



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

George Strongylis

DG Environment, European Commission

**First intersessional meeting
of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development**

**Closing Session
(January 11th – 5 to 6 pm – CR 1 NLB)**

Distinguished Co-Chairs,
Secretary-General of the Conference,
Dear colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

We are concluding a very intense and highly interactive discussion of two days. We have touched upon many important issues, listened to priorities and at the same time we have given ourselves guidance for the work ahead.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the panelists who presented a variety of stimulating thoughts and ideas and we would also like to congratulate DESA for organizing this truly successful meeting.

The international community must strengthen the link between development and environment in the months ahead leading to the Conference by accelerating the achievements of the overarching goals of sustainable development. To maintain results, we should facilitate mainstreaming sustainable development into economic planning processes, while promoting the integration of national sustainable development strategies in development processes. We should constantly remind ourselves that there is no “one size fits all” option.

Concerning the first theme of UNCSD 2012, the EU and its Member States are fully committed to laying the foundations for a transition to a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Green Economy is critical for realizing the implementation of sustainable development and steps need to be taken for the establishment of an adequate institutional background. The European Union and its Member States are of the view that it is necessary to design a UN Green Economy roadmap with concrete list of actions, timeframe for implementation and clear identification of targets and key actors.

In order to strengthen and streamline the institutional framework for sustainable development, we need to take a bold step further to ensure system-wide coherence and to eliminate fragmentation. In our view, in order to be able to strengthen international sustainable governance, we must first strengthen its environmental pillar. The EU and its Member States are ready to engage and discuss further the possible options of enhancing governance at all levels.

The next step in front of us is the 2nd Preparatory Committee, where we will need to take important decisions for the Conference, including on its rules of procedures and, this is crucial, on the negotiation process of the outcome of the Conference, that should start in early 2012 when all the inputs will be available.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.