

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
Second Preparatory Committee

Statement- Brazil
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Session 1

Objectives of the Conference

In considering the objectives of Rio+20, one should start by posing the questions : What has changed in global economy in the last 20 years ? Why is it necessary to renew political commitment to sustainable development?

There is no shorthand answer for the first question. Undoubtedly, though, the world has become increasingly integrated and the space available for to countries jump-start their development in relative isolation has become commensurately more restricted.

The recent scenario of multiple crises calls for major changes to the international economic system. The World Economic and Social Survey, in its 2010 edition states that: “Sustained and widespread future prosperity will require major reforms in global economic governance and *new thinking about global economic development. A central concern of the new thinking will be the need for a focus on sustainable development*”.

Assessing progress and gaps :

The international consensus that arose from UNCED in 1992 enhanced political commitment at many levels. Even though progress has been made, it has been uneven both globally and regionally, and even nationally. WSSD in 2002 reinforced these key messages and provided elements for improved implementation.

States have developed their strategies and plans regarding the promotion of sustainable development, responding to growing pressure from the organised Civil Society to implement guidelines and commitments under international instruments.

On the other hand, new challenges have emerged and others have become more pressing. Such is the case of climate change for instance. Even though commitment to tackling the remaining challenges in implementing strategies for sustainable development has been reiterated at different fora, the provision of means of implementation, including financing, may not have followed at the same pace, and in some cases didn't materialize, both within national budgets or through official development aid.

The recent crises have caused further imbalances. In this context, the assessment of remaining gaps in the implementation of Section IV, Chapters 33 (financial resources and mechanisms) and 34 (transfer of environmentally sound technology, cooperation and

capacity-building), of Agenda 21 is ever more pressing, especially since some long-term commitments for sustainable development previously agreed upon should be attained by 2012.

The issue of financing is crucial and closely related to the objectives of Rio+20. Due consideration must be given, inter alia, to the Monterrey Consensus. UNCTAD could contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goal by looking closely at various funding mechanisms to ensure, on a favourable basis, the most effective and expeditious transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries.

Technology is indeed a crucial area to be assessed: the implementation of sustained technology cooperation and systematic training and capacity-building at all levels, with a view to identifying areas where value could be added to accelerate the implementation of sustainable development strategies, will be a valuable contribution by UNCTAD.

The concept of sustainable development has provided a matrix for concerted action, both at the international and national levels, to bring about concrete changes in development paths. The thorough integration of the three pillars of sustainable development, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing, is still to be fully achieved and sustained.

Sustainable development has to be implemented at the national level. But national strategies need to be supported by steady financial flows, by a fair multilateral trading regime by stable and regulated international financial markets.

More has to be done and the Rio+20 Conference should provide stimulus for action, by identifying areas where further adjustments have to be made.

New and emerging issues:

The World Economic and Social Survey 2010 asserts that “By 2050, 70 per cent of the world’s population is projected to live in urban areas and megacities and undergoing further growth will create problems of their own.”

The results of the recent census show that, already in 2010, 85% of the Brazilian population lives in cities”.

This very clearly points to the issue of enhancing the sustainability of cities as not so much as an emerging issue, but at least in the case of Brazil, as a pressing contemporary one.

Energy is vital for sustainable development and poverty eradication. It is central to attaining benefits in the three pillars of sustainable development. It is closely linked to water, agriculture, health, population, education, transport, sanitation and many other

sectors. It is a major challenge for developing countries to attain the MDGs. Access to sustainable and sustained supply of energy is a condition for sustainable development.

Some success stories can be identified among the many initiatives intended to address the energy challenge. Special emphasis should be given to the increase in the use of renewable sources of energy.

Access to clean water and sanitation is, albeit not new, emerging as one of the pressing challenges of the present. A call for action and the identification of a framework within which cooperation can unfold to support policies in this regard should also be a priority of UNCSD.

Policies to promote the sustainable development of cities, ensure access to clean sources of energy, clean water and sanitation can be mutually reinforcing and contribute to create a virtuous cycle that realizes the first principle of the Rio Declaration.

