

Bite the Bullet

The Political Declaration sees the Light of Day

As Heads of Government from around the world have finally arrived in Johannesburg with their cornucopias of goodies for sustainability in the poorer parts of the world the long awaited political declaration has been released in draft by the South African Government.

The draft is too long and lacks focus. It gratuitously addresses issues that are not central to sustainable development, and touches too lightly on others that are essential. In large part, it is a workmanlike summary of the main themes of the Programme of Action. There are some fine eloquent elements in it—others are less effective.

It presents all of us with a difficult choice. It could be improved, but it is not likely to be by those who have labored for the past 18 months to produce an implementation Plan that is embarrassingly inadequate. The strong likelihood is that any negotiation is likely to weaken rather than strengthen it.

Stakeholder Forum's reluctant message to the Governments of the world is simple. Restrain yourselves. Don't subject this draft declaration to the debilitating process of negotiation and whittling down. Take the good with the bad and emphasize the good.

Everybody will be able to see a few points in this declaration which they would have liked to see handled differently, expressed more strongly or more cautiously. Everybody will have issues which they would like to see included which are omitted, or others which they would have preferred omitted.

Stakeholder Forum can see a few issues which it would itself have liked to see handled differently—the lack of a truly multilateral approach to global problems, the treatment of poverty elimination goals, the absence of a reference to the important role of the regional level of government within countries, etc.

But these are easily outweighed by the many well expressed passages, and the points which point the way to creative and constructive follow up.

We are delighted to see the strong endorsement of sustainable development as the only international paradigm for guiding the future destiny of the world.

We are delighted that the vision of the Earth Charter has finally made it to an explicit recognition in this declaration. Let no one now dare to try to get it excluded.

We are delighted to see a clear recognition that the world cannot afford to repeat the pattern and process of the last ten years in endless discussions about aspects of sustainable development, but no real commitment to measuring implementation, monitoring com-

mitments, and stimulation of decisive action.

We like especially the implicit recognition of the shortcomings of the present CSD process, and the call for a new follow up mechanism to be designed and implemented with the full participation of civil society and major groups. We look forward to playing our part in feeding ideas and suggestions into this radical reform.

But surely everyone must by now be convinced that the process of negotiating a text such as the programme of implementation is a negative and destructive process, which does little to advance sustainable development in the world, and much to sour relations between negotiators and the countries they represent.

In many parts of the text the immense labour of negotiation over the past eighteen months has done little more than to move us from Rio de Janeiro to Rio de Juea vue.

In the last two days of this process and conference let us finally bid farewell to the stultifying and destructive spirits of the night who have haunted the negotiating chambers, and come out into the light to celebrate what has been and is being achieved in the world of sustainability outside.

The negotiators in the basements of the Sandton centre are like nothing so much as the prisoners chorus in Fidelio, grey and withered by their interminable dungeon life. But in Fidelio finally the prisoners are released into the sunlight and freedom. They see the wonders of the world round about.

Why don't the negotiators drop their pens and come and join those of us outside in the freedom and light of the Ubuntu Village, the Institute for Sustainable Development, NASREC, the Water Dome, the IUCN building. Come learn something new from the creativity and commitment there displayed in abundance. Then come back to energise the political declaration if they must with a stronger and more enthusiastic endorsement of the value of the stakeholders' contributions to sustainable development, and a more vigorous determination to engage stakeholders in a more equal

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and sustained partnership in the future. Let them also match stakeholder energy with stronger government commitments on their own part.

Derek Osborn & David Hales, Stakeholder Forum

The “Responsibility Summit”

Plenary Meeting

“And if there is one word that should be on everyone’s lips at this summit, one concept that embodies everything we hope to achieve here in Johannesburg, it is responsibility.” UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan

After the long queues and ticket lottery process that took place on Sunday morning – Monday morning let the lucky few into the large Pavilion Hall – where they were able to hear 73 Heads of State outline passionately what each country was planning for their contribution for the Summit. Witnessing the sheer number of powerful people in attendance, including in their midst Nelson Mandela and the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, was a memorable experience. However, as speech after speech was read out, one was also left wondering what additional contribution the entire performance actually made to the Summit. Without wishing to sound too disrespectful, two solid days filled with five minute statements is probably something only the dedicated few are likely sit through in their entirety.

A few leaders took an apocalyptic line on our prospects. As the President of the Republic of Costa Rica – Dr. Abel Pacheco de la Espriella stated, *“If we are to continue the same path as we are, we will soon destroy the planet, but before that, we will destroy ourselves.”* Jacques Chirac, President of The French Republic, went even further,

“Our house is burning down and we’re blind to it. Nature, mutilated and overexploited, can no longer regenerate and we refuse to admit it. Humanity is suffering. It is suffering from poor development, in both the North and the South, and we stand indifferent. The earth and humankind are in danger and we are all responsible.”

