

## **Chairman's summary of the discussion on the comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as well as the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21**

### **A. General**

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development commenced its Second Preparatory Session on 28 January 2002. Delegates, representatives of intergovernmental organizations, UN Specialized Agencies, major groups and observers heard opening statements by the Chairman and Mr. Nitin Desai, Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. The opening meeting adopted the agenda and considered other organizational matters. The Commission acting as the preparatory committee approved the applications for accreditation of a number of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. The application of one non-governmental organization could not be approved and was referred for further consultation among delegations for consideration at a later time.

2. The Commission, acting as the preparatory committee, began consideration of the main item of work on its agenda the, "comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as well as the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21." In considering this item, the Commission had before it, the:

- (a) Results of national assessments;
- (b) Results of sub-regional and regional preparatory meetings
- (c) Progress reports or results of intergovernmental processes relevant to the Summit;
- (d) Report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of Agenda 21 and other background information from the Secretariat;
- (e) Background documents and other information and inputs from relevant international organizations, UN Specialized Agencies, international financial institutions and the Global Environment Facility;
- (f) Contributions of major groups, the summary of which is reflected in a following section of this report.

### **B. Intergovernmental Meetings and Processes**

3. The Commission heard reports on a number of intergovernmental meetings and processes.

4. The representative of Germany presented the results of the International Conference on Freshwater (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/10), held in Bonn, Germany, from 3-7 December 2001, and highlighted Conference recommendations directed to the WSSD. Representatives of Iceland presented two reports: the first on the Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/3), held on 1-4 October 2001; and the second on the results of the UNEP organized Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/15), held in Montreal, Canada, on 26-30 November 2001. The representative of Canada presented the report of the International Pollution Prevention Summit (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/2), which was held in Montreal, Canada, on 18-20 October 2001, and elaborated on substantive outcomes that included creation of a Global Information Network and action plans.
5. The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification presented a report issued by the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the Convention (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/11) held from 2-13 October 2001 in Geneva, Switzerland, which contains conclusions and recommendations on future steps in the implementation of the Convention, and a political statement addressing the poverty and environment nexus. The Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) presented the *Marrakech Ministerial Declaration*, issued by the Seventh Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/4), held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 29 October to 9 November 2001.
6. UNESCO presented the resolution of the Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO that was convened on 10-11 December 2001 (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/Misc.1). It outlines the IOC's commitments to the WSSD and to IOC's efforts to raise awareness of the importance of oceans. The Executive Secretary of IOC discussed the deliberations and outcomes of the Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10, held in Paris, France, from 3-7 December 2001.
7. The Executive Director of UNEP presented a progress report on international environmental governance (IEG), noting that five meetings had taken place, with the last scheduled for 12 February 2002 in Cartagena, Colombia. He described UNEP's inputs for WSSD, and said that the decision on IEG by the Seventh Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council scheduled for 13-15 February 2002 in Cartagena will be reported to the third preparatory session of WSSD.
8. The representative of Austria presented reports of the first and second Global Forums on Sustainable Energy (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/14). The first Forum was held in December 2000 and addressed issues pertinent to energy for sustainable development, while the second, held in October 2001, addressed energy technologies for rural development.

### **C. Reports of Regional Preparatory Committees**

9. The Commission heard reports on the outcomes of the various regional preparatory meetings held during the course of 2001.

#### (1) Europe and North America

10. The Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations represented the Chair of the European Regional Preparatory Committee held in Geneva, Switzerland from 24 to 25 September 2001, to report on its outcome. The Ministers of the UN ECE region urged the Summit to promote a better integration between policies for poverty eradication, environmental protection and economic development. The Ministers committed themselves to seek enhanced cooperation and solidarity with developing countries based on mutual responsibility for combating poverty and promoting sustainable development. They recognized that efforts to generate resources through domestic means and private financial flows must be supplemented by debt relief and official development assistance. They expect the UN Conference on Financing for Development to produce clear strategies and actions in this direction.

11. To make globalization work for sustainable development, the UN ECE region is determined to integrate the poorest countries into the global economy by removing trade distortions, giving duty-free and quota-free market access, and by encouraging investments in the least developed countries.

12. They suggested that the Summit should launch a specific mechanism to carry forward the shared objectives for sustainable development in a spirit of global partnership. In this regard, many UN ECE countries expressed a wish to seek to achieve a “global deal on sustainable development” in Johannesburg to ensure a new balance between global economic, social and environmental development.

#### (2) Africa

13. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia who chaired the African Regional Preparatory Committee held in Nairobi, Kenya from 15 to 18 October 2001, presented its outcome. The African Ministers emphasized that the lack of implementation of Agenda 21 was further compounded by globalization, which had increased the poverty incidence in the region. Eight main areas of concern were highlighted: obstacles to exports from developing countries to developed countries, energy at affordable prizes, the promotion micro finance, access to better health services and the problem of HIV/AIDS, sustainable rural and agricultural development, including food security, access to safe water and sanitation, vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental risks, and improved access to education. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the major limiting factor for the effective implementation of Agenda 21 has been the lack of necessary means of implementation, particularly an inadequate flow of finances. The region was also calling for an appropriate evaluation of debt relief measures, taking into account the special needs of the continent.

### (3) West Asia Region

14. The report of the West Asia/Arab Regional Preparatory Committee held in Cairo, Egypt on 24-25 October 2001 and related meetings was presented by the Minister of Tourism and Environment of Yemen who chaired the meeting. It was noted that Arab countries remain committed to work to achieve sustainable development goals within the framework of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Achievements made by Arab countries toward achieving sustainable development were noted in the areas of health and education and by increases in per capita income, improved urban services, reduced illiteracy rates, increased participation by women in education and employment, reduction in the population growth rate, increased life expectancy, strengthening environment and development institutions, better legislation, capacity building and increased participation in implementation of conventions and agreements as well as better cooperation at the regional level.

15. However, challenges exist for further progress toward achieving sustainable development in the region. They include escalating poverty and, despite recent improvements, high population growth rates and migration to urban areas. There is a need for integrated policies with regard to economic reform, improving general and vocational education, creation of jobs, conservation of natural resources, enhancement of social security, solutions to debt burden faced by many countries of the region and strengthening the role of the private sector.

16. The Arab Ministers stressed the need for developed countries to increase ODA to 0.7% of GNP, augment funds available to GEF and encourage foreign direct investment in support of sustainable development.

### (4) Latin America and the Caribbean

17. The Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, presented the results of the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Committee held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 23 and 24 October 2001, on behalf of its Chair.

