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Rio to Jo'burg and Beyond The World Summit on Sustainable Development

Annelize Schroeder

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Rio to Jo'burg and Beyond

**The World Summit on Sustainable
Development**

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SAIIA National Office Bearers

Fred Phaswana
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Rio to Jo'burg and Beyond

The World Summit on Sustainable Development

Annelize Schroeder¹

Executive Summary

Sustainable development, the focus of the 2002 Johannesburg Summit, comprises three pillars: economic, environmental and social. Striking a balance between these developmental comparatives is a key tenet of the 2002 Summit and beyond, for governments, inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Meeting the development targets set by the 1992 Rio Conference has proven difficult. Whereas official development assistance (ODA) was targeted to increase from 0.33% of GNP to 0.7%, this has instead declined to 0.22%. The debt burden for developing states has not decreased, but increased by 34%.

The key challenges for the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), however, are not only to impart a notion of global partnership and sharing on environmental and developmental issues, but to link these concepts in practice.

¹ ANNELIZE SCHROEDER is the Director of Operations at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA).

Introduction

Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well being. However, integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfillment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future. No nation can achieve this on its own; but together we can—in a global partnership for sustainable development.²

World leaders and interest groups will gather in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002 for the WSSD. Approximately 70,000 people will attend to discuss the implementation of sustainable development and map the road ahead. This meeting is a follow-on to the 1992 Rio conference, though strenuous attempts have been made not to portray the event as Rio+10 and to shift the agenda accordingly.

In planning the WSSD, as much attention has arguably been focused on the logistical arrangements as on the agenda of the meeting. However, critical issues to be tackled at the summit include the following:

- Differences in perception over the focus of the conference exist between those who see it as a concentration on 'sustainable development' and those who view environmental and ecological concerns as the priority. These differences have been evident in the run-up to the WSSD, and are echoed in the divisions between developed and developing countries.
- The relationship between regional and continental initiatives, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and their consistency with the outcomes of the WSSD.

² *Agenda 21*, A/CONF/151/26, Vol I, Office of Public Information, New York, 1992.

- The role and agenda of NGOs, increasingly active participants on the global environmental and political-economic stages, and their relationship with governmental bodies.
- The relationship between monetary aid, technical assistance and the meeting of developmental commitments within a specific time-frame.

This *SAIIA Report* focuses on the history of sustainable development, international attempts to create and focus attention on this important issue, and prospects for the post-Johannesburg era. It is divided into three sections: First, the historical background; second, preparations for the Johannesburg WSSD; and third, likely outcomes on future scenarios.

Section One: Historical Background

The road to Johannesburg did not start at Rio, but instead in Stockholm, Sweden, where the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held in June 1972. The Stockholm conference was significant because it was then for the first time that environmental issues appeared on the international political agenda. Economic growth and industrial pollution were then recognised as posing a threat to the environment. The Conference also recognised the relationship between poverty and development, and the influence of that link on the environment. Developing countries argued that poverty posed the worst threat to the environment, and that economic growth had to be pursued at all costs.³ The Stockholm Conference thus witnessed the first signs of the extent of the polarisation between North and South in the sometimes conflicting priorities of economic growth and

³ See <http://www.ecobeetle.com/stockholm/htm>.

environmental protection which have dominated the debate for 30 years.

In the wake of the Stockholm Conference, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was adopted.

Although the Stockholm Conference at its closing session agreed to convene a second UN Conference on the Human Environment, another 15 years were to pass before the world was reminded of its commitment. In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development published its report *Our Common Future* (also known as the Brundtland Report). This document outlined the concept of 'sustainable development' which was identified as: '... development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' The report was primarily concerned with securing global equity and redistributing resources towards poorer nations, whilst encouraging their economic growth. It identified three components of sustainable development, which remain valid in negotiations today. These are: environmental protection, economic growth and social equity. The report also recommended an integrated approach to policy-making in which environmental protection and long-term economic growth were seen as complementary.⁴

The publication of the Brundtland Report and its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 1987 started a process that culminated in the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio Conference, or Rio Summit.

⁴ See http://www.mmu.ac.uk/aric/ea/sustainability/Older/Brundtland_Report.html.

⁵ See <http://www.foei.org/publications/link/98/3980400.html>

The Rio Summit

More than 100 Heads of State met between 3–14 June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the Rio Summit which provided the occasion for significant progress in multilateral policies on sustainable development. Several important documents and legal instruments were adopted:

- the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;
- *Agenda 21*, the action plan to address sustainable development for the future;
- the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC);
- the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- the Statement on Forest Principles and a new, integrated approach to the problem of desertification which led to the adoption of the Convention on Desertification in 1994.⁵

The Rio Summit also resulted in the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in December 1992 as a functional body of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Based in New York, the Commission assists in improving the UN's co-ordination of environmental and development activities. Its mandate is threefold.

- The Commission reviews progress at international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the final documents of Rio. These are *Agenda 21*, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (also known as the Forest Principles) which are not legally binding.

⁶ See <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csdback.htm>

- The Commission is also expected to provide policy guidance and suggest options for activities so as to follow up on commitments made at Rio to achieve sustainable development.
- The Commission also aims to promote dialogue and build partnerships for sustainable development with governments, the international community and the major groups identified in Agenda 21 as key actors outside the central government who have a role to play in bringing about sustainable development. These groups include women, youth, indigenous peoples, NGOs, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific community and farmers.⁶

Understanding Agenda 21

Agenda 21, a 300-page action plan for the 21st century, will form the backbone of negotiations on sustainable development at the Johannesburg Summit, although its provisions will not be renegotiated. It is thus examined here in detail.

Agenda 21 is a broad-ranging, long-term and ambitious document, covering socio-economic issues, conservation and resource management, means of implementation and ways to strengthen the roles of different players.⁷

While the Rio Declaration focused primarily on the inter-relationship between man and environment, Agenda 21 provided an action plan aimed at ensuring a better life for all. Agenda 21 is complementary to the Brundtland Report and carried further its message that socio-

⁷ Social partners for sustainable development include the youth, indigenous people, non-governmental organisations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, representatives of business and industry, members of the scientific and technological community and farmers.

economic development and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive and should be addressed through effective policy measures.