Most admitted a general failure to make real progress over the last ten years. As the Portuguese president remarked *“we cannot help but recognise that the results of our efforts on the path to sustainable development have fallen short of our collective expectations. Surely, at Rio we underestimated the sheer magnitude of the task facing us - Sustainable development will require continued and sustained commitments and efforts from us all.”*

Others directly challenged the current international model of development. Hugo Chavez, president of Venezuela declared that poverty currently faced by the planet is a consequence of the neo-liberal development model. *“Neoliberalism is inhumane”* he said calling for a new ethic and morality” to change our behaviour. The model was also concisely described by the UN Secretary General, *“let us face an uncomfortable truth: the model of development we are accustomed to has been fruitful for the few, but flawed for the many. A path to prosperity that ravages the environment and*

leaves a majority of humankind behind in squalor will soon prove to be a dead-end road for everyone.”

One or two statements came out as direct attacks on other countries. For example, Uganda and Namibia were on the war-path regarding sanctions that have been imposed on Zimbabwe by the EU and UK. Neither the EU nor the UK chose to respond to these verbal attacks.

Many referred to the importance of the Summit following on the outcomes of the Millennium Summit and Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Financing for Development Conference and the launch of the Doha Development Round. Several developing countries insisted on the further opening of developed country markets and reduction of perverse subsidies. The Danish Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, outlined on behalf of the EU their commitment in this area, particularly with the reduction and removal of agricultural subsidies. It will be interesting to see if and how this promise is actually realized, once we return home.

A number of Initiatives were announced on the first day, including:

- Bolivia – Empowerment of people through “Popular Participation, National Dialogues, Social Control schemes and the Poverty Reduction Strategy”; implementation of their NSSD by 2005; host a “benchmark” meeting for the Americas in 2005
- Botswana - Declared poverty eradication is the central focus of their National Development Planning Framework, a long-term strategy, “Vision 2016: Towards Prosperity For All” – which pledges eradication of poverty by 2016.
- Costa Rica (with others) – Establish a Tourism Sustainability Certificate, with Benin and Bhutan; to take to congress of a “Constitutional Chapter on Environmental Guarantees that includes the fundamental principles of the Earth Charter.” Creation of a marine “Mesoamerican Biological” Corridor with Colombia, Ecuador and Panama which includes the islands of Galapagos, Malpelo, Coiba and Cocos.
- EU – Up to 2006 the EU commits to increase ODA by over 22 billion Euros. Increasing to 9 billion annually from 2006 onwards. A water initiative with partners in Africa and the Newly Independent States to contribute to the 2015 drinking water and sanitation targets. The Cotonou Convention linking the EU to over eighty African, Caribbean and Pacific states to bring €13.5 billion for development programmes over the next five years.
- Germany – To host an international conference on renewable energies and participate in the new global energy agency network; provide 500 million euro over next 5 years to promote cooperation on renewable energies.
- Japan – Extension of emergency food aid to 30 million US dollars to save children in southern Africa from famine; host the Third World Water Forum and its International Ministerial Conference in March 2003
- Namibia – Adoption of a Community-Based Natural Resource Management Policy for creating community-based eco-tourism enterprises. The implementation of Agenda 21 within the context of the Second National Development Plan with the long term vision of 2030.
- Portugal – Development of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD), and adoption of the plan by mid 2003.

Also positive was the many governments who called for the immediate ratification and coming into force of the Kyoto Protocol. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS), such as the Marshall Islands and Vanuatu, were especially vociferous in highlighting the importance of undertaking work to tackle climate change. Some partial good news came on this issue from the Canadians, who although they did not say they would ratify Kyoto did commit to bringing the issue of ratification to a national vote.

Other topics that many leaders highlighted as important included:

- Poverty Eradication
- Sustainable Production and Consumption
- Good governance – democracy, the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms
- Partnerships – between governments, international institutions and civil society
- NEPAD (New Partnership for African Development)
- Finance – debt relief, improved HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Country) initiative, increased Foreign Direct Investment
- Time-bound targets, time tables, and adequate resources to implement them
- Health - especially tackling HIV/AIDS and water born diseases

Taking a strong focus on the theme of responsibility, the Minister of Sustainable Development and Planning and Head of the Economic and Social Ministerial Council Republic of Bolivia, Jose G. Justiniano Sandoval, said *"It is no longer enough to pinpoint the culprits. The time to blame for the mistakes or unfulfilled promises is over. This is time for action. We have a responsibility with the future, with our children."*

In a simple but strident call to the leaders Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, reminded participants of the dire circumstances that existed just outside the Summit fortress. He spoke of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where some 13 million people are currently threatened with famine.

"If any reminder were needed of what happens when we fail to plan for and protect the long-term future of our planet, it can be heard in the cries for help from those 13 million souls."

