



**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States
By**

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Acceding Country Croatia aligns itself with this declaration.

We believe that Rio+20 offers us as a very important opportunity to address in a coherent, integrated and coordinated way today's economic, social and environmental challenges, which are closely linked.

We feel encouraged by the fact that our ideas on both themes of the Rio+20 Conference have met with growing support among our partners. At the Regional Preparatory Meeting in Geneva two weeks ago we heard that almost 40 UNECE countries support the ideas of a green economy roadmap with deadlines for specific goals, objectives and actions at international level complemented by national actions based on national priorities and a package of institutional reforms that should include the upgrading of UNEP into a specialized agency for the environment, so as to lead to a strengthened international environmental governance as part of a more balanced and effective IFSD. We welcome in this respect the growing international consensus on the need to act ambitiously both on international environmental governance and on the broader sustainable development framework and we highly appreciate the position taken recently by the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa.

The strengthening of international governance structures for sustainable development will help the transition to a green economy. Properly functioning global markets need effective multilateral institutions. The strengthening of international governance structures for sustainable development will help the transition to a green economy. Long-term economic resilience is dependent on sustainable use of natural resources. We need to reflect through which UN agencies and bodies and by what means we could best support the transition towards a green economy in the framework of the broader UN reform.

Today, a few months before the Rio+20, we find ourselves in a challenging situation, where a lot of has been achieved since Rio 1992, but still a lot is in front of us. We have analysed a number of proposals for institutional reform to address the challenges of sustainable development: these include, inter alia, reform of the United Nations General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the possible establishment of a Sustainable Development Council.

The aim of the IFSD discussion is to make a contribution to better integration, implementation and coherence of sustainable development. Governance arrangements in all three pillars of sustainable development need to be strengthened, better coordinated and made more coherent. We do not need to start from scratch, but should build further on the basis of the guidance contained in the IFSD chapter of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Initiatives like the Rome/Belgrade/Nairobi/Helsinki processes have provided key insights and valuable contributions to this discussion.

We underline the need to strengthen international environmental governance as a part of the broader IFSD reform. As indicated in our contribution to UN DESA one of the main outcomes of the Rio+20 should be a package of reforms that should include the transforming of the UNEP into a specialized agency with a revised and strengthened mandate, supported by stable, adequate and predictable financial contributions and operating on an equal footing with other UN specialised agencies, and that this agency should be based in Nairobi.

We welcome similar thinking of other countries and groups such as the African Union, Malaysia, Chile, Nepal, Republic of Korea, the UNECE eleven aligned countries concerning the UN specialized agency for the environment.

Furthermore, we also believe as was raised in the submissions of many countries that Rio provides an opportunity for governments to commit to reforms that accelerate the much needed streamlining and reinforcement of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) system. The Rio Conference should result in a political recommendation on the further development and broadening of on-going efforts to enhance synergies among thematically related or closely interlinked MEAs such as the waste and chemicals Conventions (“Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm”) as well as the “Rio Conventions (“Climate, Biodiversity, Desertification”). We also emphasize the need to reinforce and mainstream the environmental dimension within the UN system in the context of the System-Wide Coherence.

Despite the commonly recognized inter-linkages between poverty, natural resources use and ecosystem degradation, our action is still hampered by fragmentation of the UN system and lack of co-ordination between UN agencies and the international financial institutions (IFIs).

We are looking forward to engaging constructively in discussions on IFSD.

The EU and its MS welcome further discussion on the views of others. We note that there is a number of interesting ideas presented in the contributions on the table, such as the Brazilian concept on global implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration in respect of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice on environmental matters.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

We strongly believe that greening our economy provides opportunity for inclusive, equitable, environmentally friendly economic growth and contributes to poverty eradication. Both the ILO and UNEP have estimated that greening our economies can create net gains in job opportunities. We need to ensure that the envisaged transformation will generate decent jobs, advance gender mainstreaming, and will have a positive impact on poverty eradication. A green economy should provide better access to water, health care, sustainable energy and food, ensuring that these resources will be available to current and future generations.

We would like to underline the importance of democratic development, respect for human rights, gender quality, the rule of law, transparency and accountability to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.

The transition to a GE will be a global challenge, which both developed countries and developing countries should embark on with ambitious national and international action. Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication offers win-win opportunities to all countries, regardless of the structure of their economy and their level of development. Carbon emissions, environmental pollution and depletion of natural capital entail real economic costs so that

continuing on the current growth and development paths is both ecologically and economically unsustainable. Therefore, the transition to a GE is in the self-interest of developed and developing countries. We would like to emphasise that like many of countries among us we share opinion that there is no “one size fits all” model. Green economy policies have to be designed nationally and regionally, taking into account the needs, specific circumstances and starting points of individual countries. The transformation towards a GE is a global challenge that requires efforts at both the international and national level.