18. The main outcome of the Conference was a document entitled "Rio de Janeiro Platform of Action on the Road to Johannesburg 2002" which reaffirms the principles and objectives set forth in the Rio Declaration and Development and Agenda 21. The Platform highlights, among others: (1) The need to lay down the foundations for a new ethic that will serve as the cornerstone of sustainable development; (2) The need for greater integration between social, economic and environmental policies; (3) The importance of strengthening institutions at all levels through exchange of experiences, best practices and knowledge; (4) The importance of meeting the targets for ODA and securing additional resources through greater private sector involvement and enhancement of GEF, (5) The need to ensure market access for developing countries' products; (6) The importance of ensuring that the diffusion of scientific knowledge, the promotion of research and the development of clean technologies serve the needs of sustainable development, particularly in developing countries; (7) The design of a strategy for the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems; (8) The definition of a core set of data and indicators, including a vulnerability index, and (9) The need to diversify energy supply and foster energy efficiency.

#### (5) Asia and the Pacific Region

19. A representative of the Minister of Environment of Cambodia, who chaired the Asia Pacific Regional Preparatory Committee, presented the key outcomes of the high-level meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 27-29 November 2001.

20. The main outcome from the meeting was the *Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific* which includes key issues and priorities for sustainable development in the region, many which are multi-sectoral and crosscutting, embracing the environmental, economic and social spheres. The Platform also reflected the results of the regional roundtable and sub-regional meetings.

21. The Platform stressed the importance of countries in the region strengthening their economies, reforming their public sectors and enhancing good governance, including education and healthcare systems, decentralization of power, indicator systems and targets for monitoring sustainable development. At the regional/sub-regional level, the Platform recognized the importance of ESCAP in implementation, coordination and monitoring of Agenda 21. Among implementation mechanisms at the global level the Platform stressed: the fulfillment of global commitments made at UNCED; better utilization of MEAs; improved efforts towards reaching ODA targets; enhanced capacity for effective debt management; good governance at the international level; and elimination of trade barriers in order to improve market access for developing countries.

#### (6) Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

22. The Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, on behalf of the Small Island Developing States reported on the meeting of the Alliance of Small island States (AOSIS), reported on the outcomes of the regional preparatory meetings as they related to SIDS, capacity building needs, the role of civil society, adaptations to climate change and the Barbados Programme of Action.

23. The isolation and vulnerability of SIDS were emphasized in a number of presentations on the results of regional preparatory meetings. Key issues mentioned included, *inter alia*, remoteness, geographical dispersion, natural disasters, climate change, ecological fragility, exposure to economic shocks, small internal markets and limited resources endowments.

24. Some regional platforms reaffirmed the Declaration of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States approved in Barbados in 1994 and the sub-regional conventions and agreements which followed the 1992 Rio Summit. They also called for a comprehensive review of the BPoA in 2004.

## **D. Reports of Agency Heads**

25. The Commission heard from the heads of United Nations agencies and organizations regarding their assessments of the challenges facing the Johannesburg Summit and possible contributions that their respective organizations could make to the Summit and the achievement of sustainable development.

26. The Executive Director of Habitat reported that the main challenge for Habitat at the WSSD is the promotion of sustainable urbanization. Better articulation of an integrated and coordinated strategy to advance the Habitat Agenda will be an important contribution to the WSSD process. To achieve this, Habitat proposes a two-pronged approach. One will be the need to articulate effective strategies for preventive measures to support sustainable urbanization. The other is to adopt effective adaptive strategies, programmes, policies and concrete projects to deal with reality in the cities.

27. Habitat's contribution to WSSD is based on a partnership approach that will allow for a unified and coordinated input. Current key partners with whom Habitat is jointly preparing for the WSSD include local authorities, the World Bank, UNITAR, UNEP and WHO. A series of meetings are also scheduled in preparation for the Summit and a coordinated thematic cluster on the Habitat Agenda will be worked out during the preparations.

28. The Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) emphasized that the challenge for the Johannesburg Summit is to provide a results oriented focus to sustainable development. In the last 10 years, the UNDP, particularly through its Capacity 21 Programme, has concentrated on cross-cutting issues of capacity development in terms of institution-building and human development at the country level. The main disappointment with Capacity 21 Programme has been the lack of sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of developing countries. A much stronger mandate and additional financial resources would be needed to further capacity-building efforts. No single agency can promote capacity building alone. Although UNDP was tasked with Chapter 37 of Agenda 21, it has always worked in close partnership with others. UNDP promoted integrative programmes and an advocacy approach in areas such as sustainable energy development for the poor. The Administrator saw a clear need to obtain public support for the Millennium goals including that of eradicating poverty by 2015 as well as the financing for development process that aims for changes in international financial architecture, something essential to Johannesburg Summit. UNDP would continue to pursue integrative approaches in partnerships with other concerned agencies and organizations as well as civil society.

29. The Secretary of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) indicated that the main challenges for the World Summit on Sustainable Development are issues related to climate change and the protection of earth life support systems. To ensure protection of life support systems, including the atmosphere, efforts must be increased to control pollution and to monitor the accumulation of green house gases, sea level rise, degradation of coastal areas, adverse effects of pollution on small island developing states (SIDS), the weather and the hydrological cycle. Referring to the Millennium Assembly goal of reducing poverty by half by 2015, he noted that the state of the oceans, availability of freshwater, demands of a growing world population,

food production, soil erosion and desertification all have serious ramifications on poverty. He stressed the importance of the role of science and technology in understanding the impact of climate change on sustainable development and the need for effective policies. The Secretary-General stressed that today's path of development is not sustainable and pointed to the need for a new paradigm of scientific investigation that links science and technology to its impact on society and that recognizes multidimensional interactions and impacts on human. He indicated that WMO would work on promoting this new approach in its overall efforts to promote sustainable development as well as continue its role of providing advice to countries.

30. As part of its contribution to WSSD, WMO will strive to enhance monitoring capacity for observations of weather and climate, meteorological and related services, natural disasters, ozone levels, sea level rise and assessments of climate change. To reduce poverty by half and to achieve sustainable development critical needs include clean water and sanitation facilities. WMO's monitoring and assessment activities will help ensure that impoverished people receive these essential services.

31. The Executive Director of UNEP outlined four criteria for a successful World Summit: concrete action; partnerships, especially with civil society; responsive prosperity, to overcome poverty and change consumption patterns; and integration. He emphasized the Millennium Declaration as a basis for further work and partnerships. UNEP's contributions to these efforts would include, *inter alia*: (1) Assessments, early warning and monitoring, with examples being the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, and the global water assessment; (2) Capacity-building, through, for example, the coordinating centres established for the Global Environmental Outlook report; (3) Technology and technology transfer, through promoting cleaner production, and water-related technology; (4) Health and the environment; (5) Environment and food security, including links to genetically modified organisms and biotechnology; (6) Globalization and trade (7) Diversity – not just biodiversity, but also diverse cultural and spiritual values are a prerequisite for the globalization agenda; (8) Urbanization, working closely with HABITAT; (9) Energy- both the demand side (e.g. cleaner technology) and the supply side (e.g. a global network of renewable energy centres); (10) Implementation and the need to ensure agency interaction with civil society and private business.