With a day to go of statements, let hope that in amongst all the good words are hearing some real and substantial commitments for change that come right from the top.

Rosalie Gardiner, *Stakeholder Forum*

Don't Slide Back On Human Rights

So human rights is up for re - negotiation and the WSSD is in danger of breaking the biggest compact made between and amongst civil society and states - the fundamental belief of the human right to life. Developing a plan of implementation for sustainable development that removes human rights as a cornerstone is as

futile as baking bread without flour.

Human rights and Sustainable Development: The link between human rights and sustainable development is not a new issue. The Stockholm Declaration, The Brundtland Report and a number of national constitutions recognise and provide for a right to the enjoyment of life as inextricably linked to right to a clean, safe and healthy environment.

The very purpose of Stockholm 1972, Rio 1992 and Agenda 21 was to agree an international plan and legislation that created a more equitable way of human development. It was not about business as usual but taking steps towards protecting the environment and the most vulnerable from environmental degradation and poverty. The main purpose of the WSSD's plan of implementation and political declaration is to move the agenda forward not to renegotiate fundamental principles of poverty eradication and environmental protection.

Any Plan of implementation coming from the WSSD should be reconfirming and developing the best way of using human and environmental rights to move sustainable development forward. Yet at present text with references to human rights is a contentious issue with a number of states mistakenly and immorally trying to remove any mention of human rights.

The Human Rights Caucus Group and other NGO's have been working hard to safeguard references to human rights in particular Para 5, 47, 56(a), 121(d), 151 and 152. Despite the centrality of human rights to sustainable development human rights have remained a sticking point for States. It would seem that whilst the EU is supportive of a strong human rights component, the G77 and US oppose any commitment to human rights within the WSSD plan of implementation & political declaration.

The G77 are concerned that human rights needs to be coupled with the right to development the US opposes both. So while they have different reasons for opposing present text the results are the same. Lack of commitment to human rights and back sliding on agreements already made to their own nationals and civil society worldwide.

The fear that human rights will be used as a tool by rich states to impose strict rules on developing states is the main concern for G77. But a number of G77 countries already have signed up to national and regional human rights conventions, or constitutions protecting the right to life and to a clean environment. The draft implementation would not require any greater obligation than those already made. Whilst development of a country is crucial to eradicating poverty and improving the quality of life of the poorest, effective long term development is not achieved without human right code or law.

The US has also signed up to national and international agreements protecting human rights. In addition the Environmental Justice movement has fought hard to get the US government to make the links between human rights, and environment by raising awareness on the location of polluting and hazardous facilities in communities of colour. The movement has succeeded in the bringing about codes on protecting *which recognises the right of any group not to suffer 'disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects'*.

Outside of national precedent there are also a number of international consensus statements on human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action 1993: The Millennium Declaration 2001,

amongst others. Signing up to anything less than these agreed statements is backsliding and not in compliance with international norms and agreements.

Whilst the need for better enforcement and implementation of the human rights and codes requires improvement, the lack of human rights in the draft plan of implementation only hinders and undermines national and international movement on the most essential issues for poverty eradication:

- Access to clean water & adequate sanitation - guaranteed access to clean water and sanitation
- Land Rights - ownership or tenure of land without regard to gender, class, religion or race
- Environmental Discrimination - removing the disproportionate impact of burden of environmental problems on people of African, Asian descent and the poor indigenous people
- Good governance - access to information, participation and decision making
- Corporate accountability - developing corporate transparency and accountability to the communities in which they operate and the environment
- Fair share of resources - the reduction of the resources used by the rich and an increase of resources to the poor
- Environmental Justice - removal of barriers to the judicial system, such as cost & complexity
- Gender Inequality - the disproportionate negative impact of environmental degradation on women and girls.

It remains to be seen whether human rights will maintain its position as a priority for Ministerial discussion or whether that means there will be a strong human rights dimension to the plan of implementation and political declaration. For human rights to remain the cornerstone of sustainable development requires a strong political mandate over the next two days from the Ministers and essentially: (1) whether they are properly briefed on their legal or moral obligation to human rights principles, codes, conventions and agreements already signed up to at national and international level or (2) the ability of States and NGO's supporting the human rights to alleviate the concerns of G77 and the US and (3) if human rights text is used as a bargaining tool and sacrificed for agreements on other areas.

Maria Adebawale, UK Sustainable Development Commissioner, and Director, Capacity Global

Summit Interview

- *With Michael Meacher,*
UK Environment Minister -

T.M. I am joined today by Michael Meacher, UK Minister for the Environment, Minister Meacher Welcome

Here we are in Johannesburg, halfway through the political process, what outcomes should we be seen to be achieving?