In Agenda 21 the needs of developing countries were clearly spelt out, and proposals to redress the imbalances between the developed and developing countries made. The Agenda placed a heavy responsibility on developed countries to assist developing countries in reaching the goal of sustainable development, requiring that they should provide ODA to developing countries calculated according to the United Nations formula of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP). Agenda 21 also set very broad targets for achieving its objectives.

Social and Economic Dimensions

A key aim of the Agenda was to address the huge socio-economic disparities between North and South. The most serious problems relate, *inter alia*, to the trade barriers faced by developing countries, their indebtedness, inadequate development finance, limited access to developed country markets, and falling prices for the commodities that are the main products of many developing economies.

Agenda 21 proposed trade liberalisation, the provision of adequate financial resources, debt relief and the promotion of macro-economic policies conducive to development and the sustainability of the environment. Agenda 21 also called for the rejection of protectionism and the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, and urged increased investment in developing countries.

The Agenda called for greater attention to sustainable consumption patterns which would require new national policies. Governments should ensure greater efficiency in the use of energy and resources, reduce the amount of energy and materials used per unit in the production of goods and services, promote research and development in environmentally sound technologies, assist developing countries

in using these technologies and use new and renewable sources of energy and natural resources.

To integrate population concerns into national planning, policy and decision-making, Agenda 21 called on governments to combine environmental and population issues in a holistic view of development. This would ensure that education, housing and public works form part of an overall strategy to achieve health for all by the year 2000. In addition, Agenda 21 cautioned governments against the strain that HIV/AIDS was likely to place on health care resources. With regard to urban health problems, the Agenda set a target of 10–40% on the improvement level in health indicators for, *inter alia*, infant and maternal mortality by 2000.

Agenda 21 also emphasised the need for governments to adopt policies that will help to eradicate poverty. These include policies on health care and basic education; and policies on the rights of women, children and indigenous peoples. Governments were also asked to support community-driven attempts to secure sustainable ways of earning a living for local populations. Support could take the form of giving greater power to communities by generating employment, and by prioritising education and training.

The Agenda also proposed the full integration of environmental and developmental issues for government decision-making on economic, social, fiscal, energy, agricultural, transportation, trade and other policies. It also called for environmental costs to be incorporated in the decisions of producers and consumers and for a partnership to be created between government and business to deal with sustainable development issues.

Conservation and Management of Resources for Development

In the Agenda, countries were called upon to control the emission of greenhouse gases and to rely more on new and renewable energy sources. Governments were asked to adopt sustainable land-resource management policies, and focus on decision-making. Three mechanisms were proposed to address the problem: research into conducting impact, risk, cost and benefit assessments; consultation with the public on land-resource matters; and the participation of civil society in decision-making processes.

Means of Implementation

Agenda 21 also made the following recommendations on the financial mechanisms required. Substantial additional financial resources, including grants or concessional financing at predictable levels, would be required by developing countries.

Other available funding resources and mechanisms were identified as:

- the International Development Association (IDA) as well as regional and sub-regional development banks;
- the Global Environment Facility (GEF), jointly managed by the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP);
- specialised agencies, UN bodies and multilateral institutions;
- debt relief measures for low- and middle-income developing countries;
- increased private funding and direct investment; and
- innovative financing.

Agenda 21 stated that developing countries in particular need access to new and efficient technologies to alleviate poverty and human

suffering. National policies (including subsidies, taxes and regulations) should encourage the private and public sectors to become innovative and to remove barriers to the transfer of knowledge and technology. The international community should assist developing countries to assess their technology needs, and to exchange with other countries the knowledge they had gained. When the Agenda was published in 1992, it called upon countries to complete, by 1994, a review of their capacity-building needs. It was envisaged that bilateral technical aid to developing countries would amount to approximately \$15 billion annually, one fourth of total ODA.

Agenda 21 also addressed the role of institutions within the UN, post-conference arrangements and the relationship between the UN system and other international, regional, national and non-governmental institutions, organisations and groups. The document proposed that the UN General Assembly consider holding a special session no later than 1997 to review and appraise the implementation of the action plan, and that a Commission on Sustainable Development should be established no later than 1993. At its 47th session in 1997, the General Assembly was to determine the Commission's relationship with other intergovernmental bodies concerned with the environment and development. The task of monitoring the co-operation and exchange of information between the UN system and the multilateral financial institutions was given to the Administrative Committee on Coordination, headed by the Secretary-General of the UN. Technical and operational assistance, as well as co-ordination necessary for the programmes of Agenda 21 was to be provided through the strengthening of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was also to play an important role.

Section Two: The Road from Rio to Johannesburg

After the Rio Summit it became clear that Agenda 21 could be implemented only if all of the mechanisms identified at the Summit were set in motion immediately to reach the targets set. Several important conferences have taken place since 1992 to give effect to the implementation of the proposals in the Agenda. These include the Fourth (Beijing) World Conference on Women (1995), UNCTAD (1996), Rio+5 (1997), the Doha Ministerial Meeting (2001), and the Monterrey Meeting (2002).

The outcomes of these meetings, accompanied by the decisions of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), are briefly examined below.

The Fourth World Conference on Women: Beijing, 4–15 September 1995

The position of women, particularly those in developing societies, is today regarded as a key indicator of good social, economic and political governance. The UN Secretary-General at the time, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, noted in 1995 that:

Without progress in the situation of women, there can be no true social development. Human Rights are not worthy [of] the name if they exclude the female half of humanity. The struggle for women's equality is part of the struggle for a better world for all human beings and all societies.

⁸ *The Worlds Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*, Office of Public Information, United Nations, New York, 2002.

