

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS TO CONCLUDING SESSION OF THE 18TH SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
New York, 14 May 2010**

Distinguished Chair,
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join His Excellency, Dr. Luis Alberto Ferraté Felice, at the concluding plenary of the 18th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

I regret that I couldn't be with you at the High Level Segment. I was in Canada, which as you know is hosting the next G-8 and G-20 summits.

These two groupings have an important role in ensuring that our efforts for sustainable development stay on track.

As you are aware, sustainable development is among my highest priorities for 2010. That is why I will be convening an MDG Summit here in September.

We need to accelerate momentum for meeting the Goals.

We also need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable countries and communities.

The Commission on Sustainable Development is the highest political forum within the United Nations for addressing the interlinkages between these challenges.

I understand that you have had a very productive two weeks.

I welcome your emphasis on learning from best practices.

That approach will be a central plank of the MDG Summit.

I also appreciate your efforts to consider how your decisions can have more impact.

Ultimately, everything we do is tested by one criterion: has it improved peoples' lives?

With that in mind, I would like to stress four points.

First, let us focus on practical decisions that can be translated into action and scaled-up.

Second, all important decisions should be concrete, with time-bound goals.

Third, let us do more to build links with other international bodies and key forums and processes.

And fourth, we must continually assess performance and progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The twentieth anniversary of the Commission on Sustainable Development is fast approaching.

Few of the challenges identified at the Rio Earth Summit have been adequately tackled. New ones have gained added urgency.

As we look forward to the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio + 20, let me take this opportunity to announce that I have decided to designate the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Sha Zukang, as Secretary-General of the Conference.

Mr. Sha will be supported by two Executive Coordinators, whose names I will announce shortly.

Rio + 20 will be supported by a dedicated secretariat located in DESA, drawing staff from other UN organizations.

I thank Brazil for its generous offer to host the conference. I wish the Preparatory Meeting every success as it gathers for its first meeting, starting on Monday.

In our planning for this landmark event, let us recapture the solidarity and creativity of the Earth Summit.

We have a responsibility to future generations to implement what we have pledged.

Good ideas are not enough. We need focused action.

We know what we need to do. We know what works. The time for delay is over. The time for delivery is now.

Thank you.