32. The Vice President of International Fund for Agricultural Development identified the main challenge for WSSD, as restoring priority to and reinvigorating rural poverty reduction. He noted that the WSSD could achieve this by calling for new investments that empower the rural poor to take the lead in overcoming poverty. In particular, the outcomes of the WSSD could help push forward: (1) Building the capacity of the rural poor and their organizations and promoting their access to productive natural resources, technology, financial resources and markets; (2) Overcoming gender disparities; (3) Fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels; (4) Strengthening institutions created under international environmental and environmental conventions; (5) Addressing the need for a more effective framework for the dissemination of the lessons learned.

33. The Vice President identified two significant contributions of IFAD to WSSD: (1) direct investments in sustainable agriculture and rural development, taking into account IFAD's unique comparative advantage in terms of working in partnership with the rural poor in developing

solutions to environmental and poverty issues and its capacity for mobilizing resources, and (2) serving as a catalyst for broader progress beyond the scope of IFAD's projects and programs, through effective dissemination of its knowledge and lessons learned to other development partners; advocacy on issues critical to the rural poor; support for capacity building of rural poor organizations to advocate on their behalf; and continuing, vibrant partnership with civil society, governments and intergovernmental institutions.

34. The Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund emphasized that the primary challenges of Agenda 21 still remain: to ensure that access to resources for human development is in balance with human numbers; to end extreme poverty; and to advance equality between men and women. Four major areas of concern to the United Nations Population Fund are: safe drinking water, poverty eradication, gender equality and empowerment of women. It was emphasized that population growth today is a matter for the poorest countries but affecting the world and, thereby, requiring a global response. It was also stressed that there is a broad international consensus on the links between ending poverty, promoting reproductive health, securing gender equality and protecting the environment, and that the world community should continue to consolidate the gains already obtained in these areas. Finally, the Executive Director concluded that the United Nations Population Fund's contribution to the World Summit would be in sharing the experience of the organization in helping countries to incorporate population into development policies.

35. The Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, stressed that the main challenges for the Summit are poverty eradication, ensuring food security and promoting sustainable development in dry lands.

36. He noted that progress under the Convention, which was adopted in 1994 and entered into force in 1996, has been slowed by a lack of sufficient funding for its implementation. Unlike the other Rio conventions, the desertification agreement has lacked a predictable multilateral funding mechanism. However, a recent development in the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) suggests that degradation of land (deforestation and desertification) would be added as one of the focal areas of the GEF. A final decision, in this regard, is expected during the GEF Assembly in October 2002. However, the Executive Secretary stressed that the WSSD is an opportunity to launch the implementation of the UNCCD and to address, both adequately and timely, the issues of financial support and capacity building.

37. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity emphasized that biological diversity underpins sustainable development in many ways, including food security, climate stability, water filtration, soil conservation and human health. Despite many successes in the implementation of the Convention, biodiversity continues to be lost at an alarming rate due to ever expanding human demands and economic activities and the failure to shift from exploitation to sustainable management.

38. One of the main challenges of the Johannesburg Summit from the perspective of the Convention is to send clear political signal that the achievement of the objectives of the Convention is a prerequisite for sustainable development. There is a need for a renewed commitment to the Convention as an effective global mechanism that can consolidate and

strengthen efforts being undertaken through regional and international biodiversity related agreements and programmes.

39. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is to meet in April 2002 and will prepare a message to the Johannesburg Summit. The main achievements of the Convention include: a) adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; b) the development of the draft Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing; c) development and progressive implementation of ecosystem approach in various programme areas; d) the process on indigenous people and local communities; and e) promotion of inter-agency cooperation and synergies in a wide range of issues. The Convention has worked closely with the Global Environment Facility, which invested approximately \$1.2 billion over the last nine years and leveraged another \$2 billion.

40. The Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) outlined the views of his organization regarding the challenges of the WSSD and the lessons learned since the Rio Conference. He stated that while Agenda 21 remains a valid blueprint for sustainable development, future work should be refocused to concentrate on the thematic areas of energy, water and forests and on the cross-sectoral issues of capacity building and financing.

41. One of the lessons learned since the Rio Conference in 1992 is that the GEF's \$15 billion portfolio is inadequate to meet the requirements of sustainable development. This portfolio must be scaled-up and must involve more partners in order to replicate successes. Since decisions at the Ministerial level are key to additional financing, the GEF is organizing a series of Ministerial Roundtables on finance issues prior to the WSSD. Finally, he informed the delegates that for the third replenishment of the GEF, additional resources are being allocated to two new programming areas: land degradation and persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Projects under the land degradation framework will support activities developed under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

42. The Vice President of the World Bank noted that globalization can make an important contribution to sustainable development but the benefits of globalization have to be shared in a more equitable manner. Some current trends pose a challenge to achieving further progress towards sustainable development in the future, including the expected increase of food demand due to population growth, further degradation of forests, land and water as well as increasing energy demand in developing countries. The World Bank reconfirmed its commitment to Africa, where sustainable development is threatened by the degradation of natural resources and HIV/AIDS in particular.

43. The World Bank, with poverty reduction as its main objective is committed to the development targets of the Millennium Declaration. The World Bank adheres to the principle of national ownership of development strategies and a further strengthening of partnerships among governments, donors and civil society. Together with its partners, the World Bank will further engage in the discussions on financing for development, support a substantial GEF replenishment, address the issue of debt reduction and give a high priority to trade issues.

## **E. Summary of the General Debate**

44. Countries reaffirmed their commitment to the outcomes achieved at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, particularly with regard to the continued validity and relevance of Agenda 21 and the principles of the Rio Declaration. Most delegations emphasized that the purpose of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) is not to re-negotiate Agenda 21, but to re-invigorate political commitment to its full implementation. Various countries gave special attention to particular principles of the Rio Declaration such as the importance of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as the precautionary and the polluter pays principles, among others. Attention was also given to recognizing that sustainable development needs to be achieved by all countries according to their respective capabilities. A great many countries welcomed the focus given in the Secretary-General's report to accelerating implementation of Agenda 21 through concrete actions and measures, given the gap in implementation that currently exists. They stressed that this would entail the provision of new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology, capacity building and access to markets, which constitute particular areas of priority for developing countries.

45. A number of countries mentioned the idea of a "Global Deal" which could serve as the conceptual framework for the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Such a "deal" would be formulated as a package, balanced in terms of the interests of developed and developing countries and also balanced in reflecting the three pillars of sustainable development. The objective of the "Global Deal" would be the acceleration of the implementation of Agenda 21, advancing solutions to North/South issues and contributing to poverty eradication and to the achievement of sustainable production and consumption patterns. A number of countries wanted to have more information about the details of such a "deal" before making further comments on the idea.

46. Many countries felt that the ten years since UNCED have brought increased awareness of global environmental issues, greater participation and involvement by members of civil society in most countries and substantial progress with respect to the various international legislative and legal instruments. The widespread acceptance of the concept of sustainable development in government, industry and civil society was itself seen as an achievement by some countries.

