



BASD Statement to the Second UN Intersessional

New York

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Thank you Mr. Chairman. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

On behalf of the Business and Industry Major Group, we thank you for your efforts to engage all major groups in the Rio+20 process, and we look forward to continuing this collaboration in a constructive and determined way.

We support the development of a strong political declaration accompanied by a concrete set of actions as the outcome of Rio+20. Progress has been achieved over the past 20 years; global society has a much better awareness of the opportunities, challenges and imperatives of sustainable development. The main challenge today is to accelerate the pace and scale of implementation.

We are proud of the contributions to sustainable development made by the business community across the globe over the past 20 years. Businesses of all sizes and in all countries show increasing engagement in sustainable development. At the same time, we recognize that conditions continue to change and that much more action is needed. There are still many interconnected challenges that remain to be addressed and new ones will appear.

As a matter of priority, we view the following elements as critical to the effectiveness of the Conference:

A balanced, factual evaluation of the progress made over the past 20 years

A common vision for a sustainable future

An outline of the 'enabling framework' for national policy and regulation to support sustainable development

A clear set of priorities for action at the international level

A program to stimulate the application of technology and innovation across the full spectrum of sustainable development issues

The first two items are obvious. First, a balanced, factual evaluation of the progress made since 1992 must be completed, as a baseline. Second, a common vision for sustainable development defines our target.

Third, the 'enabling frameworks' which are often discussed must be defined. These frameworks must provide a balanced set of policies which support a broad range of private sector efforts to drive sustainable development. They must recognize that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach and the Green Economy seeks to green all elements of the economy in their own ways.

This includes

(a) the core economic and market frameworks that support development in general,

(b) a framework for the green economy that supports an acceleration of sustainable development,

and

(c) clear criteria and processes necessary to measure progress.

Every day businesses face the economic realities of making investments, creating jobs, and delivering essential products and services to a growing population. We recognize the need to green our current economies, and the opportunities that a transition to a green economy implies.



We also recognize that the investments required are massive. To "green" all economies, to address the challenges of developing and emerging economies, and to work within a time frame that does not put the planet at risk, businesses, like other stakeholders, require clarity and consistency in policy and regulatory frameworks. This is essential to stimulate the investment that must be made in favour of global sustainability.

This can only happen with a strong partnership between business, and civil society on the one hand and government on the other. Governments have the responsibility to provide the enabling frameworks that make it possible for business to deliver solutions, in particular to support small and medium-size enterprises as the core economic actors in the green economy. Businesses need partnerships with civil society to create trust and support for the substantial transformations that the world will have to go through on the pathway to sustainability.

Fourth, the action plan to be developed must assign priority to the actions proposed. While we would like to see action on many fronts, international processes must prioritise those areas where the impacts can be positive, scalable, and fast.

Fifth, we ask that the Conference focus on stimulating innovation, specifically in the deployment of new knowledge and technology, as much as pure research and development. We already have the majority of the technologies, financial resources, and management skills necessary to make the green economy a reality. The enabling policy framework, and the investment funds available, must be directed at the innovation gap in order to change the pace of sustainable development efforts.

In conclusion, and to echo other statements from the major groups, we must be true partners in the negotiations in order to be true partners in the solutions. We welcome the openness that has characterized this process so far and sincerely hope it will continue in the months of intense preparations ahead of us. Business will continue to move forward, and to pursue sustainability in our operations, but we cannot achieve the dramatic progress necessary without the cooperation of government.

Business cannot succeed in societies that fail, but it is equally true that society cannot achieve sustainability without businesses as committed solutions providers. The sustainability challenges today require urgency in action and implementation. Let's start acting together now and not wait for perfect solutions. We look forward to building strong partnerships with all key actors to achieve this.

Thank you.