M.M. We for us and the EU there are perhaps three or four absolutely essential objectives, one is on fresh water and sanitation and with approximately 6 billion people in the world it is just an amazing thought for us in the western world that 1 in 6 people of all the people in our world, more than 1 billion people do not have access to fresh water. This means that children who play in the water in the streets and drink it are at risk from ill health and the stats from the WHO that over 2 million children die every year from drinking contaminated water and diarrhea related diseases, that's about 6 thousand per day which is twice as many people than were killed in the Twin Towers and it happens every day. This is nothing more fundamental than water and it is the first goal and one of the millennium development goals is a halving of the proportion of people around the world with access to fresh water. This has already been agreed; we are now trying to extend this towards sanitation, which we see as being absolutely critical. We believe that one of the greatest messages at this summit is for the political leaders, the business leaders, the NGOS will together collectively commit themselves to everyone in this world in every village and every municipality to have this basic necessity of life that we take for granted.

The second one is energy, again the figures are just enormous, just over 2 billion people do not have electricity, now this is going to happen as the developing countries industrialise and it is hugely important that they do not do it in the way that we did it two to three hundred years ago, through fossil fuels oil or gas or coal but that they do it through renewable sources such as wind, sustainable biomass and of course the most important one Solar which has almost infinite capabilities. So how do we ensure that the powering industrialisation of the developing countries and electricity even for the more remote settlements around the world are all supplied by renewable energies, how do we get a push to that process?

The third one, which is more important for us in the developed world, is sustainable production and consumption. It is not just a matter of us being a bit more generous to the developing world it is not that at all but it is us not using a grossly disproportionate amount of the worlds resources for our benefit and for our enjoyment leaving an inadequate amount for everyone else. The WWF have come up with this very striking example it seems to me, that if you look at the use of the natural resources on average per country then if the developing world were to come up to the standard quality of life of Americans then the use of resources would have to double for that which is available we would need in effect to have two earths and we only have one. It is very important that we therefore reduce what we call our eco footprint, that evocative phrase. We must reduce the use of resources that we monopolise rather selfishly.

The fourth point coming back to the issue of natural resources is to reduce overexploitation of natural resources and degradation which is occurring in many areas, the contamination and the pollution and coupled to that the loss of Biodiversity, species have been becoming extinct throughout the earths history but the rate of extinction is now rapidly accelerating until some people talk about this being the sixth extinction in the history of the earth and this time it is man made. Now we have got to halt that and reverse that we want that in the text and by a certain date. Now those seem to me that if we get good meaningful language, which is going to promote those processes and reverse the very unsustainable processes that exist at the moment then that would be a very good re-

sult.

TM: I would like to draw on the millennium development targets, which you mentioned, politically these targets are quite distant in many cases, how do we give them more meaning and make them more concrete?

M.M.: Well, I think that the public awareness is critical, in the UK it makes one cry the way that the media have resented this world summit in the most grotesque manner that I can remember in recent times no serious engagement with the actual issues at all it is difficult to get across concepts like sust dev, I am not very keen on using this as a phrase, but it has to be put in concrete terms and we do need to give concrete examples of what the situation really is now as it is far worse than people realise in the developed world and we need to state these very arresting examples such as I have indicated and I think every one would be deeply moved by that and that it is possible to deal with it through concrete policies by providing the hardware, the infrastructure, the technology the management and the expertise that is going to deliver those goals and the funding and training people in these developing countries, especially the women who are responsible for providing services for their families and training them effectively. Now I think that if people really understood what is wrong with our world through sharp concrete images I think that this gets through to people and I think that people are hugely behind this.

T.M. Much has been made of partnerships in Johannesburg between civil society, business, governments, NGOs and the UN what is the value behind these type two partnerships if the text that governments are committing to in type ones is as weak as it seems?

M.M. Well firstly the text on type ones, the political declaration we are about to get from the South African delegation the declaration, I am yet to see it but we don't know how weak or strong it is, but I do hope that it is a strong document. What you call type twos, what is meant by that, is that instead of like previous conferences where documents have been worked out through anguished meetings and long working hours and government leaders have flown in to town and sign up on the dotted line, that is fine but very often there is very little follow up.

What matters at these conferences is not the text in the end it is what happens to people's lives on the ground. Unless that is affected then it is not really worth very much at all. Now this time we are trying to do things differently. We are saying that governments are trying to make a difference and do their bit across the world but they are not major movers and shakers of the world economy that is industry, that's business, the multinationals and the small to medium size enterprises all over the world and that's what provides services and creates products and leads to the sort of change that we want and we want them meshed in with us and committed to achieve these concrete programmes, I believe that there will be hundreds of these programmes and what we are saying is that if we can get world business leaders together with the NGOs, civil society, keeping an eye on governments and business to hold us to what we are saying and get them to commit to water and sanitation and draw up the plans on how to deliver it in an acceptable way to countries in Africa where this is not available at the moment, in accordance with the priorities that have been laid down by the world leaders, your type ones. They will bring in private money in addition to the extra govt money that was provided by the Monterrey conference, 11 billion dollars. That is the funding they will provide the expertise and the technologies the hardware, part of this will be training up the local communities so that they can take over this

once they have learnt the ropes within this new infrastructure. Now that I think is a very good new model, it is an innovation, there will be teething problems but I do think that it is the way to go. I think that this could be a dramatically new president to be set for all future international conferences.