47. Unfortunately, the progress achieved in the implementation of the provisions of Agenda 21 has been uneven and the commitments made by developed countries during the Rio Summit have not been kept, according to the views of many developing countries. Given these circumstances, the economies of many developing countries, particularly in Africa have deteriorated, resulting in an overwhelming increase in poverty and inequality, threats to human health, accelerated biodiversity loss, increasing desertification, unsustainable use of natural resources and mounting vulnerability to natural disasters.

48. Many countries emphasized that peace, security and stability are prerequisites for sustainable development and that the lack of peace and stability has seriously impeded the implementation of sustainable development at national and regional levels in many countries and regions.

49. Much concern was expressed about globalization, which has accelerated considerably in the 10 years since UNCED. Its potential impact on sustainable development was noted, although many countries recognized that globalisation can result in opportunities as well as challenges for sustainable development. When properly harnessed, globalisation can generate and support sustainable development and its benefits can significantly assist in the pursuit of sustainable development. One delegate referred to the positive comments made by the Secretary-General who noted that, “globalization so far from being the cause of poverty and other ills, offers the best hope of overcoming them.”<sup>1</sup>

50. Other countries were concerned, however that globalization has resulted in the marginalization of developing countries and instability in the international economic and financial system. Many developing countries were acutely aware of the vulnerability of their national economies to the fluctuations in the global economy and their inability to share the benefits of globalisation on an equal footing. As a consequence of the dynamics of globalization, many developing countries, especially in Africa, are being increasingly excluded from the world economy. Despite an unprecedented period of growing productivity and capital accumulation, the last decade has seen an extra 10 million people each year joining the ranks of the very poor.

51. Some countries stressed that along with increased volatility created by speculative short-term capital flows in the global financial markets and the increasing digital divide, globalisation has put mounting pressure on the global environment. It has also increased potential for clashes with traditional values and cultures.

52. Several countries felt that the majority of developing countries, in dealing with the invisible hand of the market, have encountered benefits that are almost as invisible. In opening up their national economies, many Small Island developing States, for example, have put at risk their indigenous businesses and industries by exposing them to excessive competition from much stronger and well-financed multinational companies. They are losing or have lost their indigenous private sector and the employment and contribution it makes to national economic development.

53. A view was expressed that efforts by some developed countries to raise non-tariff barriers, including attempts at environmental protectionism and continued reliance on unproductive export subsidies have emerged as some of the disquieting features of globalisation. This has led to continuing adverse terms of trade for developing countries. In this regard, another country noted that rather than assisting in improving market access for agricultural commodities of developing countries, globalisation has led to trade barriers and continuing poor commodity prices, thereby hurting agricultural production and discouraging national industrial development. It has also aggravated poverty and environmental degradation.

54. Many countries emphasized that the challenge for the international community is to ensure that globalisation is not at the expense of equity and development. Globalisation needs to be made more inclusive, notably in terms of developing countries’ participation and of the equitable sharing of its benefits in the global economy. The Doha Ministerial Declaration offers the

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<sup>1</sup> Address to the World Economic Forum, New York, 4 February 2002.

opportunity for WTO to play a fuller role in terms of making globalisation work for sustainable development across the world.

55. Some countries felt that the Johannesburg Summit should pave the way for finding effective solutions to the equitable sharing of benefits from globalisation and overcoming its negative aspects for the sustained economic growth of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In this regard, several participants felt there would be a need for some protection for the national economies of developing countries as these countries move toward trade liberalisation.

56. It is the view of many countries, that the conditions that promote sustainable development have not improved much during the last 10 years. Extreme poverty, environmental degradation, underdevelopment, unsustainable production and consumption patterns and unequal income distribution continue to exist. Over 1.1 billion people still live in absolute poverty, the majority of them in rural areas of developing countries, with women and marginalized people bearing most of the burden. Almost half of the people in Africa and South Asia live in poverty.

57. Rural-urban migration also increased substantially during the 1990's with a consequent increase in the numbers of people living in urban poverty in unsustainable human settlements. Such human settlements are mostly informal and unplanned, often in dangerous locations and lack basic municipal services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, schools and clinics. They are often the result of inadequate urban planning, lack of investment in infrastructure, speculative investment patterns, and indifference to the needs of the poor. It was pointed out that world leaders in the Millennium Declaration, agreed to achieve, by 2020, significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, as proposed in the "Cities without Slums" initiative. Realization of this target would require action at many levels. It was noted that access to improved housing, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health and education would be urgent priorities for improving the lives of slum dwellers. Long-term improvements would require better city planning and attention to land rights and urban infrastructures.

58. It was noted that health conditions in many countries generally improved during the 1990's, with increasing average life expectancy and a decline in child mortality rates. Nevertheless, poor health continued to be a major constraint on development in many developing countries. Inadequate and contaminated water supplies, poor sanitation facilities, severe indoor air pollution from traditional fuels, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious and parasitic diseases, and lack of access to reproductive health services took a high toll in death and disease. Some countries noted that in Africa, the emergence of HIV/AIDS has devastated the young adult population, dramatically reducing life expectancy and creating enormous obstacles to economic and social development. At the same time, developed countries, and some developing countries, have seen increases in diseases associated with unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles and obesity.

59. A number of countries reported progress in increasing access to education, including at the secondary levels. While developing countries as a whole have shown considerable improvement in net primary school enrolment over the past 10 years, it was noted that more than 113 million primary-school-age children in developing countries currently do not receive a basic school

education. The number of children not enrolled in school has generally declined, but the gender gap in primary and secondary education persists in many regions, and girls remain disadvantaged. Progress has been slow in reducing disparities in the distribution of educational opportunity, as reflected by differences in education by income, gender, disability, ethnicity, and urban versus rural location.

60. Various countries stressed that the role of education in sustainable development is of critical importance. Both education and awareness-raising, as well as creating a culture for sustainable development, were considered by most countries as important means of enabling the public and civil society to achieve sustainable development goals. In this regard, it was emphasized that education plays a particular role in reinforcing the capacity of women and girls to contribute fully to society. Greater efforts are needed to advance both formal and informal education and awareness – beginning in early childhood, particularly for girls. While local and national efforts to promote education for sustainable development need to be strengthened, they have to be complemented by international cooperation.

61. Most countries agreed that the eradication of poverty, including income poverty, hunger, illiteracy and ill health, is central to the achievement of sustainable development and to the goals of the WSSD. Progress in eradicating poverty, as measured by the Millennium Development Goals, has been slow and will require concerted and coherent action by developed and developing countries, and by civil society, government and business acting in partnership. Overcoming poverty and creating sustainable livelihoods requires growing economies, which generate opportunities for the poor, including jobs. There is a need to empower the poor, in particular women, to enable them to influence the policies, processes and institutions shaping their lives. People in poverty also need access to services, particularly education and health, and resources such as land, water and sustainable energy.

