

ISRAEL

66th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Check Against Delivery

Statement by
Ms. Shuli Davidovich
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Israel

Second Informal Intersessional Meeting
UN Conference on Sustainable Development

United Nations, New York
15 December 2011

PERMANENT MISSION OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
800 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Tel: 212-499-5510
Fax: 212-499-5515
info-un@newyork.mfa.gov.il
<http://israel-un.mfa.gov.il>

Mr. Chairman,

Over the last 20 years, there has been a historic shift in the global view on sustainable development. The international community has recognized the delicate environmental balance in which we find ourselves. There is a common understanding of the need to link economic and social policies more intimately with environmental considerations.

The "RIO+20" summit of June 2012 provides a much needed opportunity to reassess the failures and achievements in reaching the sustainable development goals that were set twenty years ago.

Israel has been an active participant in the global processes on sustainable development.

Allow me to outline some of our priorities with regard to the outcome document:

Israel believes that agriculture and in particular green agriculture should be one of the main thematic issues at Rio+20. Agriculture is a cross-cutting issue- one that has the power to create economic growth, mitigate the effects of climate change, increase food security and nutrition, empower women, and protect and renew the environment. Green rural agriculture can also balance the impact of rapid urbanization.

In October, Israel co-hosted an international meeting with UN DESA on green agriculture in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It was attended by more than 70 participants, including high level officials from 28 member states, national and international agriculture experts, and representatives of UN system agencies.

The Chair's summary, which was submitted to the compilation text, determined that agricultural systems across the world must be strengthened. Governments must lead the shift to sustainable agriculture.

Mr. Chairman,

The elaboration of policy tools and best practices for achieving sustainable economies should also be an integral part of Rio+20.

Green economy is not a one size fits all approach to development. It is founded on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Based on its own experience towards a greener and more sustainable economy, Israel has identified a range of issues that could be part of a Toolkit for Green Economy. These include green agriculture, water management, food security, combating desertification, and petroleum alternatives in transportation. Such a toolkit could allow countries to choose green economy measures based on their own situations, allowing for quicker implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

Developing an institutional framework for sustainable development is also important. In this respect, Israel maintains that international environmental governance must be improved, to ensure better coordination and coherence throughout the UN system.

Israel proposes the establishment of international, national and regional centers for sustainable development through International Environmental Development Cooperation. These centers could be established voluntarily by member states, and would focus on creating partnerships and capacity-building.

Mr. Chairman,

The challenge of mainstreaming sustainable development into all bodies of the UN reflects the challenges countries face in mainstreaming sustainable development into national economic policies. To ensure better coordination at the national level, there needs to be increased synergy within countries, between relevant ministries and among the private and public sectors.

Finally, we must promote broader definitions of progress. For example, Israel has moved from measuring economic production to measuring people's well-being, taking into account income, health, education and environment—using the so-called “beyond GDP” indicators. Efforts should be made to use indicators that encourage truly sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel supports an action-oriented document for Rio +20 - one that is concise, focused, and includes issues on which there is already a certain level of consensus. Israel looks forward to working with the international community in implementing sustainable development goals.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.