

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UNCSD)  
NOTE OF THE BUREAU'S DIALOGUE WITH THE  
PRINCIPALS/REPRESENTATIVES OF EC-ESA PLUS**

**Tuesday, 7 July 2011 (10:00 am to 1:15 pm)  
Conference Room XI, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

1. The Bureau of the Preparatory Process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) met with the Principals/Representatives of the Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs (EC-ESA Plus) on 7 July 2011 in Geneva to exchange views on the expected outcomes of Rio+20 Conference.
2. List of participants is attached at Annex 1.

**Agenda item 1: Welcome Remarks by the Chair**

3. On behalf of the Bureau of the UNCSD preparatory process, Ambassador Park welcomed the Principals/Representatives of EC-ESA Plus to the meeting. He emphasized the need to strengthen partnership between the Bureau and the UN system to achieve a shared vision at Rio+20 Conference. He reminded the participants that Rio+20 Conference is an opportunity which can't be missed because the costs associated with status quo scenario are too high. He called upon the participants to share ideas not only about what should be achieved at Rio+20 Conference, but how to ensure sustained implementation of the agreed agenda. Implementation should be our top priority in the post-Rio period, he added. Expressing his views on the expected outcomes, he mentioned that the Conference should consider delivering both negotiated and non-negotiated outcomes. He also noted energy access and transition to renewable energy critical for sustainable development and poverty eradication.

**Agenda item 2: Status of Preparations by Mr. Sha Zukang, Conference Secretary-General**

4. Mr. Sha Zukang in his briefing to the participants about the status of preparations made the following main points.
  - (a) The second PrepCom and first intersessional meetings were very productive and they provided a platform for dialogue among Member States and other stakeholders.
  - (b) A roadmap for the preparation of a zero draft of the outcome document has been agreed upon. Stakeholders have been approached to provide contributions towards the preparation of Compilation document.
  - (c) The office of the President of the General Assembly organized a thematic debate on a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication at the beginning of June in New York. The event provided an additional opportunity for an exchange of views on different aspects of the green economy debate.

- (d) The UNCSD Bureau is meeting regularly (once every six weeks) to oversee preparations for the Conference, and to provide necessary guidance to the preparatory process.
  - (e) DESA has allocated resources from its technical cooperation programme to assist developing countries in their preparations for the Rio+20 Conference. This project is being implemented in close cooperation with the UNDP.
  - (f) In the beginning of June, Mr. Sha attended the launch ceremony for the Conference in Brazil that marked the countdown to the Conference.
5. While explaining the timeline for the preparation of outcome document, he emphasized that the world might need something more than a negotiated declaration of political commitment to advance the implementation of sustainable development agenda.

### **Agenda item 3: Discussion on Expected Outcomes of the Conference**

6. Principals/Representatives of several UN system entities and Bureau members present in the meeting shared their ideas on the expected outcomes of the Conference. Main points raised or observations made by several participants (depending on the issue) are summarized below. These points however do not represent consensus-based conclusions.

- (a) The Conference needs to be people-centred with clear focus on improving livelihoods of people on the ground and better participation of citizens in decision-making.
- (b) Agenda 21, Rio Principles and JPoI provide relevant framework for sustainable development. The Conference should build upon these documents in agreeing on forward looking and action oriented set of decisions to bridge the implementation gaps.
- (c) The GDP concept as an indicator to measure the economic progress has lost its appeal because it does not adequately reflect social and environment costs associated with achieving economic growth. The human development index needs to factored-in such externalities.
- (d) The Conference should aim at addressing the three failures of last decade: failure to scale up implementation, failure to integrate three pillars of sustainable development, and failure to distinguish between mainstream development and sustainable development. The Conference should deliver solutions, both negotiated and non-negotiated, to address the causes underlying these failures. Non-negotiated outcomes could result from different initiatives to be launched by stakeholders during theme-specific days in between the 3<sup>rd</sup> PrepCom and the Conference.
- (e) Some participants were of the view that the Conference outcome should include a set of sustainable development goals. Others felt that it would not be possible without prolonged negotiations but, most importantly, the time is not right to pursue this course of action. The Conference should however agree on some

guiding principles for developing post-2015 framework which may as well include sustainable development goals.