62. While the number of people living in extreme poverty has increased substantially over the past decade, the patterns of consumption and production in the developed countries have remained essentially unchanged, in the view of many. As noted by some, the improvements in efficiency that have taken place in developed countries have been more than offset by the increase in the volume of goods and services consumed and discarded.

63. Although domestic resources have at times been the primary source for financing sustainable development, it needs to be complemented by income from trade and external financial sources, including FDI and ODA. Developing countries, in particular, stressed that the failure of the international community to meet the commitments made in Rio with regard to trade, investment and finance and technology transfer has been a major limiting factor in implementation of the Rio outcomes. It was reported that as of now only five countries had actually met the United Nations target of providing 0.7% of GNP for overseas development assistance. Policies in these areas have often not been coherent or consistent with respect to long-term human needs and sustainable development objectives. The heavy external debt burden and the decline of ODA have limited the capacity of many developing countries to attract investment and constrained their ability to implement policies for sustainable development. While foreign direct investment increased rapidly in the 1990s, it was concentrated in a small number of countries.

64. Developing countries, particularly those dependent on commodity exports, report having suffered deteriorating terms of trade. Trade barriers and a lack of market access for developing countries hamper their full participation in the global market and thus their ability to achieve progress towards sustainable development

65. The lack of implementation by the international community concerning the transfer of environmentally sound technology and the equitable sharing of benefits from technology, especially information, communication and other new technologies was noted by many countries. They believe that the main lesson to be drawn from this is that markets, by themselves, do not ensure the diffusion of technological capacity, hence supplementary means of guaranteeing that developing countries benefit from technical innovation is needed, including the provision of environmentally sound technology on concessional and preferential terms.

66. Several participants noted that hunger and food insecurity remain a continuing scourge, affecting an estimated 815 million people in the world. In recognition of the need to take immediate action to confront this, world leaders at the World Food Summit organized by FAO in 1996 agreed to a minimum target of halving the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015. This goal was reiterated by the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in September 2000. However, it was reported that recent trends show that progress to date in reaching this target is not on track and the goal is not likely to be reached. A five-year review conference will take place in Rome in June 2002 to identify ways to eliminate the constraints that are hindering the achievement of this goal.

67. It was noted that support for the concept of sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD), has grown since 1992, as awareness of the need to address the problems of hunger, poverty and rural development with an integrated approach have become clear. The major objective of SARD is to increase food production in a sustainable way and enhance food security. The link with efforts to combat degradation of agricultural lands has also been strengthened through the elaboration of international agreements such as the UNCCD and work by FAO, IFAD and other international and regional organizations.

68. Given that the majority of poor people live in rural areas and there is an urgent need to substantively increase food security for the growing world population, many countries called for urgent action to reverse the trend of declining human and financial resources for rural development and integrated land management. There is a need to develop new partnerships between governments at all levels and stakeholders, including farmers, scientists, teachers, youth and NGOs, to combat land degradation and desertification. It was proposed that the CCD should be recognized as a "sustainable development convention", crucial to addressing broader sustainable development issues. Synergies between CCD and the other Rio conventions would be helpful in implementing them all.

69. It was noted that the share of development assistance directed to the agricultural sector has steadily declined. At the same time, it was estimated that resources required to end hunger are lower than the human and economic costs of not ending it, including the cost of ill health, low labour productivity and lower economic growth.

70. Several speakers mentioned the adverse effects on agricultural production and food security resulting from barriers to agricultural trade, particularly for primary products, and supported the increased access to developed country markets for developing country exports. One country referred to the harmful effects on its food security caused by the growing of illicit crops.

71. A number of countries pointed out that the major ecosystems that support human sustenance, such as, forests, freshwater systems, coastal marine habitats, grasslands and agricultural lands were all stretched to the limit. Unsustainable consumption and production patterns, short-term economic interests, population pressures and poverty have put a heavy burden on these ecosystems. At the regional level biodiversity was found to be facing various threats caused by human activities resulting in disturbance, loss and fragmentation of habitats.

72. Several countries noted that measures taken under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as many other environmental agreements, have been strengthened. It was further noted that the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was concluded under the auspices of the CBD in 2000. Some countries reported that National Biodiversity Strategies have been developed in compliance with the CBD. Others referred to the success that has been made in arresting forest degradation, cleaning rivers and protecting sensitive eco-systems. Some regional organizations have developed regional biodiversity strategies.

73. Many participants highlighted the close link between land degradation, including desertification, poverty and hunger. Land degradation has resulted in a loss of soil quality with adverse impacts on agricultural productivity and food security, affecting the livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in Africa. Degradation of agricultural land and decline in soil fertility continue to be a major threat to food security and sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Expanding world population, accelerating urbanization and growing competition for scarce resources (resulting in deforestation, erosion and soil depletion) were seen as worsening the problems.

74. The concept of integrated land management, linking agriculture, rural development, water use and conservation, soil degradation and depletion, extraction of minerals and metals, and natural disasters such as floods, droughts and landslides, has been accepted by many countries as a crucial component of efforts to combat rural poverty as well as rural and urban food insecurity. Implementation of the land-related chapters of Agenda 21 has brought together stakeholders from the concerned sectors, working with governments at local and national levels, and relevant international organizations.

75. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) was recognized as an important outcome of the UNCED conference with its adoption in 1994 and its entry into force in December 1996. Many speakers noted with concern, however that this Convention is unique among the "Rio conventions" in not having a funding mechanism. The lack of adequate funding has hindered the implementation of the CCD, particularly, with regard to the more than 50 national action programmes (NAPs) that have been elaborated for many of the most affected countries. Countries welcomed the recent proposal by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to consider land degradation as a new focal area for funding and they urged all States to support

this decision when it comes before the GEF Assembly in October 2002. In this context, many countries called for a substantial and successful third replenishment of the GEF.

76. It was noted that the world's natural forests continue to be converted to agriculture and other land uses at a high rate. The rate of deforestation globally for the 1990s was estimated at over 14 million hectares per year, mostly in tropical developing countries. At the same time, there has been an increase in forest area in some developed and developing countries, due to both natural forest succession on abandoned agricultural land and the establishment of forest plantations at about 5 million hectares per year. This increase in forest area has helped offset deforestation in other areas, resulting in the net annual loss in forest area worldwide of about 9 million hectares. Net deforestation rates were highest in Africa and South America, whereas in Asia, new forest plantations significantly offset deforestation.

77. Several countries called for international support for the implementation of United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Plan of Action. In this regard, it was stated that the involvement of least developed countries in UNFF was important. Emphasis should be given to the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands as well as on the examination of causes of deforestation and forest degradation. There is also a need for co-operation among international organizations and instruments on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). Some countries also called for the development of an international legal framework on forests. One country also noted a need to address forest crime including illegal logging issues.

