, as well as national and local policies and development models incorporating sound ecosystem management and poverty alleviation. Speakers also highlighted: equity concerns; public awareness; benefit- and burden-sharing; employment opportunities that do not overexploit ecosystems; fair trade rules; sufficient scientific knowledge to act; indigenous and local communities' knowledge; involvement of all generations; and a focus on ecosystem over species protection.

DENMARK, on behalf of the EU, noted that in 2001, the EU heads of state agreed to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010, and called for the WSSD to adopt proposed targets on stopping natural resource loss (2015) and biodiversity loss (2010). The UK, NORWAY and the CZECH REPUBLIC also called for time-bound targets on natural resources protection. The CZECH REPUBLIC also stressed the incorporation of indicators and the value of ecosystem services in the design of biodiversity policies. ECUADOR stressed that environmental protection should be part of candidates' platforms within national elections. INDIA highlighted the importance of monetary compensation for genetic resources, and with BENIN and GABON called for capacity building. BENIN and UGANDA emphasized that poverty is one of the biggest problems for biodiversity and noted the potential of GEF funding. JAPAN supported increased data collection and sharing, including through ecological networks at the national, regional and local levels.

MAIN COMMITTEE

Chair Salim (Indonesia) opened the Committee's first meeting, recalling the achievements of Bali and noting the remaining areas of contention, namely globalization, trade, finance, the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and time-bound targets. Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa), Chair of the pre-Summit informal consultations, reported on progress made over the previous two days, highlighting that agreement had been reached on some text concerning, *inter alia*, indigenous people, fisheries, disaster management and Africa. He further highlighted energy and climate as areas that might benefit from assistance at the political level. Salim expressed hope that the work of the Main Committee would be completed by the evening of 27 August.

Editor's Note: Coverage of the negotiations ended at 10:00 pm.

VIENNA SETTING: Delegates met in the Vienna setting in afternoon and evening sessions.

Poverty Eradication: In the afternoon, the group heard reports from informal consultations on a world solidarity fund (6(b)) and a time-bound target on sanitation (7 and 7alt), both of which required further time for deliberations. Regarding assistance for employment opportunities and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) the group agreed to wording on increasing income-generating opportunities taking into account the ILO Declaration (9(b)).

Changing Unsustainable Patterns of Consumption and Production: Informal consultations continued on sustainable consumption and production (14), the life cycle approach (14(c)), and eco-labeling (14(e)). Consultations on chemicals (22 and 22(h)) continued focusing on: precaution, suggesting referral to discussions on the Rio Principles; and a time-bound target, suggesting a larger discussion on all targets. The group reached consensus on language regarding Agenda 21, highlighting the renewed commitment, as advanced in Agenda 21, to the sound management of chemicals.

Protecting and Managing the Natural Resource Base: A revised formulation for the section's chapeau (23) was circulated with most delegates supporting a new reference to minerals. Most supported inclusion of minerals, while significant disagreement continued over inclusion of the target, ecosystem approach and precaution. Delegates also debated whether to reinsert language on sectoral integration, and the relevance of environmental agreements. Regarding fisheries, the group discussed a package deleting reference to "equitable" (30) and inserting additional language regarding the rights, interests and/or special requirements of developing coastal states. Several delegations called for clarification on whether there are specific rights regarding fisheries within existing international law, stating that new language on rights would set a major precedent. With differing interpretations of PrepCom IV's output, delegates debated punctuation affecting whether a 2012 target referred to development of representative networks, or more generally to tools addressing the ecosystem approach, destructive fishing practices and marine protected areas (31(c)).

Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS): The group agreed on new text to assist SIDS in delimiting and managing coastal areas and exclusive economic zones, including the continental shelf beyond 200 miles from coastal baselines (52(c)).