Although improvements in certain areas, (such as education and economic activity) have been recorded, there are still areas of concern. According to the UN:

- Physical and sexual abuses affect millions of girls and women worldwide. Figures released in 2002 (based on reports in 1991) indicate high sexual abuse in any relationship (excluding current partners) in the following countries: Nicaragua (52 %), Puerto Rico (48%), Bangladesh (47%) and Ethiopia (45%).
- Women and girls comprise half of the world's refugees. They are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence while in transit, in refugee camps and during resettlement.
- Women comprise an increasing share of the world's labour force (at least one-third in all regions, except in northern Africa and western Asia).
- Women remain at the lower end of a segregated labour market, and continue to be employed in a limited range of occupations, to hold positions of little or no authority, and receive even less pay than men.⁸

Within this context, delegates met in Beijing, China, between 4–15 September 1995 to attend the Fourth World Conference on Women. The ensuing report called on countries to respect women's rights, grant them socio-economic equality and independence, prevent and ultimately eliminate violence against women, and give full support to the 1985 *Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women* by the end of the 20th century.⁹

The Conference adopted a *Platform for Action* which undertook a new international commitment to women's empowerment and was aimed at accelerating the implementation of the *Nairobi Forward-Looking*

⁹ *Report on the Fourth World Conference on Women, A/CONF.177/20*, United Nations Publications, 17 October 1995.

¹⁰ See <http://www.undp.org/fwcw/plat.htm>.

Strategy for the Advancement of Women. The document called for the removal of obstacles to women's participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making, and outlined the actions to be taken on national and international levels to remove the existing obstacles.¹⁰

Seven years after the Beijing Conference, there has been some progress on the goals set. While some analysts argue that this is due to new technologies and globalisation, which affect men and women equally, others indicate that the gains for women have been lost during the economic and political transitions in some countries. It appears that real and lasting change in the quality of women's lives will take years to accomplish.

One of the targets set by the Beijing *Platform for Action* was to close the gender gap in primary and secondary school education by 2005 and to reduce illiteracy rates by the year 2000. Statistics released by the UN reveal that the gender gap in enrolment in primary and secondary levels is closing. These gender differences in education cannot be eradicated by 2005. In 22 African and nine Asian countries, the gap is still wide, with enrolment ratios for girls more than 80% less than boys. Girls' access to, and completion of, secondary education is still limited, particularly in rural areas.

The *Platform for Action* advocated that women should be allowed to a more active role in decision-making processes. UN statistics show that during the first part of 2000, only nine women were heads of state or government. In 1998, eight percent of the world's cabinet ministers were women, compared to six percent in 1994. Sweden is the only country with a majority of women ministers—55%. However, since 1995, significant progress has been made in the appointment of women to sub-ministerial positions, particularly in the Caribbean and the

developed regions outside Europe, where women hold approximately 20% of such positions.

Regarding women's role in economic activity, statistics reveal that rates in this sphere have increased over the past two decades in all regions except sub-Saharan Africa, the transitional economies of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Oceania. The largest increase occurred in South America, where the involvement of women in the economy rose from 26% to 45% between 1980 and 1997. The lowest rates were found in Northern Africa and Western Asia, where less than one-third of women were economically active.

The statistics paint a depressing picture of the influence of AIDS on women, and suggest that the toll of HIV/AIDS on women will sharply increase. According to recent Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) global estimates, women now account for almost half of both the 32.4 million adults currently living with HIV/AIDS and of the 12.7 million adults who have died from the disease since the epidemic began. In 1999, 52% of the 2.1 million adults who died from AIDS worldwide were women. The majority of these deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, where women account for 55% of those infected with HIV/AIDS. Currently, there are 12 African women infected with the virus for every 10 African men.¹¹

The importance of the Beijing Conference was in highlighting the major issues that confront women world-wide. The steps that were outlined in the Beijing *Platform for Action* aimed to address these problems, and from the figures released by the UN, it seems as if significant progress has been made in many regions. However, in areas such as sub-Saharan Africa and Southern and Western Asia, much more needs to be done. There is no doubt that WSSD will pay significant attention to these

¹² See <http://www.unctad.org/en/special/u9midra.htm>

areas and devise more steps towards rectifying and improving the status of women.

UNCTAD: Midrand, 26 April–11 May 1996

UNCTAD held its ninth session in Midrand, South Africa, between 26 April–11 May 1996. The event was billed as: 'Promoting growth and sustainable development in a globalising and liberalising world economy'.

One of the most significant changes that had occurred since the previous conference was the creation of the WTO, which strengthened the rules-based trading system and furthered the process of liberalisation. This, in turn, opened up new opportunities for sustainable development and growth. UNCTAD IX was therefore taken as an opportunity to define the relationship between the two organisations. It was agreed that UNCTAD should continue to work towards assisting developing countries to identify their requirements relating to trade negotiations, fulfilling WTO obligations and negotiating trade issues effectively.

A further important consequence of the UNCTAD IX session in the context of sustainable development was the adoption of the so-called *Partnership for Growth and Development*. This document outlined steps to be taken internationally to facilitate the integration of developing countries, and in particular Least Developed Countries (LDCs) into the global economy and international trading system. The document stated that the notion of 'partnership' should be based on a clear definition of roles. These are intergovernmental co-operation between

²² See <http://www.unctad.org/en/special/u9midra.htm>

²³ See <http://www.unctad.org/sg/statements.en.htm>

developed and developing countries, among developing countries themselves (with special attention to LDCs); the effective co-ordination and complementarity of multilateral institutions; the mobilisation of human resources; and partnerships between the public and private sector.¹²

Although the UNCTAD debate focused mainly on the integration of developing countries into the global economic system, subsequent discussions went further to embrace environmental issues. The interdependence of trade and environmental issues featured strongly in the post-Doha period (to be described later in this document), but also included an UNCTAD programme on the environment.¹³

UNCTAD IX was one of several conferences held during the 1990s that aimed at establishing international benchmarks for human security and development. While it highlighted the plight of LDCs and once again placed the developmental needs of Africa on the international agenda, it also gave prominence to the idea of 'partnership for development', which later became one of the pillars of NEPAD. Yet, these gains became secondary when viewed against the high-profile agenda of the WTO.

