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**REMARKS  
BY  
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SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE 2012 UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT**

**The Second Preparatory Meeting of  
the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**

**New York, 7 March 2011**

Thank you, Ambassador Ashe.

Co-Chairs of the UNCSD Preparatory Process  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

I am very pleased to welcome you to the Second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the UNCSD preparatory process.

My remarks today will focus on two areas. First, I would like to introduce the reports prepared to support the proceedings of today's meeting. Second, I will briefly update you on preparations for the Rio 2012 Conference.

To begin, there are two reports before the Committee: (1) the Secretary-General's Report on Objective and Themes of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, and (2) the Synthesis Report on Best Practices and Lessons Learned on the Objective and Themes of the Conference.

The Secretary-General's Report on conference objective and themes highlights several key points for consideration.

On the area of green economy, there are four main messages:

First, creating a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication will need to be built from the bottom up, responding to national and local priorities and challenges.

Second, an increasing number of developed and developing countries are pursuing green growth strategies, including low-carbon growth initiatives. Efforts do not yet add up to a level of ambition equal to the global challenges, but it's a start.

Third, the strategies and policies of green economies need to consider impacts on poverty and human development. However, this does not replace the need for increased social investments and continued attention to education and health.

Fourth, countries remain concerned about near-term transition costs from loss of competitiveness, economic dislocations, unemployment, as well as worsening terms of trade and restrictive trade practices.

The report also highlights a number of points related to the institutional framework for sustainable development.

First, the institutional framework must be considered at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Second, institutional governance on sustainable development is facing fragmentation - in international environmental governance, as well as in social and economic areas. At the same time, the challenges we face are becoming more inter-linked and cross-cutting. It begs the question: can the existing institutional framework adequately address them all?

The report underscores the need for strengthening the three pillars of the institutional framework for sustainable development: environmental, economic and social, in a balanced way in order to ensure convergence of all three agendas.

Our second report, the Synthesis Report, is a revised version of a report that was circulated during the first Intersessional meeting in January. This new version takes into account two new items: responses from seven additional countries, three of which are developing countries, as well as the statements delivered by various stakeholders at the first Intersessional meeting. Among these statements are a number of countries who have not submitted responses to questionnaires.

The report's Way Forward section is also updated to reflect emerging areas of convergence, as well as areas of disagreement that require further discussion.

I also want to take this opportunity to inform the Committee that a panel of experts, which was selected jointly by DESA, UNCTAD and UNEP, has also prepared an expert report, entitled "Transition to a Green Economy: Benefits, Challenges and Risks from a Sustainable Development Perspective".

The report looks at the macroeconomic policy implications of the transition to the green economy, the interlinked issues of trade, investment and technology, and the challenges green economies pose for developing countries.

While the views expressed in this report are those of the experts, we hope it will help shed new light on the interface of the green economy and macroeconomic policy.

Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now let me turn to other preparations for the Rio 2012 Conference.

As I reported to you previously, efforts are underway to deliver coordinated and integrated support to the preparatory process. In this regard, we are tapping the capacities of existing coordination mechanisms within the UN system, such as EC-ESA plus, UNDG and EMG.

Many agencies are already engaged in wide ranging initiatives to support the process.

We have intensified efforts to support both regional and national level preparations. Regional Commissions are taking the lead in organizing the regional preparatory meetings. On the national level, we developed a proposal with UNDP to begin preparations. We are now in the process of raising funds to enable us to start early implementation.

On a positive note, I am pleased to inform you that slight improvements with the Trust Fund have enabled us to support the participation of representatives from developing countries and Major groups in this PrepCom.

I would like to thank all donors who have contributed to the Trust Fund, and encourage the others to do so.

Another important development is that many countries have announced an intention to organize preparatory meetings on issues related to Conference themes.

These countries include: Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Monaco, Republic of Korea, as well as our host Brazil. These meetings will take place during the second half of this year. Their results, as well as those of the Regional preparatory meetings, will provide important inputs for the outcome document.

I am also pleased to inform the Committee that major groups have been actively engaged in the preparatory process, making a variety of contributions. Many are preparing to launch specific initiatives in the lead-up to and during the Conference. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their engagement.

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by highlighting one very important issue. We are striving for a meaningful outcome of the Conference, one which galvanizes political will from Member States and other stakeholders and partners, and advances the implementation of sustainable development.

To address the challenges we face, we need a forward-looking, action-oriented outcome document. This document must build on Agenda 21, JPOI and other outcomes of the intergovernmental processes. It must add value by addressing new and emerging issues, tackling gaps. Particularly, it must accelerate implementation.

I hope that Member States at this PrepCom will provide clear guidance on this critical matter and on the preparatory processes ahead, as entrusted by the General Assembly.

Finally, as Secretary-General of the Conference, let me assure you that the Secretariat will do our utmost to support this preparatory process.

I wish all of us a very productive meeting.

Thank you.

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