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AFRICAN PREPARATORY CONFERENCE
FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
Nairobi, 15-18 October 2001

DRAFT REPORT ON THE AFRICAN PREPARATORY CONFERENCE
FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

NJERIPAU

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, it was decided by resolution 55/199 to convene the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The Summit is scheduled to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002. Each region of the world was requested to formulate a common position for presentation to the Summit and the current meeting is part of that process of preparation. To facilitate the process, it had been decided to work through existing regional organizations, specifically, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Preparations at the national level had contributed to subregional preparations. The African Forum for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development was launched as a preparatory process for Africa in March 2001, with an Expanded Joint Secretariat comprised of members from the above-mentioned subregional organizations and from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization of African Unity /African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Development Bank and the Regional Office for Africa of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Recommendations formulated by the five subregional meetings convened by those organizations were to form the basis for the common African position, which would be finalized and adopted by the Expert Group Segment and the Ministerial Segment, respectively, of the present African Preparatory Conference for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Conference was organized by the Expanded Joint Secretariat and hosted by UNEP.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The Expert Group segment of the Conference was opened by Mr. Sekou Touré, Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Africa. Welcoming statements were made by the representative of the Kenya Government and by Mr. Touré, on behalf of the Expanded Joint Secretariat.
3. Mr. Simon Mbarire, Acting Deputy Director of the National Environment Secretariat of the Kenya Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, welcomed the participants on behalf of the people and Government of Kenya, and on his own behalf. He thanked the Expanded Joint Secretariat for the excellent documentation for the meeting.
4. He said that the main aim of the World Summit on Sustainable Development was to take stock of and assess the progress made on the road towards sustainability since the 1992 United Nations Conference of Environment and Development (UNCED), to identify the constraints encountered and the areas where further efforts were needed, together with the new challenges to be confronted in the further implementation of Agenda 21. With the documentation provided by the preparatory team, which would greatly promote and enhance the discussions, he believed that excellent final texts of the Regional Assessment Report and the African Common Position could be prepared in the course of the meeting.
5. Mr. Sekou Touré said that it was a great honour for UNEP to host the Expert Group Segment of the African Conference in preparation for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. He expressed his gratitude for the contribution to that process made by the experts from African countries, and extended his appreciation to the other members of the Expanded Joint Secretariat for the spirit that had prevailed during the entire preparatory process.

6. The meeting constituted part of Africa's preparatory process for this crucial World Summit to be held on African soil. He said that the dreams and aspirations of millions of African women, men and children hinged on the success of the Summit. He recalled that the process had started with a high-level stakeholders meeting on sustainable development held at UNECA in January 2000, leading, with the help of the Expanded Joint Secretariat, to the launching of the African Forum for the 2002 World Summit in Dakar, Senegal, in March 2001. The current meeting was the culmination of the process, with the objectives of agreeing on an assessment of progress since 1992 and on a common African position to be presented to the Ministerial Segment of the Conference on 17 October 2001. He assured the meeting of all possible support from UNEP, and wished the participants every success in their deliberations.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Attendance

7. The meeting was attended by experts from the following countries:

[TO BE COMPLETED]

8. Representatives of the following international and intergovernmental organizations also participated: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),

[TO BE COMPLETED]

B. Election of the Bureau

9. The following Bureau was elected:

Chair: Ms. Eness Chiyenge (Zambia)

Members: Mr. Tarek El Kouny (Egypt)

Mr. Simon Mbarire (Kenya)

Mr. Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria)

Mr. Crispian Olver (South Africa)

Mr. Abdecamane Gannoun (AMU)

Mr.(ECCAS)*

Mr.(ECOWAS)*

Mr. (IGAD/COMESA)*

* The names of representatives of ECCAS, ECOWAS and IGAD/COMESA have not yet been submitted. These should be officials of member States from the subregions

Mr. M.L. Mophethe (SADC)

Rapporteur: Mr. Mbassi Menye (Cameroon)

C. Approval of programme of work

10. In regard to the programme of work, the Chair explained that the Bureau had proposed that an open-ended Drafting Committee be established to discuss and revise the draft African Ministerial Statement after its presentation in Plenary and report back to Plenary, which would approve the final draft if seen fit. The other document before the meeting, entitled “Assessment of progress on sustainable development in Africa since Rio (1992)” (UNEP/(ROA)/WSSD/1/1 and UNEP/(ROA)/WSSD/1/1/Add.1) would be presented and fully discussed in Plenary. A final draft of the Ministerial Statement would be prepared for submission to the Ministerial Segment. This procedure met with the approval of the meeting.

IV. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. The draft WSSD African Ministerial Statement

11. A presentation of the draft African Ministerial Statement was made by Professor S.K. Imbamba. Discussion of the draft was remitted to the open-ended Drafting Committee, which would revise the text, incorporating suggestions arising from the debate.

B. The draft Africa WSSD Regional Assessment Report

12. A presentation of the draft Regional Assessment Report was made by Professor S.K. Imbamba (document UNEP/(ROA)/WSSD/1/1 and UNEP/(ROA)/WSSD/1/1/Add.1).

13. In the ensuing discussion, one representative said he believed more emphasis should be given to the issue of chemicals, especially toxic wastes, and also to the need for transfer of technology.

14. One representative stressed the need to mention specifically the channels of communication with major groups in the private sector, such as trade unions and cooperatives.

15. Several representatives requested that some major concerns should be highlighted, such as:

- (a) The problem of refugees;
- (b) Conflicts;
- (c) HIV/AIDS;
- (d) Synergies between development planners who were still working sectorally;
- (e) Good governance;

- (f) Poverty eradication; and,
 - (g) The sensitization of people to Agenda 21.
16. One representative specified that good governance was necessary at both national and international levels.
17. Another representative said that globalization should not be exclusively considered under the heading of “trade and environment”, and that in the poverty and environment nexus, it should be remembered that our developed country partners were responsible for environmental degradation even more than the poor: the priority was poverty eradication, not to put the burden on the poor
18. Several representatives expressed concern that there was more emphasis on good environmental governance than on sustainable development.
19. Several representatives expressed the view that the Global Environment Facility should address more focal areas than the four focal areas.
20. Several representatives addressed the issue of poverty and emphasized the following points:
- (a) Underdevelopment and the marginalization of Africa in the context of globalization;
 - (b) Unfavourable terms of trade;
 - (c) Poverty and the growing gap between the rich and the poor posed a threat to national, regional and international peace and security
 - (d) The HIPIC initiative was too limited to adequately address the issue of poverty; and,
 - (e) The eradication of poverty required the international community to devote a portion of global resources to it.
21. One representative stressed the importance of sustainable human settlements.
22. Another representative spoke of the need to review other epidemics, including malaria and meningitis, instead of concentrating solely on HIV/AIDS.
23. One representative said that the issue of international environmental governance, which had recently been discussed in a meeting in Algiers, needed to be addressed further.
24. One representative stressed south-south cooperation in regard to the issue of cooperation and integration of efforts.
25. One representative called for “green accounting” rather than measuring the Gross National Product, because the promotion of sustainable development required measurements which would help to integrate the ecological component into priority concerns and provide a better assessment of sustainable development in the international community.

26. In reply to the debate, Professor Imbamba assured the participants that the points they had raised would be very valuable, and would be accorded serious reflection. Regarding the heavy emphasis on the environment, he said that this had its origin in the subregional reports that the assessment had been based on. He said he was particularly impressed by the call for globalization not to be dealt with exclusively under the heading of trade and environment. As for “green accounting” he said he would be in favour of it being mentioned in the political statement.

[TO BE COMPLETED]