Rio+ 5

At a special session of the UN General Assembly held between 23–27 June 1997 in New York, the international community was afforded the opportunity to review the implementation of Agenda 21. The purpose of the meeting was four-fold:

- to revive commitments towards sustainable development made at Rio;

¹² *Critical Trends—Global Change and Sustainable Development*, United Nations, New York, 1997, p.1.

- to assess the successes and failures of Agenda 21, and to propose measures to strengthen these;
- to identify new challenges; and
- to emphasise issues that had not been addressed in sufficient depth at Rio.¹⁴

Although the conference accomplished its mandate, it was seen by many developing countries as a failure. No further commitments were made in addition to those made at Rio. The developing countries regarded the process as stagnant and sabotaged by the developed countries. Perhaps the two most serious issues of disappointment for the developing countries were the failure of the developed countries to pledge increased monetary aid and technical assistance, and the fact that no agreement was reached on specific time-bound frameworks for the implementation of Agenda 21. These two issues will enjoy priority attention at the forthcoming WSSD.

World Trade Organisation

Pursuant to the objectives of Agenda 21, the preamble of the *Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO*, signed in April 1994, reiterated the commitment made two years earlier at Rio, that the international community would make positive efforts to ensure that developing countries and especially LDCs secured a share in the growth of world trade. Developing countries believe that this commitment was an empty promise, as the plight of the poor became worse in the ensuing years.

The period after the Seattle WTO negotiations in 1999 saw the organisation crippled by deadlock and disagreements between members, with virtually no decisions taken or implemented. However, the events of 11 September 2001 played an important role in creating a

¹⁵ *Doha Ministerial Declaration*, World Trade Organisation: WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1.

new impetus for the activities of the WTO, because they demonstrated what poverty and marginalisation can lead to. The efforts of the WTO Secretariat and its members to revitalise the organisation, combined with a justifiable fear of international recession following the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11th, led to an agreement to hold a new round of negotiations to discuss ways and means to achieve international trade regulation and liberalisation.

These negotiations, known as the Doha Development Agenda, started in January 2002 and are scheduled to end in 2005. The Doha Ministerial Declaration of 20 November 2001¹⁵ takes cognisance of the need for all countries, especially LDCs, to benefit from the increased opportunities and improved welfare generated by the multilateral trading system. It promises to provide market access on a broad range of goods and services of crucial interest to developing countries, especially in the field of agriculture. However, concrete action on the latter remains to be seen, as the EU's position on its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) could stall the process indefinitely. The US position on steel and its continued reluctance to adopt less protectionist policies on textiles and clothing, also threaten any progress on these issues.

Through the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the WTO pledges to work in close co-operation with UNCTAD and other relevant international organisations, to ensure that LDCs receive technical assistance and capacity building support in the trade and investment spheres. Developing countries have also received special concessions in the area of health. For example, more flexibility will be allowed regarding the interpretation of the rules on patent protection. Consequently, the governments of developing countries will be able to issue compulsory licences for generic products in emergency situations, such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic.¹⁶

¹⁶ 'Changing the barriers: Prospects for the WTO's Doha Round', *Global Dialogue*, 7, 1, April 2002, p.3.

During the forthcoming Doha negotiations, developing countries will be strengthened by the participation of China, which has recently been accepted as a WTO member. In its association with developing countries (in the UN context, the G-77) China will provide the necessary impetus to trade negotiations. China's position within the WTO will be watched closely: as arguably the most important developing member-state in the WTO, it is faced with a precarious situation. On the one hand the country will become a major role player in this multilateral forum. On the other, it is required to implement WTO rules domestically. While these could bolster China's already significant structural economic reforms, any failure by following the WTO's rules, could create an undesirable precedent within the Organisation.

Regarding trade and the environment, the Doha Ministerial Declaration makes provision for negotiations on three issues:

- the relationship between existing WTO rules and specific trade obligations set out in multilateral environmental agreements (MEA);
- procedures for regular information exchange between MEA Secretariats and the relevant WTO committees, and the criteria for granting observer status; and
- the reduction or elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to environmental goods and services.

In addition, the Declaration instructs the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) to give particular attention to:

- the effect of environmental measures on market access for developing countries, particularly LDCs;
- the effect of the elimination or reduction of trade restrictions and distortions;
- the relevant provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights; and

¹⁷ *Doha Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1*

- labelling requirements for environmental purposes.¹⁷

The disruptions and disorder that characterised the Seattle Round, unnerved the WTO. If the Doha Round is to improve on the Seattle talks, the developed countries will have to honour their commitments in concrete ways, and not merely pay lip service.

International Conference on Financing for Development: 21–22 March 2002

This Conference, also referred to as the Monterrey Conference, was attended by heads of state and government to discuss the challenges of developmental financing, especially in developing countries.

The undertakings made by the developed countries in terms of the UN *Millennium Declaration* form an important segment of the document on the *Final Outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development*. Coming as it does in the wake of the events of September 11, which exacerbated the global economic slowdown, the document urges the international community into closer collaboration on the promotion of sustained economic growth. It also urges countries to support the development frameworks (such as NEPAD) that have been initiated at regional level.

The document also recommends certain actions to promote economic growth:

- **Mobilisation of domestic financial resources for development.** Examples are the creation of the necessary internal conditions for domestic savings, sustainable levels of investment and an increase in human capacity. In order to create the right climate to achieve these conditions, good governance is of the utmost importance.
- **Mobilisation of international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows.** This can only take place in an economic and political environment that is stable and

predictable. There is also a need for sufficient and stable private financial flows to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Measures that might mitigate the impact of excessive volatility of short-term capital flows should also be considered.

- **International trade as an engine for development.** A universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system is required.
- **Increase in international financial and technical co-operation for development.** This relates to the importance of the role that the ODA plays in development, especially in countries with the lowest capacity to attract private direct investment.
- **Relief of external debt.** External debt relief can play a key role in the development of indebted countries. Debt relief measures should, as far as possible, be pursued with international financial fora. Although some initiatives have been undertaken to reduce outstanding indebtedness, further measures, including debt cancellation should be adopted. Debt relief can assist progress towards achieving the developmental goals of the *Millennium Declaration*.
- **Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development.** There is a need to enhance the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems. Corrective measures include improvement of global economic governance and a strengthening of the UN's leadership role in promoting development.

