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CSD HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 26 APRIL 1996

Delegates to the fourth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-4) met in Plenary to hear reports on national sustainable development strategies and NGO presentations regarding the sectoral issues. The Drafting Groups considering finance and the sectoral issues met during the afternoon. Delegates agreed not to meet on Monday, 29 April, in observance of an Islamic holiday, Eid al-Adha, as supported by GA Resolution 50/206.

PLENARY

Yoncho Pelovsky, Deputy Minister of the Environment, noted that Bulgaria faces serious problems with industrial pollution and that the energy generation sector is a primary polluter, due to the high content of sulphur in Bulgarian coal. He reported on Bulgaria's use of charges and fees to punish polluters and to collect money to finance projects, and noted national strategies regarding the conservation of biodiversity and wetlands, a water treatment programme, a Black Sea programme, and a programme to phase out leaded gasoline.

Jonathan Lash, Co-Chair, US President's Council for Sustainable Development, described the Council's final report, which includes: a vision statement on sustainability; changes in decision making needed to achieve sustainable development; ten long-term goals; a set of quantitative indicators; and a range of recommendations. The recommendations address: increasing cost-effectiveness of environmental management; creating a flexible regulatory management system; expanding market-driven pollution control programmes; changing tax policies to discourage environmentally damaging production and consumption decisions; and eliminating government subsidies.

Jukka Sarjala, Director General, National Board of Education, described Finland's efforts to integrate environmental considerations into sectoral policies, such as the development of partnerships with industry and local Agenda 21s. He also highlighted the work of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development to coordinate measures and include all stakeholders. Iri Sarjala, a student at Puolalanmaki Upper Secondary School, reported on a school-wide Agenda 21 and conducting eco-audits.

Ernesto Guhl-Nanneti, Colombian Vice-Minister for the

Environment, noted elements of Colombia's integrated environmental programme, including the consolidation of institutional capacity and international cooperation programmes. Environmental education is pursued through television, radio, publications and projects developed by NGOs. Environmental policy is adapted to the regions, and popular participation is an important component. National difficulties include insufficient human and financial resources. Difficulties at the international level include the lack of political will, the problem of making national agendas compatible with international agendas, and the need for technology transfer.

Margarita Parás Fernández, Program Evaluation Director, Secretaria de Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca, said the Mexican strategy involves political and institutional reforms, innovations for decentralized public policy, and development of better conditions for social participation. Steps to restrain deterioration trends include: the protection of resources combined with sustainable and more diversified use; the use of resources that favors equity with a view to overcoming poverty; and the development of pluralistic, participatory environmental management, and new negotiating methods for conflict resolution.

Yoshihiro Natori, Special Advisor to Director General, Global Environment Department, Environment Agency, Japan, discussed Japan's basic environment law and plan, and efforts related to sustainable development indicators, sustainable production and consumption patterns and strengthening the role of major groups. Policy instruments include emission controls, environmental impact assessments and economic instruments. Japan has created a "Green Purchasing Network" of enterprises, local governments and consumer groups to help promote and exchange information on products. A "Partnership Plaza" will be established in July to serve as a focal point to facilitate the exchange of experiences between NGOs, private enterprises and local administrations.

Delegates then completed consideration of the review of sectoral clusters. FRIENDS OF THE EARTH suggested that the CSD set targets and timetables related to transportation issues, including an immediate 100% tax on air transport fuel. The UNA OF SWEDEN (Stockholm), on behalf of European Youth, noted youth concern regarding investments in unsustainable transport systems. She also called for a Common European Youth Platform to facilitate youth participation in implementing Agenda 21. The COORDINATING BOARD OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS highlighted the negative effects of fossil fuel production and supported application of the Polluter Pays Principle. The

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PERMANENT SOUTH PACIFIC COMMITTEE noted regional activities including the South Pacific Network for the Marine Environment, pilot studies on marine biodiversity, a plan of action to protect marine mammals, and a monitoring project on El Niño.

DRAFTING GROUP I

Drafting Group I, considering oceans and atmosphere issues, met briefly for the first time Friday morning. Svante Bodin, Chair of the informal contact group to Drafting Group I presented a progress report and he tabled a consolidated paper on Implementation of International Fishery Instruments.

In the afternoon, the Group considered a draft decision regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action (POA) for the sustainable development of SIDS. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, on behalf of AOSIS and the G77/CHINA, endorsed the draft with a few technical adjustments. He added a line to the paragraph on a vulnerability index stating that the CSD welcomes the offer by Malta to host the center for the computation of the index. To the paragraph on protection of coastal and marine resources, which recognizes relevant international agreements, he added a reference to decision 2/10 of the Second Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Many other delegations, including the EU, US, SAMOA, AUSTRALIA, and SAUDI ARABIA, generally supported the draft.