78. It was suggested by several speakers that sustainable mountain development could serve as a model for a comprehensive approach to the protection and sustainable management of an entire living space. The 2002 International Year of Mountains (IYM) can provide opportunities and incentives for furthering scientific research on mountains addressing the linkages between climate change, energy and water resources. In view of their significance for sustainable development, several speakers urged that sustainable mountain development be considered as a separate item on the WSSD agenda. It was also suggested that the WSSD should develop specific initiatives on sustainable mountain development. In October 2002, a Summit on Mountains will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan that will link the IYM and the Johannesburg conclusions.

79. It was noted that the expansion of irrigated agriculture and growing demands for water for industrial and municipal uses have increased pressures on freshwater resources in many countries over the last decade. Areas of water scarcity are increasing, particularly in North Africa and West Asia. In the next two decades, it is estimated that 17 per cent more water will be needed to produce food for growing populations in developing countries and that total water use will increase by 40 per cent. One-third of the countries in water-stressed regions of the world are expected to face severe water shortages in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

80. A view was expressed that, as water scarcity became more severe, there was a risk that water would become a source of conflict among peoples. However, sharing water had also been an important element of cooperation in many cultures, and there were many such regional cooperative efforts today. The international community had a special responsibility for providing political, technical and financial support.

81. Several countries pointed to their efforts to develop integrated watershed plans and reported some success in arresting forest degradation and in cleaning some rivers, protecting sensitive eco-systems, and creating environmental awareness. One country had reformed its national water resources policy, its integrated water resources management strategy, and had facilitated participation by the private sector and local communities in the management of water. Another country stated that it had provided safe water supply and sanitation to a higher percentage of households, had improved water management and had increased the number of protected areas while another country said its communities had conserved watershed areas, and helped reduce floods and landslides.

82. Several delegations strongly reiterated the Millennium Declaration goal of halving the number of people without access to freshwater by 2015 as a key element in poverty reduction. They also supported the additional target of halving the number of people without access to sanitation by 2015 as articulated at the Bonn International Conference on Freshwater in December 2001. The Johannesburg Summit should result in concrete action to meet the Millennium Declaration goals in this regard together with well specified time bound measures and sources of finance and technology to support countries in their efforts to achieve this goal.

83. Some countries stressed the importance of gender issues and participation of stakeholders in achieving those goals. Citing the recommendations from the Bonn conference on freshwater, they called for commitments from governments and stakeholders for better governance arrangements for public and private partnerships; mobilizing financial resources for infrastructure and services; and partnerships for capacity building and sharing technology and knowledge.

84. There was the view expressed that water was best dealt with at the regional level, and that all efforts should be in conformity with existing agreements among the states sharing a transboundary water course and should maximize upstream and downstream benefits and help the development of water resources and the protection of water quality for the benefit of all riparian states. Another country stated that it was not ready to go beyond the texts that were adopted at the conclusion of Rio +5 and CSD-6 on water issues.

85. Other countries called on the international community to support regional cooperation initiatives undertaken by states on international watercourses. Innovative bilateral and regional approaches were needed for international watercourses and agreements should be in conformity with international law principles and conventions. A view was expressed that decisions to construct large infrastructure projects, including dams, should be made in consultation with all riparian states, and should minimize the potential negative impacts. Others stressed the imperative of multilateral cooperation in the sustainable management of natural resources, including land and water resources.

86. It was noted that a number of important international and regional conventions and agreements dealing with oceans and seas have been successfully negotiated since Rio and it is noteworthy that the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and other legally-binding treaties have entered into force since 1992. Most recently, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement entered into

force in December 2001. The Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Ecosystem has moved forward the debate on ecosystem-based fisheries management, as have various initiatives of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Doha Ministerial Declaration of the WTO and the provisions on removing harmful fisheries subsidies was welcomed. More and better scientific data on the oceans and seas are now available though further support to monitoring and assessment efforts is required. Regional and sub-regional cooperation has increased and yielded positive results. International cooperation and coordination on oceans affairs has been facilitated by the establishment in 1999 of the General Assembly's Informal Consultative Process on Oceans, as recommended by CSD decision 7/1.

87. Many countries expressed the view that the international community must address greater attention to the oceans, which are of central importance for human development, poverty reduction and food security. Some focused in particular on the protection and sustainable management of fisheries and others were concerned especially with coasts and coastal zone management. The vital importance of shipping to global development and the safety of the seas were mentioned by some.

88. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) urged a renewed commitment to the Barbados Programme of Action, which was adopted in 1994 and requested support for a comprehensive 10-year review of its implementation in 2004. It was noted that the Barbados Programme was reviewed at its first five-year anniversary at the Special Session of the General Assembly in 1999. The considerable efforts of SIDS countries were acknowledged. But the overall assessment pointed to no real substantive changes in achievement. To highlight the point, the review identified six focal areas requiring not only priority but also urgent action. These included climate change, natural and environmental disasters, freshwater resources, coastal and marine resources energy and tourism. In the meantime, there has been significant cause for concern because recent studies point to a steady decline in the environmental quality of SIDS in all regions.

89. Several participants expressed the view that the Report of the Secretary-General did not give enough attention to oceans and SIDS issues and many speakers urged that "oceans, coasts and islands" become a central theme of WSSD. Some countries called for a dedicated interactive dialogue on oceans and islands during the WSSD preparatory process –with the aim of arriving at "global implementation initiatives" and another suggested that time be set aside to specifically address oceans issues.

90. Speakers emphasized the need for an integrated approach to marine and coastal management, as urged by the CSD's review of oceans at its 7<sup>th</sup> session, and noted concerns that both Governments and international institutions often follow a fragmented approach, based on sectoral issues. The Oceans must be considered as a whole and not as a "cross-cutting" issue. With 80 percent of marine pollution caused by land-based sources, many participants urged more effective implementation of the 1995 Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, as called for in the Montreal Declaration.

91. Better scientific information and assessment of the interaction between the atmosphere, oceans and climate change is necessary, especially with respect to coastal areas and small island

developing States, although the major constraint in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action for SIDS is not lack of information but inadequate financial and technical resources. Financial and technical support to many coastal developing countries is lacking. Capacity building with regard to both institutions and human resources is required.

92. The occurrence of disasters has deeply affected the environment. Floods and tropical cyclones have had devastating effects on the people and economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America over the past 10 years. Natural disasters had taken an enormous annual toll of human suffering, loss of lives and property damage, sometimes reaching US\$440 billion in one year. The El Niño-La Niña events have also resulted in enormous global socio-economic losses. Sea-level rise has caused inundation of the freshwater lens on island states.