In the document, prominence is given to the role of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), especially in respect of the role they could play to protect international financial stability in economic crises.¹⁸

¹⁸ *Final Outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, United Nations document A/CONF/198/1, 1 March 2002.

From New York to Bali to Jo'burg

The UN General Assembly decided at its 55th session in 2000 that a 10-year review of the Rio Conference should be held in South Africa in 2002. The mandate given to the Summit was threefold:

- to focus on the identification of accomplishments and areas where further efforts are needed to implement Agenda 21 and other outcomes of UNCED;
- to focus on action-oriented decisions in areas where further efforts are needed for the implementation of Agenda 21; and
- to address new challenges and opportunities within the framework of Agenda 21.

The UN General Assembly mandated the CSD to act as the preparatory committee for the WSSD. In this capacity, the Commission was instructed, *inter alia*, to assess the successes and failures of Agenda 21, to identify and address new challenges and opportunities and to propose rules and procedures for the WSSD. Four Preparatory Committee Meetings (PrepComs) were envisaged. The first meeting was intended to focus on administrative procedures, while the three additional meetings were to focus on the contents of the programme of work for the WSSD.

The first PrepCom was held between 30 April–2 May 2001 in New York, to prepare the administrative arrangements for the Summit. This was followed by the second PrepCom between 28 January–8 February 2002. Among the topics, the meeting focused on a comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21. Recommendations for future action and certain time-bound measures to strengthen the implementation of Agenda 21 were made. A Chairman's Paper was published following the deliberations. This includes a summary of the general debate, in which countries had reaffirmed their commitment to the Rio decisions and the conclusion that the purpose of the WSSD will not be to renegotiate Agenda 21, but to reinvigorate political commitment. Other issues emphasised in

the Paper are health (and especially the implications of HIV/AIDS in developing countries), water usage and management, and the role of energy in sustainable development.

At PrepCom 2, a 'global deal', intended to provide a conceptual framework for the forthcoming Summit, was proposed by the developed countries. This deal was formulated as a package that reflected the principles of sustainable development, while balancing the interests of developed and developing countries in an attempt to accelerate the implementation of sustainable production and consumption patterns. However, the developing countries refused to commit themselves to the package until further information had been supplied.

The Chairman's Paper gave a detailed assessment of what the implementation of Agenda 21 had achieved so far. It concluded that implementation had not been as effective as had been envisaged. Extreme poverty, environmental degradation, underdevelopment, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, and unequal income distribution still exist. More than 1.1 billion people (including almost half of the population in Africa and South Asia) still live in absolute poverty, most of them in the rural areas of developing countries, with women and marginalised people as the chief victims.

However, the report also noted that health conditions have improved in many countries since Rio, with increasing life expectancy and a decline in child mortality rates. Conversely, poor health conditions remained a major constraint on many developing countries. Since Rio, the emergence of HIV/AIDS, especially in Africa, has dramatically reduced life expectancy while simultaneously creating enormous obstacles to economic and social development. Developed countries and some developing countries have also seen increases in diseases associated with unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles and obesity. These were noted as new topics for discussion at WSSD.

Another issue raised in the Paper, was threats to the major ecosystems that support human sustenance. Owing to unsustainable consumption and production patterns, short-term economic interests, population pressures and poverty, these systems are threatened with disturbance, loss and fragmentation. Many countries attending PrepCom 2 accepted the concept of integrated land management as a crucial tool in the combating of rural poverty and food insecurity.

A related concern voiced in the Paper was the growing shortage of water supplies. Areas of water scarcity were increasing, particularly in North Africa and West Asia. It was estimated that 17% more water would be needed to produce food for growing populations in developing countries over the next 20 years, while total water use would increase by 40% over the same period. One-third of the countries in water-stressed regions of the world are expected to face severe water shortages this century. The fear was expressed that water could become a source of conflict among peoples.

The Paper noted that energy is essential for economic growth and social development, but that it is also associated with pollution, increasing greenhouse gas emissions and other health and environmentally damaging effects. While some countries considered the current energy system to be unsustainable, others commented that the principles established for the integration of sustainable development and environmental protection in their national sustainable development objectives and policies had been successfully implemented.

According to the Paper, many countries, regions and institutions have reported the successful implementation of national Agenda 21 plans of action, sustainable development strategies and supportive legislation, with a discernible impact on the national planning process. In contrast, a number of other countries were of the opinion that

²⁹ *Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Second session (28 January-8 February 2002), United Nations Document Nr A/CONF.199/PC/2*

sustainable development policies and programmes have in general fallen short of the level of policy integration required to serve economic, social and environmental objectives simultaneously.

The importance of good governance to any country's sustainable development strategies was widely discussed at the meetings and will remain a fundamental requirement. Transparency and accountability in government were likely to lead to proactive and responsive policies as well as improved partnerships. Those who attended PrepCom 2 expressed their conviction that WSSD can only be successful if clear and firm political commitments are made by the participating countries.¹⁹

At PrepCom 3, which took place between 25 March–5 April 2002, delegations continued to consider the PrepCom 2 Chairman's Paper, as well as other inputs to the preparatory process aimed at finding ways of strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development. The process also entailed the evaluation and definition of the role and programme of work of the CSD.

The UN General Assembly gave PrepCom 3 the task of agreeing on the text of a document which would contain the results of the comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and provide conclusions and recommendations for action. PrepCom 3 was also expected to identify the main themes for the Summit. Overwhelming support was expressed at the PrepCom for proposals to launch results-orientated partnership initiatives at the WSSD. In addition, pressure from developing countries resulted in a proposed initiative to draft a

²⁰ *Adoption of the Agenda and other organizational matters*, Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Third Session, United Nations Document Nr A/CONF.199/PC/1

consensus document that would commit governments to the adoption of specific steps to promote and implement sustainable development.

