

**Comments on the Statement by the Russian Federation at the First Preparatory Committee
Meeting of the UNCSO, on May 18, in Morning Session 2 on
'a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication**

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I would like to make a few comments in response to the interesting and thought-provoking statement made by the delegate from the Russian Federation on the theme of the session.

I think that the Russian Federation delegate has enriched our discussion this morning by underlining the need to explore the concept of 'green economy' in depth and with sincerity. I would like to contribute to this exploration with the following comments:

The distinguished Russian delegate expressed skepticism on the value of talking about a green economy while our overarching concern is sustainable development. In fact, he suggested that talking about a green economy could be counterproductive in our pursuit of sustainable development because a green economy seems to fail to address social goals.

There is no doubt that sustainable development should be the overarching goal for our development endeavor. But it is a goal which is in need of prescriptions or solutions for its realization. A green economy is proposed as a way of implementing this goal. And I further argue that, while its contents have to be explored further, a green economy could address social goals as well.

Admittedly, a green economy is an approach to economic development as well as environmental protection. As such, it will help make growth sustainable. But green growth creates employment. And green, sustainable growth is socially valuable for its promise of sustained employment creation.

I would like to underline the premise that green growth tends to be more labor-intensive than what we might call 'brown growth' by which we would mean economic growth led by the traditional energy-intensive industries which tend to be also capital-intensive, and by the same token, have been shedding labor lately, accounting for the jobless growth that many economies have been experiencing. Brown growth has been socially polarizing as a result. The empirical results support the argument that green businesses tend to be employment-creating.

This makes green growth conducive to social development. It may also be argued that green growth tends to confer more benefits to the socially disadvantaged than to those who are better provided for. For example, the Secretary-General's report rightly argues that it is the poor who tends to suffer more from expensive and/or unclean energy or local environmental problems of pollution, waste, congestion, lack of clean water or poor sanitation.

On these grounds, I argue that green economy is also conducive to social development, and thus addresses all three pillars of sustainable development. Green economy, or better still, green growth thus promises to constitute an effective approach to sustainable development.

I would agree that a green economy is in need of reinforcement of its social development content and that the social development aspect of a green economy is a key issue to be explored and elaborated in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. But this does not mean that a green economy subtracts social dimension of sustainable development. In fact, it seems that a green economy constitutes an essential ingredient of social development, especially one that makes possible pursuit of this development on a sustained basis.