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**CLOSING REMARKS BY
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ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The First Intersessional Meeting of the UNCSD

New York, 11 January 2011

Thank you Ambassador Ashe.

Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here at the concluding session of the first informal intersessional meeting of the UNCSD. The main purpose of this meeting was to enhance our understanding about the objectives and themes of the UNCSD. The meeting was also meant to prepare ourselves for the second PrepCom which is due to take place in two months time.

I think to a large extent the Intersessional meeting reached its objectives. The debate has been very rich and interactive. The delegations have openly shared their ideas on the way forward, while expressing concerns where there is lack of clarity or further elaboration is needed.

I understand that the co-chair will later present salient features of the discussions that took place over the last two days. The co-chairs' summary will become available in the next few days. Let me briefly share with you some key messages coming out of this meeting.

First, the need for a strong commitment to sustainable development at all levels was emphasized, since persistent gaps exist in relation to the implementation of the Agenda 21 and JPOI and many international commitments have not been met. Also, many emerging challenges in the last few years have impeded progress in sustainable development.

Second, the session on “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” has contributed a great deal in bridging the understanding gap among the stakeholders. The discussion showed that the green economy should not be viewed as substitute to sustainable development. It is not an end in itself, but it can be a means to an end.

Third, an important task during the preparatory process will be to further elaborate on win-win aspects of the green economy strategy and roadmap. In this regard, many delegations have emphasized the need for additional studies on different aspects of the green economy, especially its social impacts.

Fourth, a key message from the session on “institutional framework for sustainable development” is that this framework needs be strengthened in all its three dimensions. The need for improving coordination among various institutions was strongly emphasized.

Fifth, divergent views exist as to what is the best architecture for sustainable development governance. The CSD has succeeded in keeping the sustainable development policy agenda alive, but it has its weaknesses as well. One of the weak spots surely is that it has not been able to generate sufficient momentum for effective implementation. Proposals emerged during this session will need to be further fleshed out as we move forward in the preparatory process. Improving social and economic governance was seen to be as important as international environment governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me assure you that the Secretariat will rely on guidance provided by this meeting to further intensify our preparatory activities. We will work closely with the Bureau to ensure that the results achieved during this meeting are properly used in the preparations of the second PrepCom.

The next PrepCom is very important. It will have to make a number of decisions with regard to both organizational and procedural matters. Also, it will continue to advance the substantive discussions on objective and themes of the conference. Therefore, we need to prepare ourselves to enter into the second PrepCom with the objective of identifying common ground and seeking solutions to the problems—rather than repeating the problems.

In response to some concerns expressed in this meeting, let me state that the Secretariat will work with the rest of the UN system to see how the work being done by different parts of the system on green economy could be either compiled or synthesized and brought to the attention of all delegates during the preparatory process.

Finally, I would like to mention that the Synthesis Report will be finalized based on the views expressed during these two days, and will be ready in time for the 2nd PrepCom. I would like to invite once again all stakeholders, but most notably developing countries, to send responses to the five questions in the questionnaire as we will continue to draw on them throughout the preparatory process.

I thank you.