PrepCom 4 took place in Bali, Indonesia, between 27 May–7 June 2002. Its mandate was to create a concise document out of the text generated by PrepCom 3, which emphasised the need for global partnerships to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, investigated strategically integrated approaches to the implementation of Agenda 21, and evaluated the main challenges and opportunities confronting the international community in respect of sustainable development. This text was to be called the 'Draft Plan of Implementation of the WSSD'. The failure of the participants in PrepCom 4 to agree on the text of the document was widely reported. Although agreement was reached on the less controversial issues (which constitute about 80% of the document), the main issues crucial to its successful negotiation remained unresolved. These related to the means of implementation (most notably trade and finance), good governance and priorities and targets. It was decided that further negotiations on these aspects would occur at the WSSD. It was widely reported that the main obstacle to consensus was the lack of political will in some leading countries in the developed world, who opposed virtually all of the strategies regarded by the developing countries as crucial to the successful implementation of Agenda 21 in the future.

Failures and Successes of Agenda 21

When a detailed assessment was made of Agenda 21 during PrepCom 2, it became clear that its implementation had not been as successful as world leaders had hoped. The reasons for the failure of the implementation are many, but the main causes are to be found in Agenda 21 itself. It became evident from the discussion on the content of the document that the programme was too ambitious. Secondly, it did not stipulate exact time-frames for implementation of all the projects identified, but merely gave broad indications. Also, the document did not take into account possible changes in the economic

world order. At the time Agenda 21 was negotiated, both Latin America and Southeast Asia were experiencing an economic boom. Five years later, the economic crisis that erupted in Thailand had spilled over to Latin America and had affected many countries there, most notably Mexico (the so-called 'tequila crisis'), and, to a lesser extent, Argentina and Brazil, the two main economies of Mercosur. These events started a process of global recession which ultimately culminated, in the case of Argentina, in the worst financial and economic crisis ever witnessed in that country.

Another contributory cause of the limited success of Agenda 21 is the restructuring of the United Nations, which has entailed reconsideration of the role of ECOSOC, a body which has 53 members and is sometimes accused of both inaction and unnecessary duplication. The CSD falls under the auspices of this body, and the effectiveness of the Commission has been affected by the current debate about its future and activities. It is clear that more effective implementation measures than the ones introduced by the CSD will be needed if Agenda 21 is to be successful in the long run.

Some of the successes and failures of the implementation of Agenda 21 (as outlined by PrepCom 2) can be outlined as follows:

Failures

- The economic situation in many developing countries, especially in Africa, has deteriorated.
- Many countries are still confronted with insecurity and instability, which have hampered the implementation of sustainable development programmes both nationally and regionally.
- Many developing countries remain vulnerable to fluctuations in the global economy, and are unable to share the benefits of globalisation on an equal footing. As a consequence, many countries are still, and even increasingly, excluded from the world economy.

- Small island developing states in particular have experienced excessive competition from much stronger and better-financed multinational companies, resulting in the failure of indigenous private sector enterprises.
- The rise of non-tariff barriers and continued reliance on unproductive export subsidies have led to the continuance of adverse terms of trade for developing countries.
- Rural-urban migration has led to the creation in many countries of informal and unplanned settlements, which lack basic services such as safe drinking water and sanitation. This has led to a serious deterioration in the health of these communities.
- The developed countries stand accused of inaction on providing additional sources of income to developing countries in the form of trade and external financial sources, including FDI and ODA.
- Many developing countries have been negatively affected by deteriorating terms of trade, such as trade barriers and a lack of market access.
- Food insecurity was also identified as a major source of concern. It is estimated that approximately 815 million people in the world are affected. The recent review conference in Rome provided a forum for developing countries, who accused the developed countries of inaction in the face of the increasingly prevalent problem of starvation.
- The lack of adequate funding has hindered the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification, especially with regard to the more than 50 national action programmes envisaged for the most affected countries.
- The rate of deforestation is increasing globally, but is especially

²¹ *Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Second Session, United Nations Document A/CONE.199/PC.2*

severe in developing countries. Net deforestation rates are highest in Africa and South America.

- The lack of scientific and technical capacity in developing countries remains a major obstacle to sustainable development.
- Lack of human, technological and institutional capacity in developing countries remains one of the most serious constraints in the quest for sustainable development.²¹

Successes

- Health conditions have improved significantly in many countries since Rio, resulting in increased average life expectancy and a decline in infant/child mortality rates. In 1992, the infant mortality rates in developing countries amounted to 70 deaths per 1,000 live births. This figure has decreased to 61 in 2000. In sub-Saharan Africa, the infant mortality rate was 178 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992. This figure has also decreased dramatically to 107 in 2000. However, life expectancy is dropping significantly in sub-Saharan Africa as a result of HIV/AIDS. In Malawi, for example, life expectancy stands at 39 years.
- Countries, and especially developing countries, have reported progress in increasing access to primary education. Despite this improvement, much more needs to be done to ensure that children receive a basic school education.
- Measures taken under the Convention on Biological Diversity and other environmental agreements have been strengthened since Rio.
- The Convention to Combat Desertification entered into force in 1996, thereby providing an international legal instrument to address this

²² *Ibid.*

problem. The Convention aims to develop strategies to improve productivity and the sustainable management of land, conserve natural resources and improve living conditions at community level.

- Several important international and regional conventions and agreements dealing with oceans and seas have been successfully negotiated.
- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other treaties have entered into force since Rio.
- The Doha Ministerial Declaration and provisions on removing harmful fisheries subsidies enjoy widespread international support.
- The implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in 2001 constitutes a breakthrough in climate change and mitigation efforts.
- The Global Environment Facility (GEF) climate change programme, which was established as a result of negotiations at Rio, functions on a global scale.
- The increased participation of civil society in decision-making on sustainable development issues has been recorded.²²

Section Three: Jo'burg and Beyond—A World Divided by A Common Concern?

