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Statement of

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U.S. Department of State**

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Thank you chair.

Rio+20 provides a critical opportunity to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development. First, the United States believes that a short, focused political outcome document – of five pages or less – is the best way to provide a legitimate political vision and demonstrate our collective commitment to sustainable development.

Rio+20 needs to energize all stakeholders including governments, private sector, youth, and nongovernmental organizations. It should inspire, mobilize, and leverage actions to achieve a sustainable future. The outcome document should resonate with organizations and individuals at all levels, from corporate boardrooms to corner cafes and schoolhouses. The outcome should be clear enough to be grasped and easily summarized by the popular press and by average citizens who may be unfamiliar with international diplomatic language. It needs to be direct and aspirational enough to drive important efforts to innovate, implement, and replicate solutions.

We firmly believe that our collective vision, call to action, and proposed solutions will be lost in 80+ pages of United Nations text. Lengthy negotiations will distract from the critical task of identifying ways in which governments can work – both individually and together – to catalyze, mobilize and enable the critical actions of all stakeholders towards sustainable development.

We are concerned that the Bureau's proposed options are inadequate to achieve the aims we have agreed in convening in Rio. They imply a lengthy negotiated text, whether a negotiated "action plan" is included in the text or as an annex.

In lieu of a negotiated action plan, we propose that the short political document of five pages be accompanied by Compendium of Commitments that would be annexed to the document. This Compendium would be delivered as part of the overall Rio +20 outcome and include a list of voluntary, non-negotiated commitments and intended actions from governments, stakeholders and partnerships. The Compendium would represent pledges from actors at all levels to take action to achieve sustainable development. We propose this voluntary Compendium of Commitments as an alternative to the Bureau's proposed Action Plan; it would be a non-negotiated official meeting outcome that would send the clear message to the global community that Rio indeed represents a new approach – broad and inclusive – toward achieving sustainable development.

The Compendium focuses on developing solutions rather than on gaining detailed consensus. It allows all key stakeholders, including national governments, cities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, scientific communities, and any interested parties to bring forward their ideas, initiatives, and efforts to achieve a sustainable future. The commitments could include actions at the local, national or global levels.

We envision these commitments would come from all stakeholders, governments individually and collectively, as well as NGOs, private sector, regional organizations, and others. By not requiring consensus on every item, it will allow us to be bold and move forward in a way that reflects a new dynamism often absent from lengthy negotiated texts. The commitments could feature some high-level initiatives and partnerships such as expansion of the Partnership for Clean Cookstoves, increasing the focus of the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles on promoting cleaner vehicle technologies, focusing attention and resources on the recently launched Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paints, or provide an opportunity to expand on the successes we have seen from NGOs and the private sector. This Compendium would also provide the opportunity for cities and sub-national governments to build on their successes in areas such as energy and water conservation, in green building or sustainable urbanization.

While we see these commitments as voluntarily entered into, we support a mechanism for accountability. The commitments would be registered and announced as one part of the official outcome of the meeting so that media and stakeholders could identify and report on the concrete actions undertaken and the concrete outcomes delivered. We believe that voluntary commitments made in good faith by each participant will be carried out with more energy and dedication than an extensive negotiated action plan. To track participants' progress in carrying out their respective commitments, we envision that implementation of the commitments could be monitored by the intergovernmental process or processes given responsibility for tracking sustainable development going forward, as well as by coalitions of civil society stakeholders.

It is essential that Rio+20 provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to contribute to sustainable development. We must provide inspiration for the billions of our citizens who not only want concrete commitments about what governments intend to do, but also want to become a part of the solution through their local communities, citizens groups, and businesses to build the sustainable future we all seek. These commitments we speak of are not a replacement for our responsibilities as governments, but rather support and build upon the efforts we make and the actions that we take. Our success as governments will be multiplied if we create a framework as a key Rio +20 deliverable that also allows actors beyond national governments to participate in Rio+20 in a meaningful way.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.