T.M.: Turning to the governance debate that is currently going on about how we manage sustainable development as an international community, how do we address the paradox we are discussing in this debate within the governance structure that needs reform itself are we going to see the changes that we need?

M.M.: Well that is another big question. It is an area that I hope to see some useful movement but I don't think that it will be enough. If you talk about good governance, everybody is in favour of good governance including of course the vast majority of people that reside in countries with bad governance and there are a lot of them. Perhaps about 40 or 50 of the 175 countries in the world where the whole question of human rights, the right to hold your government to account, those don't exist, and you can't expect an international summit such as this to transform the nature of the governing system within countries where this is working really badly and letting its people down. Governance will remain a key issue, we all know countries that face these problems and oppress their people these are all terrible things and the international community will continue to denounce unequivocally these horrors. We cannot within a world democratic system just go in and change these countries. So it is difficult we need constant pressure and not providing aid to these governments who may be corrupt but instead to provide to local NGOs or communities who will use it for providing the basic essentials of life. We need to be a bit cleverer about this and we need to decide how far good governance is a condition for providing aid and all these are questions that we continue to anguish about, but it isn't something that you can just look for a gathering of people at one time at one point in the world to solve. This is an on going process, which the international community needs to use every mechanism at its disposal to bear down on these regimes and seek change.

T.M.: Finally minister what should we have achieved by the next we meet at a heads of state world summit?

M.M.: Well I would expect the next meeting will be in 5 years what with the first one in Rio in 1992 and the second in New York in 1997 and Johannesburg in 2002 so presumably the next one will be in 2007. We will review the progress of the last 5 years. One of the real objectives is not just the type 2 initiatives but also monitoring as I have always thought that it is extraordinary that we don't spend the first day at these international meetings looking at what we have achieved against what we said we would achieve. If you were a business and the board meets every week the first thing would be report from the secretariat stating what had been achieved since the last meeting and this is what we said we would achieve and this is what has gone wrong. This would then lead to a discussion about how to deal with it. If we were World Environment Plc that is what we would do ministers need to regard themselves as an executive board of World Environment. I think that it is extremely important that we consider what our commitments were, what has happened on each of them what has gone wrong around the world, is it corruption, is it poor management, is it technical incapacity, is the methodology not there is the funding not there, what has gone wrong and how are we going to deal with that? If we do that then I think that we can really begin to move forward. If there is no change or perhaps we are going backwards, then we need a fundamental reassessment of this process. However I believe that in the

light of Johannesburg there will be significant improvement for the poor people of the world and that is what this all about.

Toby Middleton & Simon Ford, Stakeholder Forum

Regional Government & Sustainable Development

Saturday saw the birth of a new global organisation to assist regional governments promote and enhance Sustainable Development.

The idea for such an organisation was born earlier this year at a Prep-Com held in Bali (Indonesia). There, during a series of meetings, a number of delegates became aware of the need for such an organisation for it was realised that whilst the Rio Conference had charged National Governments and Local Governments to develop strategies for Sustainable Development, there was no corresponding directive to Regional Governments to do the same.

It was further realised that while National Governments developed the big picture policies which framed Sustainable Development, it was usually the layer of Government below the Central Governments that were required to develop the legislative infrastructure and detailed regulations that ensured Sustainable Development was achieved.

Saturday's Conference addressed a number of issues, and the first part of the morning was given over to the 'Role' that this layer of government played, why it was important, and what it could achieve. Before discussion the delegates listened to presentations from the representatives of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), Flanders (Belgium) and West Java (Indonesia). The material in these presentations demonstrated that these governments had a broad range of experience and worked within different administrative infrastructures. This was reinforced during discussion when comments were received from other regions with representatives in the audience. It became apparent that not only were there considerable demographic differences between different regions, there were also considerable differences in the powers and responsibilities that the regions had over infrastructure and policy formulation. Thus in some regions the governments were entirely responsible for legal matters and the central government had only a limited role, whereas in other regions the reverse was true.

One of the diversities which became apparent was that the names of these governments were very different. Some were States, others were Provinces and yet others were Regions. One participant had undertaken to search through the literature and had discovered almost thirty different words used to describe the layer of Government which the conference addressed. For this reason finding a name that was acceptable to all governments was problematic, so that instead of choosing a name to describe themselves the confer-

ence chose to use a set of initials to symbolise the concept of regional Government, and thus refer to themselves as RGs.