Sustainable Development in Africa: Delegates agreed to chapeau text acknowledging that Africa's efforts to achieve sustainable development have been hindered by conflicts, insufficient investment, limited market access opportunities and supply-side constraints, unsustainable debt burdens, historically declining ODA levels and the impact of HIV/AIDS (56). Language on human rights and fundamental freedoms remained contentious, with delegates debating whether all or universally agreed human rights should be protected (56(a)). Delegates deferred discussion on support for strategic environmental assessment (56(h)), as this paragraph was part of a package proposal that had not been final-



ized, and on whether to reference other energy-related paragraphs in text supporting Africa's efforts to implement NEPAD's energy access targets (56 (j(i))).

CONTACT GROUP ON MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION: The contact group, facilitated by John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), continued negotiations on finance and trade, based on a revised version of a paper tabled by Ashe on 24 August. *The contact group was scheduled to reconvene at 10:00 pm to consider a draft section on globalization.*

Finance: On external debt (9), a group of countries proposed that debt relief measures should be pursued vigorously and expeditiously, including within the Paris and London Clubs and other relevant fora. A new subparagraph, encouraging donor countries to take steps to ensure that resources provided for debt relief do not detract from ODA, was proposed but not agreed.

Trade: A proposal to remove a reference to the January 2005 date for the conclusion of the Doha negotiations was opposed during a discussion on the fulfillment of commitments (12). A group of countries proposed text calling for the elimination of unilateral trade sanctions used to reinforce the environmental agenda (12(b)). Delegates could not agree on whether they should "work towards," "strongly encourage" or "commit" themselves to the objective of providing duty-free and quota-free access for exports from all least developed countries (13). A country group proposed text on the establishment of an international mechanism to stabilize market prices for coping with instability of commodity prices and declining terms of trade in a paragraph on commodity-dependent countries (15).

On environmentally harmful and/or trade-distorting subsidies, a country group explained that it had serious concerns (17(b)*alt*). The group also proposed a new subparagraph on supporting the work of the ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension (17(c)).

A proposal to delete a reference to sustainability impact assessments was opposed by a number of countries (17(d)). Several delegations supported a suggestion to consider sustainable development in existing and new regional trade cooperation agreements (19(a)*alt*). A proposal to delete a subparagraph (19(c)) on expanding domestic and international markets for organic products was resisted. One country called for "due attention to the need for quality control compliance and preservation of consumer confidence." Another delegation offered support for voluntary market-based initiatives consistent with the WTO (19(c)*alt*).

CONTACT GROUP ON INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: The contact group on Chapter X of the draft Plan of Implementation, co-chaired by Lars-Göran Engfeldt (Sweden) and Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria), met in afternoon and evening sessions. The contact group reviewed outstanding issues following a late-night debate during the Vienna-style negotiations on 25 August, when a group of countries insisted on addressing Chapter X as a whole. However, understanding was reached that delegations would respect work being done in other consultations on paragraphs from Chapter X.

Several paragraphs remain unresolved on: the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (120); the rule of law and respect for human rights (121(d)*bis* and 121(d)*bis alt*); encouraging partnerships by international institutions (138(b) and (c)); paragraph 139, which focuses, *inter alia*, on the need for a permanent financial mechanism for the CCD; on the link between the role of ECOSOC in the follow-up to the WSSD outcome and the Monterrey Consensus (126(f)); guidelines on access to information and public participation (151); and the interrelationship between human rights and environmental protection (152).

A number of delegations were not ready to discuss the text on finance and trade (122(b) and (c)) because it was being addressed in the contact group on means of implementation. There was broad acceptance of the provision on the social dimension (122(g)), but

final agreement was held up pending the outcome of discussion in the contact group, in the same paragraph, of ILO conventions on core labor standards, the latter issue being taken up in paragraph 9(b) in the Main Committee.

Discussion was inconclusive on language regarding an enabling international economic environment, since the relevant paragraph (123) was originally proposed by a group of countries at PrepCom IV to balance text on good domestic governance (146). The Chair indicated that Koen Davidse (the Netherlands) would facilitate on-going consultations on this issue. Davidse may produce a text on 27 August.

Language was agreed on taking steps to formulate national strategies for sustainable development, to begin implementing them by 2005 (145(b)).

IN THE CORRIDORS I

Concerns have been voiced that negotiations over the Kyoto Protocol ratification might prove to be one of the crunch issues at the high level deliberations. Some delegates have suggested that referring this sensitive political issue to Ministers or Heads of State, as suggested in the Main Committee, may result in weakening existing language, while others believe that a push for stronger language could be used as leverage for commitments on targets and timeframes for renewable energy systems. With the UNFCCC COP-8 convening in October, some delegates have suggested that elimination of all references to climate change might be preferable to any public back-pedaling on commitments.

IN THE CORRIDORS II

There has also been a significant buzz on participation issues. Some developing country delegations have expressed concern regarding their restricted access to the floor in the Vienna-style setting, noting that while developing countries are required to speak with one voice, most developed countries have liberally made interventions on their own behalf. Others wondered whether divergent country voices from the G-77/China would weaken or strengthen the position of developing countries.

WSSD Secretary-General Desai's extemporaneous speech in the opening plenary was well-received as it set the tone for the Summit and outlined a framework committing both governments and civil society to a practicable path for sustainable development. Many major group participants welcomed President Mbeki's statement on the need to include non-state actors in the Summit's proceedings. However, limited space within the convention center and the number of NGO representatives far exceeding the number of access passes have raised fears regarding their ability to participate. Those outside eagerly awaited a rumored announcement on new participation arrangements allowing them into the building on a first come first serve basis.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PARTNERSHIP PLENARIES: Partnership Plenaries on agriculture at 10:00 am and cross-sectoral issues at 3:00 pm will be held in the Plenary Hall.

MAIN COMMITTEE: The Main Committee will meet at 10:00 am in Exhibition 1 to continue negotiations on the draft Plan of Implementation.

CONTACT GROUPS: The contact group on institutional arrangements will resume negotiations at 10:00 am in Committee Room 5. Look for a new text on good governance. Check the Journal for time and venue of the next session of the contact group on means of implementation.



Ubuntu Community Kraal



The Ubuntu Community Kraal, a community space, opened yesterday. It is a space to spotlight sustainable development success stories won through community-level action and to encourage knowledge-sharing and interaction with leaders from governments, civil society, the media, NGOs and other communities.

At the Kraal, communities are addressing key issues of sustainable livelihoods and poverty-environment linkages, demonstrating in the heart of the WSSD that communities in developing countries are taking positive action.

The *Equator Initiative*, UNDP, the UN Foundation, Government of Canada and many other committed partners support this space, recognizing the strategically critical importance of enhancing community voices at the WSSD.

The weekly agenda highlights the WEHAB priorities (water, energy, health, agriculture, biodiversity)

Tuesday - Energy

Thursday -Sustainable Community Health

Friday - Agriculture

Saturday - Community Perspectives on the Millennium Development Goals

Monday - Capacity-Building for Communities

Tuesday - Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management

For more information on *Equator Initiative*, the *Equator Prize 2002* finalists, and Kraal partners, please visit www.equatorinitiative.org or contact Sean Southey at 072 536 8596 or sean.southey@undp.org

ENERGY FOR PEOPLE

Venue: Community Kraal

Ubuntu Village

Tuesday, August 27th

Full Day Event

- 09:30 Community Dialogue: Energy and Local Development Priorities
- 11:15 Energy Options for Generating Opportunities
- 12:30 Expanding Partnerships at the Community Level:
GEF Small Grants Programme
- 14:15 Technology Demonstrations: Solar- PV, LP Gas, Multipurpose Platform
- 15:30 Energy and Women: Panel Discussion
- 17:00 Global Village Energy Partnership Presentation
- 18:30 Energy Policies for Increasing Access to Services

NEW: UNDP will launch its new publication "**Energy for Sustainable Development: A Policy Agenda**", with editors T.B. Johansson and J. Goldemberg at 2:00 pm in the Ubuntu Village Conference Room B