93. It was noted that energy is essential for economic growth and social development, but is also associated with air pollution, increasing greenhouse gas emissions and other damage to health and the environment. Some countries consider the world's current energy system to be unsustainable. However, a number of countries reported having paid particular attention to implementing the principles for integrating sustainable development and environmental protection into their energy sector policies or national sustainable development objectives by reducing the consumption of fuel and energy resources, enhancing the use of renewable sources of energy, and giving priority to the use of clean fuels and energy sources. In some cases, the results of active policies and the implementation of appropriate practical measures for energy efficiency have resulted in significant reductions in the GDP power intensity. Nevertheless, many opportunities remain for reducing energy intensity and for adopting measures to encourage investments in the utilisation of indigenous and renewable energy resources. It was noted that the Global Environment Facility has been quite effective in supporting renewable energy technology, as currently constituted, but is inadequate for addressing the other energy issues of sustainable development.

94. The effects of poor air quality on health were highlighted and efforts to improve air quality were mentioned by several countries. The adverse impact of unsustainable consumption and production patterns on air quality was also mentioned. The severe and lingering impacts of the Chernobyl accident on the air quality of that region and the inadequate capacity to mitigate its effects were noted.

95. Several countries mentioned efforts by their governments to reduce air pollution by implementing sustainable development plans, enacting legislation and making considerable investments to that end. Other countries have taken action to control air pollution by closing highly polluting factories and businesses. In addition, efforts have been made to include civil society in the decision-making process for implementing strategies and plans to reduce air pollution.

96. There was considerable support for the view that climate change remains the most urgent global environmental problem. Countries noted that human lives and livelihoods are already at risk due to climate change, particularly in SIDS countries. The most serious impacts of climate change and sea level rise are accelerated damage to coral reefs, coastlines, food crops, and seawater inundation of freshwater lenses. The frequency of these impacts is increasing in number

and severity. The impact of climate change on mountains and the Arctic region was especially mentioned. In mountain regions, the greatest concern is the threat of receding glaciers with the potential for glacial lake outbursts, while in the Arctic the effects on ice cover, sea currents and permafrost could have global consequences.

97. The decision reached on implementation of the Kyoto Protocol at COP7 in Marrakech in 2001 was generally regarded as a breakthrough accomplishment that will provide strong new impetus to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. At the same time, some countries mentioned the climate change programme of the GEF as a true post-Rio success story, although resources remain inadequate. Many countries agreed that the issues of climate change, loss of biological diversity, desertification and land degradation are closely interrelated, and synergies of environmental conventions, such as UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD, need to be strengthened.

98. Over the past ten years, many countries, regions and institutions have implemented national Agenda 21 plans of action, sustainable development strategies, and supportive legislation, with discernable impact on the national planning processes. However, a number of countries felt that sustainable development policies and programmes have in general fallen short of the level of policy integration required to simultaneously serve economic, social and environmental objectives.

99. An International Forum on National Sustainable Development Strategies was held in Accra, Ghana in November 2001 with the purpose of reviewing these experiences, sharing lessons learned and recommending approaches to integrate key characteristics of sustainable development strategies into policies and programmes at the national level. Participatory institutional structures and forums, including Councils for Sustainable Development or inter-ministerial commissions, in many countries have greatly improved the relevance and quality of these strategies.

100. Noting the outcomes of the Accra Forum and the key characteristics for a national sustainable development strategy, several countries urged the Summit to make a renewed and time-bound commitment to elaborate and implement national sustainable development strategies in all countries. A manual on the development and implementation of sustainable development at the national level could be developed for launching at the Summit.

101. The UN system was called upon to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing their sustainable development strategies. It was stressed that regional approaches to strategies and implementation of sustainable development initiatives be given particular consideration.

102. The advent of information and communication technologies has enhanced awareness about environment and sustainable development issues. However, there is a need to do a better job of managing information and science, to provide decision-makers with a solid understanding of global, regional and local environmental challenges upon which to base policy decisions. It was recognized that environmental administration and protection is a knowledge-intensive activity, which demands a high degree of scientific and technological expertise. In the case of the Pacific SIDS, dispersed populations, small sizes and vast ocean distances have long hampered

the development of ICTs. These circumstances impose large costs on service provisions in education, economic development, social welfare, health, travel and communication and have constrained the growth of important industries such as fisheries, agriculture and tourism.

103. Even though new problems have emerged such as the digital divide, ICTs will play an enhanced role in sustainable development, including in environmental protection. Bridging the digital divide both within and among countries as well as sharing and transferring of other relevant technologies including environmentally sound technology is very crucial. Therefore, capacity-building and technology transfer must also be underlined if we are to overcome constraints in sustainable development.

104. New information technologies have facilitated the development of databases on natural resources that can be used to analyze environmental conditions within specific regions. Earth observation satellites have been increasingly providing essential data in support of many projects for sustainable development. To effectively gather information on the state of the Earth and its environment, it has become important to organize global observations using various satellites of space agencies. For this purpose, the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) has played an essential role as an international framework for the coordination of earth observation programmes worldwide. Earth observation satellites in support of activities of CEOS will be launched to promote the sharing of the benefits of Earth observation data for sustainable development.

105. A methodology using indicators at local, regional, national and international levels should be used for such assessments, according to some. The importance of indicators for monitoring progress in the implementation of the outcome of the Summit was emphasized by one country and the further development and use of common sets of indicators for sustainable development was stressed as being crucial. Several countries reported that, to this end, a wide variety of sustainable development related indicators had been elaborated and developed in many countries and international organizations. In particular, the outcome of the CSD Work Programme on indicators of sustainable development was seen as helpful in the preparation of national indicator sets.

106. SIDS countries reported success in the development of vulnerability measures based on economic factors since the adoption of the Barbados Programme of Action. Pacific countries are well advanced in the development of an environmental vulnerability index and, the Caribbean states are in the process of developing a similar index, studying the effects of social factors. With these measures SIDS should be able to better understand their capacities and abilities in the effort to achieve sustainable development.

107. Several countries stressed that ten years after UNCED the lack of scientific and technical capacity remains a major obstacle to sustainable development in many countries. The development and application of scientific and technological knowledge and capabilities are absolutely critical factors underpinning progress on sustainable development in all countries. Collective and individual efforts on sustainable development require harnessing sound science and traditional knowledge as the basis of policy development and implementation. Yet in some countries, the scientific and technological community has faced enormous challenges in

deepening their scientific understanding of sustainable development and in providing authoritative advice for decision-making, including in areas of measurements and monitoring, or elaborating principles of sustainable development impact assessment, and re-shaping their own institutional structures and mechanisms to this effect. Concrete proposals are needed for strengthening existing scientific networks and institutions.

108. The need to preserve the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities was emphasized by a number of countries as well as their equitable participation in the benefits obtained from its commercial use, was emphasized.

109. Capacity building, together with other means of implementation like finances and technology transfer are integral and indivisible tools to achieve sustainable development and need to be dealt with in a more holistic manner. Many developing countries felt that lack of capacity building (in terms of human, technological and institutional capacity) in the priority sectors has been one of the fundamental constraints facing developing countries in their efforts to implement Agenda 21. In this view, capacity building has existed mainly in theory, and even where capacity has been built up, it was quickly lost to more attractive and lucrative employment possibilities in developed countries.