In order to give renewed impetus to sustainable development, Rio 2012 needs to agree on a shared vision for change that can help to put the world on track towards sustainable development and is able to deliver results within agreed time frames. This is the reason we propose a green economy roadmap as one of the main operational outcomes of Rio+20. The roadmap should consist of a number of international commitments for green economy linked with specific goals and objectives.

The EU and its Member States have proposed a substantive amount of concrete deliverables in their contribution to UNDESA. International action should encourage and promote concrete action on key areas on crosscutting issues as well as on sector-specific issues.

As crosscutting issues we propose inter alia the further developing and adoption of indicators complementing GDP that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions in a balanced manner, the adoption of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production and the gradual elimination of subsidies that have considerable negative effects on the environment and are incompatible with sustainable development.

With respect to sector specific issues we should take action on the following:- Water, food security and agriculture, forestry and energy, with international partnerships and goals

- Fisheries and the marine environment, to tackle today's challenges on conservation and sustainable management of ocean resources both within and beyond areas of national jurisdiction,
- Sustainable management and restoration of natural resources and ecosystem services,
- Sustainable chemicals and waste management.
- Sustainable urban development.

Progress in all these areas is fundamental to achieve green economy.

Let me turn your attention to a specific element of our green economy roadmap proposal – establishment of Capacity Development Scheme. Numerous countries have expressed interest in green economy options, and some have started to take action; however, technical and human resource constraints slow down implementation of green economy policies. Hence, we propose a Capacity Development Scheme that should be designed to support interested countries overcome these constraints and accelerate the identification, assessment and operationalisation of green economy options to create a national incentive framework. It should be voluntary and demand-driven, triggered by the expressed interest of countries. As each country faces a unique set of challenges, and has different development goals and economic priorities, the Capacity Development Scheme - with input from the UN system, International Financial Institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and the private sector – would provide country-specific advice in order to accelerate the transition to a green economy. The proposed GE Capacity Development Scheme will flexibly adapt to the country-specific institutional framework and foster coordination, consistency and coherence between and across existing institutions. Interested countries are matched with the development partner best placed to provide support.

An ambitious but realistic timeframe for each country seeking advice would help with implementation.

This capacity development scheme would rely on enhanced coordination between existing structures and more efficient, better coordinated use of existing resources.

We are encouraged to learn that our view on the importance of stronger engagement of private sector, business and civil society in a process of transition to a green economy to ensure a bottom-up approach and innovative partnerships is shared by many UN Members States and civil society organizations.

The private sector and business are key in achieving sustainable development and can potentially play one of the leading roles. The EU sees the need for governments to enable the private sector to play this role. There are three priorities: First, governments must generate policies and regulatory environments that attract investments in sustainable development and green growth. Key here is incentives, such as correct pricing, including through phasing out of harmful subsidies. This is essential for sustainable investment and innovation in all countries. Second, in the spirit of Busan, we must invite the private sector to join in the forming of the Rio outcome and in the further dialogue on the right policies for sustainable development. Finally, we must encourage companies to commit to measuring and disclosing sustainability practices.

In terms of civil society participation and in order to ensure a maximum effectiveness, ownership and legitimacy of Rio+20, the EU and its Member States have been supporting an open and inclusive process. In this perspective, we wish to express our full support to all the requests made by the major groups to the Bureau as regards their active participation during the negotiations and at the Conference itself.

We would like to engage in a dialogue on green economy with other UN member states and other stakeholders.

The EU and its Member States note with interest the idea of Republic of Korea on the establishment of the Global Green Growth Partnership together with the Green Economy Roadmap as well as the Brazilian concept of sustainable public procurement, a global pact for SCP, the Canadian proposal for a toolkit of best practices for facilitating the transition to green economy and the China proposal on green, decent and inclusive jobs. Similarly the area of disaster preparedness as proposed by Japan and others, is certainly worth exploring too. We are also encourage by the broad range of green economy areas covered in the US submission and their willingness to consider global actions alongside national and regional ones, for instance in areas such as ocean acidification and multidimensional indicators of wealth.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The idea of global goals has been mentioned in several contributions, in various forms, and we are considering them carefully. We have clearly indicated in our joint contribution that goals would be instrumental to give renewed impetus to sustainable development.

The EU and its Member States have listened with interest to the proposals referring to Sustainable Development Goals brought forward by several countries. In order to give renewed impetus to sustainable development and to provide a clear vision to accelerate implementation, the dialogue on specific goals is of common interest as one result of Rio+20. Our particular interest would be to discuss the possible linkages between these specific goals and the two conference themes on IFSD and green economy. In this context we are also looking forward to the results of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability.

We are interested in a further exchange on the details of the proposal. In our view any agreement on new goals must be universal and has to adequately reflect the three pillars of sustainable development. It should not interfere with the ongoing process of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, should be closely coordinated with its review process starting in 2013 and should contribute to a Post-MDG framework after 2015.

The EU and its Member States will continue to be actively engaged in the Rio+20 process and are committed to contributing to a meaningful outcome of the UN CSD 2012.

Thank you for your attention.