Despite the diversity that was portrayed, the session was able to draw together a number of common strands which were characteristic of this layer of government. Thus they:

- Played a pivotal role in the policy chain
- Were able to act more quickly than national governments
- Had a more detailed understanding of local issues
- Could play a catalytic role between National and Local governments
- Understood the opportunities and challenges of local industries
- Were closer than National governments to civil society

The way these attributes were used and manifest was very varied because they had evolved through a process of discussion between Regional Governments with their Central governments and Local Authorities.

After Coffee the delegates turned to consider the wording of a political declaration that could be released as **The Gauteng Declaration**. Prior to the conference a considerable amount of work had been put into a draft declaration, and this draft was placed before the delegates to scrutinise and refine until it was acceptable to all those present. There was much debate about the wording to be used to describe the level of government that was being discussed, and its relationship with central governments and local authorities. Draft documentation had implied that RGs were 'better' placed to carry out Sustainable Development, but 'better' was struck out and less contentious phraseology was used which put it more simply that RGs had a 'role' to play, thereby avoiding the suggestion that they were attempting to claim superiority. This mood of wishing to engage both central governments and local authorities on an equal footing was the reason why references to 'levels of government' was also avoided, for the concept of level, carries with it the implication that one level is above or below another, and therefore implies that there is a hierarchy of importance between them. This was avoided by substituting the phrase 'spheres of government' for 'levels of government'. Several developing countries softened the reference to human rights, for they felt that whilst these were important issues they could be used by those wanting to antagonise discussions and might hinder progress rather than advance the cause.

One area of common agreement was that Regions were often frustrated by the lack of progress with implementing Sustainable Development at the international level, and ways were considered to incorporate a call on Central Governments to make concrete, time-bound proposals for implementing Sustainable Development Strategies. After debate it was decided to set this out as a separate Resolution, though the insistence on 'time bound' action plans was withdrawn.

The revised Declaration was printed over lunch after which it was re-considered and finally accepted by all participants so that it could be released to the press. The conference closed with a series of presentations from the delegations on Strategies for implementing Sustainable Development; these came from: Western Australia, the Basque Country, Wallonia, and Wales. Again there was much diversity in the detail of approach, but common strands included: mechanisms for making certain Sustainable Development Policies

were central to all government thinking; mechanisms for stimulating and consulting all stakeholders in debate; and the need for policies and progress to be reviewed at regular intervals

Finally the delegation from the Basque Country offered to host the next meeting of RGs in San Sebastian (Basque Country - Spain) from 13th to the 16th of December 2002, which was agreed.

Brian Hanson, Stakeholder Forum

The Johannesburg Call

A Statement by Local Governments of the WSSD

We, the leaders and representatives of local governments from across the globe, gathered in Johannesburg, South Africa in August 2002, commit ourselves to the sustainable development of our planet and people.

Since 1992, local governments have made significant strides towards realising the goals and aspirations of the Rio Earth Summit. Today, we pledge to intensify those local efforts to realising the aspirations, goals and targets of the Johannesburg Summit, as well as all existing international protocols and declarations, including Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration and the Habitat Agenda. As the interface between government and people, we are dedicated to the attainment of a more just, equitable and caring world.

We realise that local actions alone will not save the planet. We therefore urge our national governments, representative international bodies and the United Nations to enhance our capacity and ability to launch a frontline attack on poverty and underdevelopment. Given our pivotal role in this universal battle, we also urge these national and international bodies to make all efforts to strengthen institutions of organised local government. In the African context, we call on all international institutions, including the United Nations, to work through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to support local government in the continent.

We call upon national governments to recognise local government as a vital sphere of government that is the most visible face of the developmental state.

We call for a new form of global solidarity where all like-minded individuals, organisations and spheres of government rally together to build a new tomorrow.

We are deeply concerned about the impact of globalisation at local level, especially within the developing world and countries with economies in transition. We have witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of aspects of our international system on local communities and our local spaces.

We therefore call for a fundamental restructuring of international relations in order to realise a just and more humane world order. We believe that the current structure of the world economy limits local governments' ability to fulfil our developmental mandate.

Inadequate access to international markets, an inequitable global trade regime, unsustainable debt, declining levels of Overseas Development Assistance and the digital divide impede our efforts to govern with authority and humanity.

We urge the world's states and international representative organisations gathered in Johannesburg in 2002 to heed the voice of international local government. As we venture into the new millennium, we commit ourselves to:

- Halving the number of people without access to safe water and sanitation;
- Undertaking active steps to address public health problems, in line with the WTO/TRIPS agreement;
- Improving access to affordable modern energy services;
- Increasing market access for goods from the developing world;
- Moving towards technology and knowledge partnerships in the context of a fair and accessible intellectual property regime
- Ensuring equitable access to quality education at all levels for all

We commit ourselves to achieving these targets by 2015.

