

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UNCSD)
MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH BUREAU MEETING
Wednesday, 9 March 2011 (9 am to 12 (noon))
Conference Room 19th Floor
Two United Nations Plaza (DC-2), New York

1. The fourteenth meeting of the Bureau of the Preparatory Process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) was held on 9 March 2011 in New York.
2. The meeting was attended by the following:

Bureau Members

- Amb. Park In-Kook Co-Chair and Chair of the Meeting
- Mr. Jirí Hlaváček
- Amb. Maged A. Abdelaziz
- Amb. Charles T. Ntwaagae (*represented by Ms. Ntseang Molemele, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Botswana to the UN*)
- Ms. Ana Bianchi
- Ms. Tania Raguž
- Mr. Paolo Soprano
- Mr. Asad M. Khan
- Mr. John Matuszak
- Ms. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessôa

Secretariat

- Amb. Sha Zukang, Conference Secretary-General (CSG)
- Ms. Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Coordinator
- Mr. Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator
- Mr. Tariq Banuri, Head of the CSG Office
- Cluster Leaders

Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The proposed agenda was adopted without amendments.

Agenda Item 2: Discussion on the Results of 2nd PrepCom

4. Amb. Park thanked the Bureau Members and the Secretariat for the work done and expressed his satisfaction about the results of the meeting. He then opened the floor for other Bureau Members to express their views on the meeting. Below is the summary of views expressed.

- The mood of the meeting was very positive. The discussions were substantive and productive. The meeting demonstrated considerable positive synergy and momentum for moving forward
- The meeting was very well attended by Member States, UN system entities and Major groups. This was noted to be a good indication of strong political support for the Conference.
- The Bureau's decision not to have panellists proved to be a good one--it allowed participants more time to engage in in-depth discussions. The scientific and

technical aspects which were to be addressed by the panels were well covered by the side events.

- The list of questions used in each session proved helpful in focusing the discussions on issues of importance. Had these questions been circulated in advance, it would have helped the countries to respond to those in their statements.
- It was noted that some delegations put forward concrete proposals on the subject matter of the Conference. Not enough time was devoted to the discussion on objectives of the Conference *vis-a-vis* the two themes. This matter will need to be properly addressed at the 2nd Intersessional Meeting.
- The adoption of decision concerning the process for the preparation of the draft outcome document for the UNCSD was noted to be an important outcome of the 2nd PrepCom. However, some Bureau Members expressed concerns over the use of wording “within existing resources” since this will entail taking away resources from other processes or activities. It was noted that both the Second and Fifth Committees of the 66th session of the General Assembly might revisit this point. All Bureau Members were advised to discuss this matter with their respective constituencies in order to avoid disruptions to the preparatory process.
- Side events during the 2nd Prepcom were well-received. These provided a platform for experts to voice their views.
- The participation of Major groups was welcomed and praised. The timing of the meeting between the Major groups and the Bureau, and last minute change in meeting’s venue caused inconvenience to many participants. The future meeting should be better planned on the margins of the 2nd Intersessional Meeting in mid-December.
- The Co-chairs summary could serve as useful resource especially for the delegations of smaller countries who could not attend the whole meeting. The Co-chairs summary, once cleared by the Bureau, should be posted on the website. However, the Co-Chairs’ summary will not serve as basis for outcome negotiations.

Agenda Item 3: Next steps in the preparatory process

(partially chaired by Mr. Hlaváček)

5. The Bureau discussed next steps in the preparatory process in the light of decision made by the 2nd PrepCom concerning the process for the preparation of the draft outcome document for the UNCSD. The Bureau agreed on the following actions.

