

**Informal Comments**  
**U.S. Delegation**  
**Commission on Sustainable Development**  
New York 24 March 2003

**Introduction and Comments on the Future Work Program of the CSD**

- Thanks to Bureau for organizing this second round of informals. In his introductory notes for the draft CSD 11 program of work, Chairman Moosa called for creation of a “new CSD” designed to meet the challenges of the post Johannesburg period.
- We are here to discuss both CSD reform, in general, and the organization of work for CSD 11. We hope these discussions will substantially advance the agenda for CSD 11. We believe that, in seeking to achieve this “new CSD,” it is important that we get it right with the first post-Johannesburg session of the CSD.
- We also thank and congratulate the Secretariat and the Bureau for seeking innovative approaches to making CSD 11 a success, such as creating the space for both a Learning Center and a Partnerships Fair.
- Our hope is that, together, we can renew the CSD so that it is clearly focused and results-oriented, not just a place for rhetorical debate on the extremely broad and complex set of issues that comprise development.
- In some ways we want a CSD that brings outside voices in to inform us and to help us better understand what works and what doesn't work in promoting sustainable development. This will require us all to be more focused on results, and more concerned about practical approaches and impacts on peoples' lives.
- We were encouraged by the discussions held here last month and we look forward to a robust dialog over the next couple of days as we work together to create a more focused, results-oriented CSD.
- As for the thematic content of the CSD's work, we believe the Secretary General's "WEHAB" formulation offers a useful basis for defining the themes of upcoming CSD sessions.
- For example, if we consider “Water” as the overarching theme for the next CSD cycle, we could consider it as the “prism” through which we examine the many facets of water's relationship with other sectoral issues, such as “water and energy,” “water and agriculture,” and so on. It could also be the prism through which we examine the other dimensions of sustainable development, such as poverty alleviation and means of implementation.
- In the same vein, if we consider “Energy” as the overarching theme for the subsequent CSD cycle, again, it could be the prism through which we examine the nexus between energy and other dimensions of sustainable development. As noted in the Secretary General's report of the WSSD, “Energy is central to the lives of the poor and affects them in terms of food, water, health, income, and jobs. Access to energy is central to poverty alleviation.”
- As we contemplate the thematic content of upcoming CSDs, we believe future CSD cycles should focus clearly on a single overarching theme and establish clearly understandable processes aimed at promoting implementation.

## **Second Intervention**

- In keeping with the spirit of dialog that has emerged here today, we would echo the views expressed by India and others that we should not be here to re-open negotiations of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The task before us now is to determine how we might work together in carrying Agenda 21 and the JPOI forward and accomplish the sustainable development objectives they set forth.
- Several delegations have emphasized “means of implementation” as a subject matter for the work of the CSD. We believe that where the CSD could offer significant “added value” is in creating the space for governments, civil society, and the private sector to come together to examine “implementation” and to identify what is and is not working in our efforts to implement Agenda 21 and the JPOI.
- We should ensure ample opportunities to look at barriers to implementation, be they financial limitations or institutional barriers that serve to discourage sustainable development efforts. Again, we would like the CSD to create the space for dialogues on these issues between and among governments, non-government organizations, and the private sector.
- Finally, we wish to ask the Chairman if he or the Secretariat could please advise as to how the results of these informal discussions might be memorialised. Will we receive a “Chairman’s summary” of conclusions and, if so, when? Or, do these discussions simply represent “brainstorming” that will feed into the discussions & decisions of CSD 11?