We, as local government from across the globe, acknowledge that ours is not an equal, fair or just world. If international gatherings like this one are to make a meaningful difference to people's lives, we – the representatives of the people – must be bold and unequivocal about making changes. We recognise that without political commitment, nothing will be achieved. We therefore pledge our unwavering commitment to eradicating poverty, correcting the imbalances between the developed and developing world and fundamentally reshaping our world. We also commit ourselves to developing very practical, realistic Action Plans and to implement them through Local Action 21 programs to realise these goals. We challenge all Heads of State meeting in Johannesburg next week to do the same.

The time to act is now. Let us not lose this opportunity; there may not be another.

International Council for Local Environment Initiatives

Unions Demand Stronger Reference to Decent Work

As heads of state and governments at the World Summit on Sustainable Development engage in the final stage of negotiations, the international union movement is calling for political will and commitment by world leaders to push for decent employment as a key part of a strong Implementation Action Plan.

The international trade union movement is closely following every step of the process, and will continue to work to ensure the full integration of the social dimension and people concerns into all implementation planning and activities relating to WSSD out-

comes. The trade union movement has been in the forefront of promoting the social aspects of sustainable development before and during the WSSD. We can assure the world that we in the union movement will do our utmost for decent work and sustainable workplaces to be at the centre of the final conclusions of the Summit, and that commitments made here will be closely followed in the future, said Louis Belanger, spokesperson of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

The process in Johannesburg has proven more than ever before the importance of strong unions to achieving sustainable development. It's not that complicated: where unions are strong and present, workplaces are safer and workers and employers are more aware of environmental issues, and of the need for their own participation to better link production and consumption within their workplaces. Awareness is a must for a sustainable future and workplaces are essential to achieving this, concluded Belanger.

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

Communicating Weather Information In Developing Nations

Communities in developing countries can now have better access to weather forecasts as a result of new, affordable weather forecasting and broadcasting equipment developed by the Met Office. This will help prevent them from losing vital crops each year because they don't have access to a simple weather forecast. The benefits of being able to plan ahead mean that communities have a better chance of providing sufficient food for their families and being able to sell more produce.

The Met Office also broadcasts information over RANET. Steve Palmer, technical co-ordinator at the Met Office, said: "The Met Office has been working to provide easy, affordable access to weather information to developing countries for some time, particularly with our involvement in RANET (radio and internet for the communication of hydrological and climate-related information). As part of our RANET activities, we have been providing forecasting equipment and online educational resources to African and, in the future Asian, communities without direct internet access."

"We are delighted to be able to extend the support we give to meteorologists and communities in Africa by developing a lower-cost television broadcast system to the existing radio and internet services provided. We hope to be able to provide weather forecasting services to meet the needs of ten African countries this year, compared with only three last year."

RANET is a product of ACMAD the African Centre for Meteorological Applications for Development

The Met Office

Living with Risk & the need to reduce vulnerability to disasters to achieve sustainable development!

Vulnerability reduction and risk management to reduce the impact of natural hazards need to become part of sustainable development plans and actions at all levels. The annual toll of climate related disasters has doubled in five years, and increased impact is expected from climate change. This is recognized in paragraph 45 of the draft political declaration, circulated on Monday 2 September. Nevertheless, this commitment focuses only on the technological aspects.

WSSD is an opportunity for the world's leaders to commit to reducing the economic, social, and environmental impact of disasters by mobilizing international cooperation and sound technologies, and, in particular, by addressing vulnerability and disaster management in sustainable development policies and plans at all levels.

This, of course, includes the further development of early warning systems but it is absolutely imperative to take social and participatory dimensions into account to manage- and live with- risks. Building resilient communities is the ultimate objective of the International Strategy of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), launched in 2000 to pursue implementation of the recommendations emanated during the International Decade for Natural Disaster reduction (IDNDR 1990-99).

United Nations ISDR launched "*Living with Risk: a global review on disaster reduction initiatives*" earlier in August, in the run-up to WSSD. It is a 400 page study which calls for a world in which earthquakes shake buildings but not economies; in which cyclones bring drama but not tragedy, and in which floods drench landscapes without washing away hope.

The poor are the most affected, more than 90% of deaths from floods, drought and earthquakes are to be found in developing countries. Disaster risk reduction is about improved institutional capacities to deal with risk, about awareness and education, of land use planning, safer constructions, sound environmental and integrated watershed management, to use wetlands, mangroves, reefs and forests to reduce the impact of climate related disasters. Paragraph 35 of the draft Plan of Implementation of Jo'burg outlines actions. Several partnerships, "Type 2", addresses these issues.