The EU proposed a series of amendments, including: adding a reference to regional approaches to implementing the POA to the paragraph on strategy and policy coordination; deleting the paragraph referring to DPCSD's role as coordinator of the POA; adding language referring to the private sector's role in sustainable energy and tourism development; reformulating text on disaster reduction urging SIDS to explore mechanisms for regional cooperation between SIDS, and calling upon the international community to support SIDS' efforts in this area; and deleting paragraphs calling for support from the international community to improve air and maritime transport for SIDS. JAPAN supported DPCSD as coordinator.

SAUDI ARABIA said a paragraph noting conclusions from the second assessment report of the IPCC carries some incomplete facts and he proposed its deletion. He also deleted a reference to SIDS' dependence on imported petroleum goods "largely for transport and the generation of electricity." He asked for clarification regarding regulation of air transport and suggested deleting the reference. The CHAIR cautioned that a proposed deletion of an acknowledgment of the DPCSD's role in coordinating the Barbados POA may take credibility away from the UN.

Delegates also debated text referring to the "expected" effects of global climate change and sea-level rise, including increased tropical storms and inundation. AUSTRALIA proposed "possible" effects, while SAUDI ARABIA proposed "potential" effects. The EU, US, and ICELAND supported "expected." UNEP quoted from the IPCC assessment report on climate change that "knowledge is currently insufficient regarding tropical storms" and suggested "possible." The CHAIR bracketed "possible."

SAUDI ARABIA proposed deletion of two paragraphs referring to human influence on climate, encouraging the *Ad Hoc* Group on the Berlin Mandate to draft a legal instrument on reduction limitation objectives, and calling upon the international community to support the efforts of SIDS to adapt to sea-level rise. The US, JAPAN, ICELAND and SAMOA "strongly" supported retaining these paragraphs.

DRAFTING GROUP II

Drafting Group II (financial issues) reconvened in the afternoon. In the first revision of the draft decision on combating poverty (Chapter 2), the US asked to retain references to "sustainably" and "substantially" (proposed by the G-77/CHINA) reducing overall poverty. The EU amended a reference to conform with a CSD description of economic growth as a fundamental element of sustainable development. The draft decision was agreed.

The first revision of the draft decision on demographic dynamics and sustainability (Chapter 5) was agreed without further amendment.

In the first revision of the draft decision on trade, environment and sustainable development (Chapter 2), the G-77/CHINA deleted a sub-paragraph recognizing the role of trade in achieving the objectives of MEAs and a reference to measures ensuring the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment policies. New G-77/CHINA amendments call on UN bodies to enhance coordination on trade and environment policies, include capacity building among positive measures, and add the WTO to the list of International Financial Institutions invited to examine the effects of trade measures in MEAs. The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY preferred to amend the sub-paragraph on trade measures and MEAs. SWITZERLAND suggested that a NORWEGIAN proposal could serve as a compromise text, stressing the need for flexibility in the use of environmental policy tools, and the possibility for trade measures to achieve legitimate environmental objectives while safeguarding an open, non-discriminatory and equitable trading system.

The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY also wanted to keep language calling on governments and the WTO to examine the mutual supportiveness of trade and environmental policies. He added a reference to Principle 11 of the Rio Declaration. The US cautioned against the CSD providing substantive guidance to the WTO on work already under way. He agreed with a proposal by SAUDI ARABIA to delete a sub-paragraph stressing that positive measures are preferable to trade restriction to secure compliance with MEAs. AUSTRALIA supported continued inter-agency cooperation on trade and the environment, and added a reference to the OECD. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the decision were agreed.

Informal-informals were to examine outstanding issues on trade (Revision 2) and the preliminary draft decision submitted by the Chair on changing production and consumption (Chapter 4).

IN THE CORRIDORS

As of Friday, the contact group on oceans still had not resolved conflicts over Annex II (sustainable fisheries) of the Chair's report on the *Ad Hoc* Group on Sectoral Issues. Some observers stressed that there was basic agreement over fundamental issues: the raft of international agreements on sustainable fisheries is significant and welcomed by all; most have been concluded recently and there has not yet been time to fully implement them; and all nations should implement agreements as quickly as possible. Substantial disagreement exists over the role of the CSD *vis-à-vis* these agreements, with some delegates and NGOs favoring an aggressive role for the CSD in emphasizing individual clauses, particularly regarding bycatch and discards, reduction of overcapacity, and reflagging of fishing vessels. The Chair of the contact group will consolidate delegates' comments into a draft for discussion.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

DRAFTING GROUPS: The Drafting Groups will meet throughout the day in Conference Rooms 1 and 2 to finalize all draft decisions.

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