- The Co-chairs, on behalf of the Bureau, will send a letter as soon as possible to Member States, UN system and Major groups soliciting concrete proposals for the outcome document on the objectives and two themes of the Conference. The decision adopted at the 2nd PrepCom should be attached with the letter. For ease of reference, the objectives and themes of the Conference should be clearly referred to in the letter as defined in GA Resolution A/64/236.
- The Secretariat was requested to: (i) provide an update in the next Bureau meeting on the results of collaboration with UNDP and UN country teams for providing assistance to countries in their preparations for the Conference--national preparations was felt as a priority at this point; (ii) post all statements made during the 2nd PrepCom on the UNCSD website; and (iii) compile a list of country-led and other stakeholders preparatory meetings and post this list on the UNCSD website so that more information is available about these preparatory events. The Bureau will

need to have further discussions to determine how the preparatory process could benefit from the results emanating from these meetings.

- The private/business sector both at the global and national levels should be approached with the aim of seeking their support and contributions in support of the Conference.
- The Bureau underscored the need to intensify regional preparatory activities. The regional commissions should explore the possibility of undertaking such activities even at sub-regional levels.

6. The Bureau deferred decision-making on the following items to future Bureau meetings.

(a) *Structure of the outcome document*

7. There was a general consensus that the structure should respect what is stated in the GA Resolution A/64/236-calling for a focused political document on the objective and two themes of the Conference. Towards this aim, several ideas came under discussion including whether the Bureau should come up with the structure now or wait for the inputs to be received for the preparation of compilation document or even solicit inputs from stakeholders on the structure as well. A suggestion was made to consider the possibility of departing from the traditional structures used by the outcome documents of UN Summits, and aim instead at a document with short brief focused action oriented items, such as the one produced by the G-20. Some Bureau members expressed concerns that in the absence of a proper structure, inputs received from stakeholders might become difficult to compile. Given that some developing and developed countries have already outlined their desired structures at the 2nd PrepCom, there would be a need to bring some sort of convergence in these ideas. The Bureau Members expressed the need to consult with their constituencies before making a decision on the approach to be adopted.

(b) *Programme and organization of work for the Conference*

8. The Secretariat pointed out that a delay in decision-making on this item will pose logistical and organizational difficulties for both the host country and the Secretariat. The preparations can not proceed without the knowledge of the number of plenary sessions, the number of roundtables, and the number of invited people, etc. The Bureau welcomed the Secretariat and Brazil's idea to submit a proposal for discussion at the next Bureau meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Miscellaneous Items

(a) *Consideration of UNEP's Governing Council decision*

9. The Bureau also discussed the UNEP Governing Council's decision to invite the Preparatory Committee for UNCSD to initiate a full analysis of the financial, structural and legal implications and comparative advantages of the options identified in the Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome.

10. A direct request to do such a study was not brought to the attention of the 2nd PrepCom, even though this decision was transmitted by the Presidency of the Governing Council through a statement, and referred to in statements made by many countries. It was noted that the UNEP Governing Council's request is an inter-governmentally agreed decision, and since

it could not be considered by the 2nd PrepCom, the Bureau agreed to follow a two-track approach to address this matter.

11. In this regard, first, the Bureau Members after seeking the views of their respective constituencies will take up this matter at the next Bureau meeting. Second, the Bureau has already requested the CSG to bring UNEP's Governing Council invitation to the attention of EC-ESA Plus with the aim of seeking views on the feasibility and costs of conducting the analysis mentioned above. In the light of feedback received, the Bureau will discuss this matter in one of its future meetings and the Co-chairs will communicate Bureau's decision to the President of the UNEP Governing Council, Minister of Environment of Spain (Ms. Rosa Aguilar Rivero). A suggestion was made to consider a process similar to the one followed for conducting the study on *"The Transition to a Green Economy: Benefits, Challenges and Risks from a Sustainable Development Perspective"*, but no decision was made.

(b) *Date of Bureau's next meeting*

11. The next Bureau meeting will take place on Monday, 18 April in the morning.

(c) *Any other business*

12. The representative of Brazil, Ms. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessôa, pointed out that the host country wishes to refer to the UNCSD as "Rio+20" instead of "Rio 2012" and asked for the logo of the Conference to be changed accordingly.