

UNITED NATIONS

**2nd MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT 2012**

New York, 7 - 8 March 2011

Session 3: Theme 2 of the Conference

Institutional framework for sustainable development

Tuesday, 8th of March 2011

Statement of Italy

*Delivered by Mr. Paolo Soprano – Director for Sustainable Development
Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea*

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement made by Hungary on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

I would relate to your questions, and particularly to questions 1, 5, 6 and 7.

Allow me to thank the Presidency of the 26th session of the UNEP Governing Council for transmitting UNEP Decision on International Environmental Governance (IEG) to this 2nd meeting of the UNCSD 2012 Preparatory Committee. In 2009 Italy, together with Kenya, was co-chaired the Ministerial consultations on International Environmental Governance. From there on, we have kept looking at the IEG process with continuous political interest. We also would like to take this opportunity to congratulate with the current co-chairs, Kenya and Finland, for their hard work.

We join previous speaker to welcome UNEP Governing Council decision and we therefore believe that this Preparatory Committee should endorse the invitation therein, according to which PrepCom2 is asked to build on the Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome in its discussions on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development.

There is no time here to go over the complex and long history regarding the debates on international environmental governance and institutional framework for sustainable development, nor to explore in more details the five options contained

both in the Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome and in the SG Report to PrepCom2. We wish however to highlight our general views.

These debates have in the last decades gone side by side but have not established any link. We believe that now is time to do so. We are strongly convinced that IEG and IFSD are mutually reinforcing and that the strengthening of the IEG through the transformation of UNEP in a Specialized Agency is the first necessary step towards greater sustainability across sectors at institutional level and on the ground. The environmental specialized agency will be another tool for combating poverty since it will support the fight against the environmental causes of it.

Sustainable development idea was originated from the need to balance, include and mainstream different set of values under one single encompassing umbrella. However, in the UN system, while the social and economic pillar are strong the environment is still relatively weak, in spite of the fact that much progress has been made. The increasing number of MEAs, the extent of national and international political attention around the globe, the increasing role that national courts are playing testify both the contribution of environment to sustainable development as well as a fragmented approach in need for leadership and guidance. We believe that much work still remains to be done to address the weaknesses of the environmental pillar at institutional level as one of the major gap and obstacles to achieve sustainable development.

Sustainable development is not, and should not be, a matter of trade-offs. As several UN Reports, including the last UNEP Report on Green Economy, have pointed out sustainable development tells the story of opportunities for a long term and equitable growth. National Sustainable Development Strategies have demonstrated the difficulties but also the possibility to go in this direction. It is on this basis that we believe that IEG and IFSD are mutually supportive and also that the two themes of the conference are strongly interlinked as one can serve the purpose of the other.

Mr. co-Chair, let me say in concluding that in the months leading up to the Second Intersessional Italy is looking forward to engage constructively in a substantive discussion on Rio deliverables on this theme.

Thank you.