Rio raised international awareness of the importance of sustainable development. As a result, and given the persistence of poverty in developing nations, developmental concerns have been high on the international agenda over the past decade. Consensus exists on the nature of the problem, but there is considerable variation in identifying possible solutions and in the political will to face the costs involved in

implementing such solutions. There is, however, agreement that poverty constitutes the biggest threat to sustainable development and that the issue needs to be resolved. The disagreement on how to achieve the eradication of poverty, represents a common disjunction.

The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has identified five priority areas for attention at the WSSD. These are water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity—the so-called *WEHAB priorities*. There is agreement that these issues are important, but once again the shared objective becomes a point of division.

The positions of the major groups at the WSSD are described below.

The EU Position

The EU takes its commitment to sustainable development seriously in terms of environmental issues. It has issued the *European Union Sustainable Development Strategy*, a *Sixth Environmental Action Programme* and the document *10 Years After Rio: Proposals for the WSSD*, in which it outlines its strategic goals.

In general, the EU views poverty eradication, the changing of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and the protection and management of the natural resource base of economic and social development as the essential requirements for sustainable development. It also propagates measures to promote good governance and to encourage corporate accountability and international co-operation on these issues.

²³ See <http://www.twinside.org.sg/title/wssd1.htm>

The EU believes that any references to trade should be complementary to the Doha language. This position protects the EU's economy and avoids steps to open its markets, to the frustration of developing countries. Although the EU has committed itself to integrate the poorest countries into the global economy through the removal of trade restrictions, duty-free and quota-free access and the encouragement of investment in the LDCs, these promises are viewed with a certain degree of scepticism by the developing countries.

The US Standpoint (JUSCANZ Group)

Within the WSSD context, the US co-operates closely with the so-called JUSCANZ group (Japan, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand). Thus far, at all the PrepComs, this group opposed any language calling for binding decisions, and instead favoured voluntary solutions. Until now, the group has refused to accept paragraphs outlining the relationship between globalisation and sustainable development, or any language committing developed countries to concrete action on issues related to debt, financial contributions and fair trade²³. In particular it has raised its voice against proposals for concrete time-bound targets, and references to the supply of new and additional resources to developing countries. It has questioned especially the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities'—one of the most important Rio principles. As such, the views of the US and its allies in the JUSCANZ group are in serious disagreement with those of developing countries.

The Bush Administration focuses strongly on the principle of good governance. In a speech to the Inter-American Development Bank in March 2002, President Bush stated:

For all countries—developed and developing—sustainable development must begin at home. Environmental protection, economic development and social development all depend on a foundation of good governance in which free markets, sound institutions and the rule of law are the

norm. Sustainable development cannot be achieved in an atmosphere where corruption runs deep, private property is unprotected, markets are closed and private contracts are unenforceable.

Good governance and democracy, while two sides of the same development coin, must also be seen to be applied uniformly, if they are to be effective, for example, on OECD companies operating abroad and at home. These concerns are moot given not only the role played by multinationals in emerging markets, but the collapse amidst scandal of major corporations such as Enron and Worldcom.

The G-77 View

The G-77 (and China) is the group of developing countries which co-operates within the UN system. They are united in their commitment to achieving the broader goals set by the World Summit agenda, such as eradication of poverty and natural resources management. They agree on the need both for practical and action-orientated outcomes for the WSSD and the importance globally of the implementation of sustainable development programmes within time-frames. On the economic side, objectives include:

- support of the implementation of the Doha WTO Ministerial and Monterrey outcomes;
- new and additional resources to assist implementation; and
- better and increased access to developed country markets.

The EU evinces a more sympathetic attitude towards the G-77 arguments, while the JUSCANZ group, more emphatic in its opposition than the EU, opposes any initiative that goes beyond Doha and Monterrey. Instead, they highlight linkages between trade and environment, and advocate effective national policies rather than ODA for developing countries.

However, this Group, because of its loose composition, also has its own problems. For example, the G-77 contains the two 'threshold powers' (India and Pakistan) who have a history of divided opinions. Members differ on such issues as energy, on post-Bali processes and on implementation plans. However, some of the logistical and leadership problems experienced by the G-77, seem to have been resolved, following the intervention of the South African government on various occasions.

Pretoria's Position

South Africa will need to articulate its own position clearly, both as the host and as a key G-77 member. Simultaneously it needs to negotiate with EU countries and the JUSCANZ group on their positions to ensure a positive outcome for the WSSD. The eradication of poverty is the first priority on its agenda. In his address to the Business Leadership Forum on 29 April 2002, the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Valli Moosa, reiterated the view that growing poverty and inequality are the greatest threats to sustainable development.

The single-most important threat to sustainable development globally is poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the desperately poor. This is not only a threat to poor nations but also to wealthy nations as the instability, conflict, disease and environmental degradation associated with poverty threaten the overall socio-economic status of our planet. South Africa would like to therefore submit for consideration 'the eradication of poverty as the key to sustainable development' as the Summit theme-If we are to give effect to a new vision of a sustainable global economy, WSSD must adopt a concrete, pragmatic and accelerated Programme of Action for the implementation of the targets endorsed by the leaders of the World's nations in the Millennium Declaration.

²⁴ 'G-8 Nepad response disappoints Africans', *Business Day*, 28 June 2002.

The issue of communicable diseases will also feature prominently on South Africa's agenda. HIV/AIDS poses a serious threat to sustainable development and the South African government's view is that as such, plans of action to deal with the pandemic should be incorporated in the overall poverty eradication, sustainable development and economic growth strategies.

Another issue is the effective creation of global partnerships between government, business and civil society. The government is of the opinion that the global programme of action could be implemented more successfully through such partnerships. NEPAD will probably be presented to the WSSD as a model for such partnerships on a regional level, as it addresses core issues that are of global concern, such as economic growth and development, good governance, the elimination of corruption and the facilitation of peace, democracy and economic stability.