"*Living with risk* suggests a different future. Disaster reduction and attacking vulnerability is the best of all bargains. It costs less, and it saves more lives, protects livelihoods and builds a better future. Disaster risk reduction is part of sustainable development," says Salvano Briceño, director of the ISDR Secretariat.

The WSSD Sustainable Development Barometer

The World Summit Consumption Barometer

Water use at its highest.



GREENING the WSSD

The overall index shows that the Summit venues are using 86% more resources than when the Summit started. Last Thursday they used 759 kilolitres of water - the highest on any one day so far. As participants, we all need to do our bit to reduce the impact we have on the resources of Johannesburg.



Resource consumption at Summit venues on Thursday 29 August

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Water | 759 Kl |
| Waste to landfill | 16.47 tons |
| Waste recycled | 5.44 tons |
| Electricity | 104.91 MWh |
| Green Electricity | 39.65 MWh |
| CO ₂ offset | 6049.58 tons |

As participants at the World Summit your actions make a difference. Always remember to reduce, reuse and recycle.

www.greeningthewssd.com

In partnership with Coca-Cola

The SD Barometer is provided by 'Greening the WSSD'

Met Office World Weather Reports

Monsoon rains in Lahore. | Issued on: Mon Sep 2nd 2002
Heavy Monsoon rain gave a soaking at Lahore, Pakistan with 34mm of rain falling in the 6 hour period ending 0600 GMT Monday. This is well over half the normal September monthly rainfall of 56mm.

A hot Sunday night in Indiana | Issued on: Mon Sep 2nd 2002
The overnight minimum temperature of 23.2 degrees Celsius recorded 1200 GMT Monday at Des Moines, Indiana was 11 degrees Celsius above the September average of 12.2 degrees Celsius.

Ex Rusa hits Russia | Issued on: Mon Sep 2nd 2002
Ex Tropical storm Rusa dumped 99mm in the 18 hour period ending 1200 GMT Monday on the city of Juzhno-Sahalinsk which is on the island of Sakhalin, situated to the north of Japan.

A frosty Sunday night in New South Wales | Issued on: Mon Sep 2nd 2002
Bombala in the state of New South Wales, Australia recorded a temperature of minus 5.1 degrees Celsius at 1200 GMT Monday. This is 7 degrees Celsius lower than the September average of 2.2 degrees Celsius.

Thunderstorms affect Brindisi | Issued on: Mon Sep 2nd 2002
An area of thunderstorms affecting parts of eastern Italy produced some very heavy rain with 46mm falling in the 6 hours ending 1200 GMT Monday at Brindisi. The amount is 5mm more than total expected rainfall for the whole of September of 41mm.

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| The Met Office Johannesburg 5 Day Weather Forecast | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|---|--------------|---|--|
| Monday 2nd | | Tuesday 3rd | | Wednesday 4th | | Thursday 5th | | Friday 6th | |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| Day Max | Night Min | Day Max | Night Min | Day Max | Night Min | Day Max | Night Min | Day Max | |
| 21°C 70°F | 6°C 43°F | 22°C 72°F | 7°C 45°F | 23°C 73°F | 8°C 46°F | 19°C 66°F | 10°C 50°F | 18°C 64°F | |

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| Events Diary |
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| Tuesday 9.00 - 1.00 | Plenary Session - General Debate. Plenary Hall |
| 10.00 - 1.00 | Roundtable - Making it Happen. Ballroom 3 |
| 1.15 - 2.45 | Financing & Investment for Sustainable Development in Latin America & the Caribbean. Ballroom 1 |
| 1.15 - 2.45 | From Baltic Sea to Lake Victoria - Innovative Regional Partnerships for Transboundary Solutions to Sustainable Development. Committee Room 5 |
| 2.00 - 8.00 | Plenary Session - General Debate. Plenary Hall |
| 3.00 - 6.00 | Roundtable - Making it Happen. Ballroom 3 |
| 3.30 - 5.30 | Symposium on Global Mapping Partnership. Japan Pavilion, Ubuntu Village |
| 6.00 - 7.30 | Special High Level Event on the Future of Multi-lateralism. Ballroom 1 |
| 6.30 - 8.00 | Partnerships in Capacity Building for Trade & Sustainable Development. Ballroom 2 |
| Wednesday 9.00 - 1.00 | Plenary Session - General Debate. Plenary Hall |
| 10.00 - 1.00 | Roundtable - Making it Happen. Ballroom 3 |
| 1.15 - 2.45 | Women & Wash - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene. Ballroom 1 |
| 1.15 - 2.45 | Sustainability Education & the Management of Change. Committee Room 4A |
| 2.00 - 8.00 | Plenary Session - Multi-Stakeholder Event. To Be Announced |