- (f) The Conference offers an opportunity to advance the green economy agenda as a pathway to sustainable development. However, for this to happen, the international community needs to ensure that developing countries have access to necessary resources and technologies.
- (g) Transition to a green economy will not happen automatically; it will need an enabling environment supported by pricing mechanisms as well as trade and environmental policy frameworks. Further studies on e.g. green jobs, agriculture and sustainable fisheries etc, can provide further guidance for making a transition towards green economy. However, the need for a strong multilateral trading system was highlighted to address the fears of green protectionism.
- (h) Behavioural changes leading to sustainable consumption and production patterns should be promoted at all levels. Mobilizing different segments of the society towards this aim could be instrumental.
- (i) Defining the level of ambition on IFSD will be important before considering different scenarios in this regard. However, there was a general consensus on strengthening of ECOSOC. Some argued the need to transform ECOSOC into Sustainable Development Council.
- (j) All five options listed under IEG are not mutually exclusive, and many of these could be pursued on parallel tracks until the emergence of final institutional architecture. Some of these may take long time to mature while others could address concerns in the short-run.
- (k) Coordination and coherence of the UN system should be improved and duplication should be avoided. “Delivering as one” approach was noted to be a good model for securing better coordination and cooperation at country level. This approach however needs further strengthening through better integration of three pillars of sustainable development in the programming and operational activities at country level.
- (l) Importance of urbanization was emphasized as a cross-cutting issue. If cities are managed properly, they could become driver of sustainable development through creation of economic opportunities. A new development model within the context of green economy may help to achieve this.
- (m) Energy, food security and eradication of poverty should receive priority in terms of finding plausible solutions at the Conference. In addition, gaps in implementation as well as new and emerging issues should be discussed from the perspective of multiple crises.
- (n) Land was noted to be an important area of concern in the context of food security and to combat chronic hunger. The Conference may consider setting targets to monitor desertification and consequences of drought, especially in Africa.

- (o) Science and education, proper management of oceans and freshwater systems, and tourism can contribute a great deal in advancing the goal of sustainable development.
- (p) Major groups are important partners in implementing sustainable development agenda on the ground. They should be mobilized and their voices should be properly heard during the preparatory process. Engagement with the private sector was considered critical especially to ensure transition towards the green economy.
- (q) Importance of regional and sub-regional preparations was emphasized. The regional commissions will debrief to the Bureau on the results of the regional preparatory meetings.
- (r) All stakeholders were encouraged to meet the deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 for submission of inputs towards the preparation of compilation document.

#### **Agenda item 4: Briefing on IFSD Study**

7. Mr. Sha Zukang briefed the participants on the status of preparation of joint EC-ESA study on IFSD. He stated that this study will address the governance issues for all three pillars of sustainable development, as well as their integration at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. The outline of the study has taken on board the comments and suggestions received from various agencies. The study on the 5 options of Nairobi-Helsinki outcome will be a contribution to this overall IFSD study. A Consultant has been engaged and work on the study is in progress. The IFSD study will be ready in September, and will serve as an important source of information for deliberations of Member States and other stakeholders.

ANNEX 1  
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS  
UNCSD BUREAU'S DIALOGUE WITH THE  
PRINCIPALS/REPRESENTATIVES OF EC-ESA PLUS

BUREAU MEMBERS

- Amb. Park In-Kook, Co-Chair, and Chair of the Meeting
- Amb. Charles T. Ntwaagae
- Ms. Ana Bianchi
- Ms. Tania Raguž
- Mr. Paolo Soprano
- Mr. Bedřich Moldan
- Mr. Keith H. Christie
- Mr. Asad M. Khan, *by videolink*
- Ms. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessôa

PRINCIPALS

- ECA            Mr. Abdoulie Janneh
- ECE            Mr. Jan Kubis
- ECLAC        Ms. Alicia Barcena
- ESCWA        Ms. Rima Khalaf
- ILO            Mr. Juan Somavia
- IOM            Mr. William Swing
- UNEP         Mr. Achim Steiner
- UN-HABITAT Mr. Joan Clos *by videolink*

ASGs/DEPUTIES

- UNV            Ms. Flavia Pansieri
- UNDP         Mr. Olav Kjørven
- UNWTO        Mr. Marcio Favilla de Paula
- WFP            Ms. Sheila Sisulu
- UNESCO      Ms. Gretchen Kalonji

DIRECTORS AND OTHERS

- IAEA            Mr. Holger Rogner
- ICAO            Mrs. Jane Hupe
- IFAD            Ms. Elwyn Grainger-Jones
- IMO            Mr. Juvenal Shiundu
- ITU             Ms. Beatrice Pluchon
- UNCCD        Mr. Mohamadou-Mansour N'Diaye
- UNCTAD        Mr. Lucas Assuncao
- UNFCCC        Mr. Fernando Castellanos Silveira
- UNICEF        Mr. Pascal Villeneuve

- WFP Mr. Claudio Scaramella
- WHO Dr Andrew Kennedy Cassels
- WIPO Mr. Joseph Bradley
- WBANK Ms. Dominique Bichara
- WTO Ms. Vesile Kulacolgu

RIO+20 SECRETARIAT

- Mr. Sha Zukang, Conference Secretary-General
- Mr. Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator
- Ms. Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Coordinator
- Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director, ECOSOC
- Mr. Muhammad Aslam Chaudhry, Chief, Intergovernmental Cluster
- Mr. Navid Hanif, Chief, SPU, Secretary EC-ESA
- Ms. Irena Zubcevic, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, DSD
- Ms. Federica Pietracci, Sustainable Development Officer, DSD