However, the reaction of the G-8 countries at their Summit in Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002, does not bode well for the acceptance of NEPAD as a model for partnership and sharing at the WSSD. In response to NEPAD, G-8 countries adopted the Africa Action Plan, which pledged that an extra \$6 billion a year would be given to Africa by 2006. African countries expressed dissatisfaction with this amount and stated that the Plan, although it would be helpful in reversing declining aid flows, had not gone far enough to address issues of sustainable development. The Plan gives general directives on NEPAD, and states that each individual member of the G-8 should decide upon assistance independently.²⁴

²⁴ See <http://www.worldsummit2002.org/guide/whois.htm>.

The Role of Civil Society

Civil society will have the opportunity to air their opinions on sustainable development topics at the Summit. Preparations are in place for multi-stakeholder dialogues to take place between governments and NGOs on a wide range of issues. This will provide NGOs with the opportunity to discuss their concerns with governments, thereby enhancing the intergovernmental process. On the other hand, it also provides NGOs with the opportunity to make meaningful inputs into the intergovernmental decision-making process. NGOs were afforded the opportunity to participate in all PrepCom meetings prior to the WSSD.

Other Challenges for the Johannesburg Summit

The onus of ensuring the successful outcome of the WSSD rests largely on the shoulders of the South African government. This puts a high *degree of responsibility on the country's leaders*. The successful negotiation of the Draft Implementation Plan and the Political Declaration at the Summit, would give South Africa the confidence it needs after the unsuccessful outcome of the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) Conference in Durban in 2001.

Shortly after the failure of PrepCom 4, President Thabo Mbeki publicly declared that he and his government were ready to engage in negotiations and informal consultations to ensure the successful outcome of the Summit and that of reaching consensus on the Draft Plan of Implementation, which could not be finalised in Bali. Several bilateral meetings have already taken place. For example, Presidents Mbeki and Cardoso from Brazil, together with the Swedish Prime Minister, Goran Persson, met at the 'Transfer of the Torch' ceremony on 25 June 2002 in Rio de Janeiro. At the FAO Food Summit in Rome, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan also held talks with the South African president to discuss problems related to the WSSD, and possible

outcomes. Many more meetings are scheduled to take place before the start of the Summit.

Pre-meetings in New York at the United Nations are also focused on achieving a successful outcome and considerable progress has already been made. As a result of a meeting on 18 July 2002 in New York at the request of President Mbeki, the gap between the many divergent positions on consensus language appears to have narrowed significantly. Also, agreement seems to have been reached on issues related to the interpretation of the Rio Principles and the articulation of progress achieved at the WTO Doha meeting in November 2001 and Monterrey Conference in March 2002.

Another challenge relates to the role that the South African government will play as host and facilitator. The outcome of the WSSD is highly dependent upon the way in which South Africa directs negotiations, and the 'diplomatic deals' it can conclude before and during the WSSD. It is also a question of prestige that South Africa should demonstrate it can both host a conference of this magnitude and steer an international process to a successful conclusion.

There are different views and opinions on what the outcome of the WSSD will be. In general, mention is made of so-called 'Type 1 and Type 2' outcomes. Type 1 outcomes (obligatory) refer to new commitments and directions for the implementation of sustainable development projects, and partnership initiatives for specific actions. Type 2 outcomes (voluntary) include partnership agreements between some states and or/stakeholders as part of the official outcome of the Summit. There are, as yet, no criteria for Type 2 outcomes.²⁵ Providing a strategy where frameworks and criteria are included to ensure a positive outcome, poses another challenge to South Africa.

The government decided to adopt the so-called 'Friends of the Chair' concept, in which like-minded countries assist the Chairman of the conference to work with others towards an acceptable text. This is a multilateral technique that was applied to great effect in the negotiations on the Protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention. In the case of the WSSD it might again prove successful.

Delegates are currently cautiously optimistic that consensus on the Draft Plan of Implementation will be reached. The Chairman's Paper, which was compiled after Bali, serves as a guideline to what can be expected. Topics are combined under the headings of eradication of poverty, unsustainable patterns of consumption of natural resources and the need to harness globalisation in the quest for sustainable development. Currently, the Paper does not focus on time-bound frameworks and targets, but the South African government has committed itself to ensure that such goals are set.

The worst-case scenario is the failure of the WSSD to reach an outcome reflecting consensus among all participants, as for example happened at WCAR in Durban in 2001. This is a possibility that cannot be ignored. The consequences of this for sustainable development could be severe.

Conclusion

The eyes of the world will be fixed on Johannesburg during the WSSD. It is clear that this meeting will be a difficult one, not least because of the possibility of disruptive NGO action in and around the Summit. The WSSD aims not only to review Agenda 21, but to steer sustainable development into a new phase. It seems likely that the WSSD will focus on trade and financial mechanisms rather than on technicalities related to environmental protection and sustainable management of resources.

At the heart of the problems facing the WSSD in Johannesburg, lies the impasse at the Preparatory Committee Meeting of the WSSD in Bali in May this year. No consensus could be reached on crucial

elements of the 'Draft Plan of Implementation of the WSSD', which will form the working document for the Summit. The issues at stake relate to the differences in approach between the industrialised/developed countries on the one hand and the developing countries on the other. They resolve around the means of trade and finance implementation, good governance, time-bound frameworks for the future implementation of Agenda 21 and the important Rio principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities'.

Progress regarding sustainable development has not been as successful as many had hoped for, partly because of the long period of revision since Rio. New forms of review should also be introduced at the Johannesburg Summit to make the implementation of sustainable development issues more practical, with a shorter timeframe. The example set by systems such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), where a PrepCom takes place annually to prepare for the Review Conferences every five years, might be applicable to the sustainable development debate.

The success of the WSSD will hinge on the ability of nations and participants alike to find ways to bridge developmental differences and to forge workable solutions to what are, ultimately, common global challenges. The challenge is for participants, many of whom will no longer be in office at Johannesburg+10 to find the political will to put their developmental promises into practice.

Acronyms

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
ECOSOC	<i>Economic and Social Council of the United Nations</i>
EU	European Union
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDA	International Development Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JUSCANZ	Japan, United States, Canada and New Zealand coalition
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NEPAD	New Partnership of Africa's Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
UN	United Nations

UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCAR	World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation