

UNCSD INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2012

During the morning, representatives from governments, the UN and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations presented opening comments on the zero draft. During the afternoon, delegates began negotiations on the first two sections of the draft.

COMMENTS ON THE ZERO DRAFT

Many countries said the outcome should be more balanced, ambitious and action-oriented, but said the current text could be used as a basis for negotiations.

ISRAEL stressed water and technology, and called for greater emphasis on green agriculture and education for sustainable development, particularly for youth. WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS opposed a green economy based on voluntary measures by the private sector, lamented the lack of reference to inequality, and urged agreement on a financial transaction tax. SWITZERLAND called for: concrete and time-bound measures and actions; more specificity on moving toward a greener economy and guidance on the proposed SDGs; and more information on the proposed compendium of commitments. LOCAL AUTHORITIES urged more progress on sustainable urban development and highlighting the role of local governments in the IFSD.

NICARAGUA called for: a technology transfer mechanism; changes to the current consumption and production model; reforming the international financial architecture; and a new ethic of sustainable development that promotes social and environmental justice. SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES emphasized: prompt and reliable delivery of previously pledged development assistance; tailoring the outcome to the needs of developing countries; and a people-centered approach. VENEZUELA stressed: recognition of fossil fuels as important in the energy mix; guaranteeing access to energy for developing countries; secure access to food, agriculture, and democracy; and developed country compliance with, *inter alia*, financial and technology transfer.

BRAZIL said: the outcome document and Rio+20 must be relevant at the multilateral, national and civil society levels; the SDGs should be a tool to mainstream sustainable development at all levels; there should be reports on sustainable development, such as the global environment outlook; sustainable development should be integrated into national development planning; and civil society participation should be integrated into sustainable development discussions and implementation. UNEP suggested consolidating the various “frameworks for action” in the zero draft into a single section. UNDP urged a strong outcome on energy and a cross-cutting approach to empowering women

and girls. The International Labor Organization said upcoming meetings of its Governing Body and its Conference will both take decisions related to UNCSD topics.

MALDIVES emphasized: climate change; oceans and fisheries issues; sustainable energy; support to SIDS; and gender equality and empowerment of women. COSTA RICA said the MDGs should be a process for achieving sustainable development, and synergies among conventions, including the chemicals and wastes and environmental conventions, should be ensured. BOLIVIA underscored harmony with nature through a holistic development approach, and expressed concern that green economy promotes markets, payments for environmental services and a weak role for the state. He opposed reference to structural adjustment, stressed the role of indigenous peoples, and welcomed the proposal for SDGs. NGOs called for, *inter alia*: adoption of a new treaty to enshrine Principle 10 at all levels; a convention on corporate environmental and social responsibility; a SDC; and transforming UNEP into a specialized agency with full participation of major groups in decision making and implementation.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES called for: recognizing culture as the 4th pillar of sustainable development; and references to “green economies” to reflect the multiple values provided by local economies. CHILDREN AND YOUTH emphasized: youth as a key player in a green economy; gender equality and reproductive rights of women; upgrading UNEP to a specialized agency; and an Ombudsperson for Future Generations. SAUDI ARABIA highlighted the right to development and eradicating poverty as a top priority to achieve sustainable economic growth. LIECHTENSTEIN underlined, *inter alia*, gender equality, and links between the green economy, the rule of law and economic opportunity. He supported upgrading UNEP as a specialized agency and developing a global registry on sustainable development.

The PHILIPPINES said Rio+20 should be linked to the attainment of the MDGs by 2015 and should incorporate a framework for sustainable development that includes disaster and climate risk management. The UN Population Fund said the text should refer to universal access to family planning and reproductive health. The UN Industrial Development Organization suggested defining appropriate indicators and targets for greening efforts with energy at the forefront of the debate, as well as strengthening UN issue-based cooperation, such as UN-Energy and UN-Water. The International Telecommunications Union emphasized the role of information and communications technology as part of the sustainable development infrastructure. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO supported launching a process toward developing SDGs once their relationship with the MDGs is clearly defined and strengthening UNEP in key areas. SLOVAKIA requested the

Secretariat to provide a proposal on how ECOSOC could align its work with the goals of sustainable development. GHANA called for: recognizing institutions as the 4th pillar of sustainable development; redirecting resources to facilitate the transition to a green economy; stronger language on research and knowledge management, and science and technology, and their links with policy; and mainstreaming gender issues. TURKEY urged focus on country differentiation and poverty eradication in rural areas.

FRANCE stressed adopting measures for public participation globally before, during and after Rio+20, and said it will host a conference on international environmental governance on 31 January. ICELAND underscored engaging civil society and addressing, *inter alia*, marine environment, renewable energy and gender equality. WOMEN stressed, *inter alia*: adding a section on health and wellbeing; addressing land, energy and food as key sectors; a social protection floor; global implementation of Rio Principle 10; and an international independent technology assessment and monitoring body. The International Organization for Migration, also for the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, highlighted the need for: a sustainable development framework that includes practical measures to reduce natural hazards risks; referencing the Hyogo Framework of Action; and mainstreaming migration into disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature emphasized: public participation; accountability; a close link between the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the proposed knowledge platform; and phasing out subsidies.

NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DRAFT

During the afternoon discussion of proposed amendments to the first two sections of the zero draft, Co-Chair Kim Sook noted that the Preamble/Stage Setting and Renewing Political Commitment sections had grown from 2.5 pages to 31 pages.

On preambular text on heads of state and government, the EU, with the US, proposed referring to representatives of the peoples of the world. The US proposed deleting reference to heads of state and government.

On eradicating poverty, and economic stability and growth that benefits all, the G-77/CHINA added social equity and environmental sustainability. The EU suggested paragraphs on, *inter alia*, good governance and the rule of law at national and international levels.

On accelerating progress in achieving internationally agreed development goals, the G-77/CHINA, supported by the EU, proposed language reaffirming commitment to achieving such goals.

In a paragraph on commitment, many delegates said they did not understand a reference to "life support systems." MEXICO proposed text indicating that carbon-intensive economic development is not sustainable.

On the objective and themes for the conference, the EU proposed text that makes more explicit the vision embedded in the main themes of the conference, including the necessity to take action at global, regional, national and local levels, and ensure better policy coherence. The EU also proposed text highlighting that the cost of inaction outweighs the cost of action and will promote sustainability.

On renewing political commitment and the subsection on reaffirming the Rio principles, the G-77/CHINA proposed adding a paragraph on the importance of inclusive, transparent and effective multilateralism, and full and fair participation of developing countries.

On text reaffirming commitment to past agreements, the EU proposed adding the International Conference on Population. SWITZERLAND proposed adding reference to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, among others.

On text that refers to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the US and Japan proposed deleting reference to specific principles. The G-77/CHINA

proposed referencing additional past agreements, and urging countries to implement their commitments under the Rio Conventions, among others.

On text regarding progress and change since 1992, the EU added text on research and technological development. The G-77/CHINA added text on increasing gaps between developed and developing countries. AUSTRALIA said the text should recognize that hundreds of millions have been lifted out of poverty. SWITZERLAND proposed text on progress in protecting the ozone layer and regulating international trade in endangered species and environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes, among others.

The EU proposed new text on impacts of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production on capacity of ecosystems and on population dynamics. The G-77/CHINA proposed text on lack of implementation and integration and their impacts on global challenges, including climate change.

On national commitment to sustainable development, the G-77/CHINA proposed text that highlights efforts undertaken to integrate sustainable development in national policies and plans. The EU proposed text recognizing examples of progress and leadership in sustainable development. SWITZERLAND suggested text that highlights the challenge of coherence between social, environmental and economic policies.

On barriers and gaps in implementing internationally agreed commitments, the EU said the original text was too negative. The G-77/CHINA proposed additional paragraphs addressing: poverty; development assistance; consumption and production patterns; current major challenges and crises; and unemployment.

On eradicating poverty and hunger, CANADA and the US said G-77/China-proposed text on self-determination and foreign occupation is not appropriate for this document.

On the challenges facing various groups of countries, the G-77/CHINA proposed replacing it with separate paragraphs addressing the needs of LDCs, SIDS, African countries, middle-income countries and landlocked countries, and a paragraph on trade. BELARUS and MEXICO supported references to middle-income countries. The EU, supported by the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, added a new paragraph on international efforts to improve aid effectiveness and promote effective development cooperation. SWITZERLAND added reference to mountainous developing states. NEW ZEALAND supported an EU-proposed reference to countries in conflict.

On a paragraph on diversity, the EU underscored cultural and natural diversity. The G-77/CHINA proposed paragraphs on: a holistic approach in order to live in harmony with nature; the role of intellectual property rights and their impact on technology transfer; and unilateral sanctions affecting the ability to achieve sustainable development.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Following a very well attended morning briefing on the High level Panel on Global Sustainability's main outcomes, many were looking forward to the launch of the final report of the Panel on Monday, 30 January, during the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Delegates highlighted the Panel's relevance to the UNCSD, with one noting that "many of the Panel's proposals mirror our ongoing negotiations of the zero draft." Some also indicated they are looking forward to Friday's lunchtime informal consultations on the SDGs, and hoping to gain more clarity on the process forward. "We support the idea of developing SDGs," said one, "but we are anticipating intense negotiations when it comes to exactly what specific topics will be included in the goals themselves."

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the UNCSD informal consultations will be available on Monday, 30 January 2012, at: <http://www.iisd.ca/uncsd/idzod/>

UNCSD-L: A mailing list for news and announcements related to preparations for the UNCSD, moderated by IISD: <http://uncsd.iisd.org/about-the-uncsd-l-mailing-list/>