110. Levels of external assistance for capacity building remain a concern for most developing countries. Several countries mentioned that various international organizations such as the GEF, UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank and others, are involved to some extent in capacity building efforts. According to some, these agencies and the donor groups need to pursue more effective partnerships, while ensuring transparency and openness, in order to minimize duplication and to ensure the most efficient mechanism for the implementation of future activities in the area of capacity building. Some participants observed that instead of building capacity according to country needs, capacity building activities, at times, have followed priorities other than those of the recipients, often relying on too many external consultants. This has had a negative effect on capacity building since such approaches increase dependency without building local capacity or creating a sense of national ownership.

111. Several countries, however noted the positive contribution made by the GEF and UNDP's Capacity 21 Programme in enhancing the ability of developing countries to undertake local-level capacity development, but there is a room for further improvement. The challenge is to develop and implement an initiative of significantly larger scale that is able to respond to the growing needs of capacity development that cut across all sectors of sustainable development. Several countries called on the Summit to agree to significantly strengthen the Capacity 21 Programme as a key institutional mechanism for implementing Agenda 21. Others stressed, however, that capacity building cannot be dependent solely on public investment, but must also be based on generating growth within communities and the private sector that relate to job creation and the diversity of industries.

112. A number of countries called on the international community to give its fullest support to the effort of developing countries to strengthen capacity both at the national and the sub regional level. Strengthening, in particular, regional education, research and developmental institutions, as well as development of physical infrastructure in such vital areas as transport, information and

communication, science and technology and energy was encouraged. In addition, there is an urgent need to develop and implement a capacity-building framework which adopts an integrated and participatory approach that nurtures the well-being of individuals, families, communities and society, and encourages and empowers people to take ownership of processes that affect them.

113. Most countries agreed that one of the genuine successes in the past ten years has been the increasing participation of civil society and major groups at all levels in decision-making. A steady improvement of stakeholder consultations through Local Agenda 21 (LA21) initiatives was reported with Local Agenda 21 programmes now adopted in over 6,000 localities in 113 countries.

114. The importance of all stakeholders, including governments both at the national and local level, enterprises, and civil society cooperating closely to achieve sustainable development is generally acknowledged. In particular, since many business enterprises and NGOs possess professional and practical technology and know-how, they have played an important role in promoting positive changes in society by effectively combining their activities with those of national and local governments.

115. Some countries said that much of the concrete action on sustainable development has taken place in coalitions involving government at all levels – national, state, and local, as well as NGOs, business, indigenous groups, and other stakeholders. These “coalitions of the willing” are the most effective way to pursue sustainable development. They offer a powerful approach with many applications both domestically and internationally. As a result of greater participation of civil society in the policy debate and in decision-making in the field of sustainable development, public awareness has increased and has been translated into better institutional and legal frameworks.

116. It was noted that the transparent participation and shared responsibilities of civil society is of utmost importance in the design, implementation and follow-up of sustainable development policies and regional and international commitments on sustainable development. Governments were encouraged to financially promote the participation of non-governmental actors in the process. Partnerships among major groups are an essential means, leading to influencing decision-making processes.

117. Empowering the poor, particularly women, was seen by some as essential in recognizing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability so as to enable them to influence the policies, processes and institutions shaping their lives. This includes securing their rights to services, particularly education and health. Access to education in general and efforts to raise public awareness of sustainable development issues in particular are needed.

118. The contribution of the indigenous and local communities, who use practices harmonious with the sustainable development objectives, as well as the need for protection of their traditional knowledge, was considered extremely valuable. In fact, some countries suggested that it is a priority to pay special attention to the specific needs and concerns of indigenous peoples, in regard to environmental issues and biotechnology. In many instances they are major stakeholders in natural resources exploitation in their traditional lands, in eco-tourism and in bio-prospecting.

119. A view was expressed that a group, which accounts for about 20% of population in almost every country, was somehow forgotten in Agenda 21 and in discussions at the UN CSD Forum. This is the group of senior, retired people. Aged persons should be considered as an important social group, indispensable for sustainable development due to their experience and wisdom and their love and care for the younger generations. In implementing, the principle of partnership and participation, the senior and retired people should be recognized as one of the Major Groups.

120. Some countries, in assessing the decade since Rio, noted the need to strengthen the ability to monitor the implementation of agreements and the impact of programmes. Improvements in reporting mechanisms are needed to ensure greater accountability and commitment. In this respect, several countries suggested the need for more effective integration among development finance institutions, multi-trade systems, and the UN agencies dealing with sustainable development.

121. Some countries felt that the International Environmental Governance (IEG) process currently undertaken by UNEP, was one of the most important institutional contributions in preparation for the WSSD and that UNEP, in this context, should be strengthened. Others stressed, however, that the finalization of the IEG process should await the results of a detailed examination of future arrangements for sustainable development governance and should not infringe on the autonomy of the respective conferences of the parties of MEAs or on the governance structures of other institutions.

122. A number of countries felt that improved linkages and effective coordination of all agencies involved in the implementation of sustainable development, within and outside the UN-System, was needed. A review of the institutional structure for sustainable development could include core bodies of the United Nations such as CSD, UNDP and UNEP, in partnership agreements with the major groups, including the regional commissions, financial institutions and taking into consideration the outcome of the Millennium Summit and other major conferences. It should also lead to greater coherence and consistency between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization.

123. Strengthened institutional arrangements for sustainable development, with enhanced the capacity to facilitate the implementation of WSSD outcomes, was recommended by some. Voluntary regional and sub-regional cooperation was seen as an important element in a system of "International Governance for Sustainable Development" and thus it was expressed that a regional approach to sustainable development should be encouraged and the role of regional institutions, such as the regional development banks and the United Nations Regional Commissions, should be enhanced.

124. Since the majority of decisions affecting sustainable development are made at the national and local levels, it was stressed that good governance at the national level is fundamental to sustainability, and that this could be ensured by transparency and accountability, which in turn could lead to proactive and responsive policies, and improved partnerships. Strengthening of local, public and private processes in the formulation of policies for sustainable

development, and facilitation of exchange of information and experience between countries and regions of the world was considered especially important.

125. A view was expressed that strong, sound institutional elements in domestic institutions, including fair regulatory systems, transparency and the rule of law, provided for more effective ODA and made the country more attractive to potential investors. Good governance structures, as well as strong, sound institutional elements continue to be, of primary importance to achieving sustainable development. It was stressed that building these institutional elements requires new kinds of partnerships with government, civil society and business.

126. In conclusion, many participants felt that a viable programme of action from the World Summit on Sustainable Development can only be effectively implemented with a clear and firm political commitment. A strong political declaration by world leaders that reflects a shared vision, a genuine spirit of partnership and common ownership, would provide a solid basis for all countries to support the outcomes of WSSD and to advance implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration. All participants committed themselves of making the preparatory process and the World Summit a success.