

November 18, 2003

**Note of the Bureau of the Twelfth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its Third Meeting**

1. The third meeting of the Bureau of the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was held on 18 November 2003. Minister Brende (Norway), Chairperson of CSD-12, chaired the meeting via video link from Oslo. The following Vice-Chairs attended the meeting in New York: Mr. Toru Shimuzu (Japan); Mr. Bolus Paul Zom Lolo (Nigeria); and Ms. Eva Tomic (Slovenia), and Ambassador Stagno (Costa Rica) by telelink. The meeting was also attended by the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSD/DESA), staff from DSD/DESA and officials from the Norwegian Ministries of Environment and Foreign Affairs.
2. Minister Brende opened the meeting by highlighting growing expectations and support from member States for CSD-12, noting in particular the crucial role of CSD in keeping the momentum of the Johannesburg summit through its monitoring function and its focus on implementation.

**Activities of the Bureau since its second meeting**

3. Minister Brende gave a briefing on his recent activities as Chairperson of CSD-12 and invited Bureau members to share information on their respective contacts with their regional groups. In reviewing the reactions of member Governments to the CSD-12 framework for the organization of work, the Bureau reaffirmed that CSD-12 would address the thematic issues in an integrated manner. This would apply not only to the inter-linkages between the thematic cluster and the cross-cutting issues as identified at CSD-11 but also to the inter-linkages among the issues of water and sanitation and human settlements. The Bureau further emphasized the important contributions of Major Groups and reiterated that Major Groups would be fully integrated throughout CSD-12 and would participate in the High-level Segment.
4. The Bureau reaffirmed that CSD-12 activities would be organized through a variety of formats, including issue-oriented presentations, interactive discussions, Partnership Fair, Learning Center and informal roundtable discussions, as well as statements. Statements would be short and allow member governments to comment on any aspect of the implementation review. Minister Brende stressed that the Bureau and the Secretariat would continue working creatively to seek a proper balance between maintaining the integrity of CSD activities as an intergovernmental process and meeting the need for a dynamic, rich and interactive programme.
5. It was agreed that the Secretariat would compile a dossier to provide information on the Partnerships Fair, Learning Center, Major Groups participation, informal

roundtable discussions and side-events. Such a dossier would be posted on the DSD website and also made available in hard copies for distribution at CSD-related events.

### **Updates on regional meetings**

6. Mr. Shimizu and the Secretariat reported on the results of the regional implementation meetings in Asia Pacific and West Asia, respectively. Both meetings went well, with well-prepared presentations and a balanced representation of government policy makers, experts and Major Groups. There was strong support at the regional level for the work of CSD-12. The lessons learned in the regional context should be shared at the global level through interactive regional discussions at CSD-12. Ambassador Stagno, via tele-link from Santiago, gave an up-to-the minute report on the ECLAC meeting and indicated that the latter part would be forward-looking, examining emerging challenges.
7. The Bureau took note with satisfaction of the meeting on 29th October between Ambassador Stagno, representing the Bureau, and Heads of Regional Commissions on the effective modality of regional discussions at CSD-12.
8. The Bureau was informed of the current preparations for the upcoming ECA and ECE regional implementation meetings being held in Addis Ababa and Geneva, respectively, and expressed appreciation for the work being undertaken by the regional commissions concerned and by interested UN organizations. It was emphasized again that the outcomes of all five regional implementation meetings would be officially transmitted to CSD-12 and be part of the official documentation.
9. The Bureau also welcomed the initiative of regional commissions to realign their future regional meetings in sustainable development with the implementation cycles of CSD.

### **Preparations for the SIDS**

10. The Secretariat reported to the Bureau on current preparations for the three-day preparatory meeting on SIDS. The Bureau underscored the importance of this preparatory meeting for the success of the SIDS International Meeting to be held in August/September 2004 in Mauritius and reaffirmed its commitment to bring the three-day preparatory meeting to a fruitful conclusion.
11. In this connection, the Bureau noted the CSD-11 resolution on the preparations for the SIDS International Meeting, including its decision that CSD should convene a three-day preparatory meeting during its 12<sup>th</sup> session for an in-depth assessment and appraisal of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and that CSD should finalize the preparations for the International Meeting, including its agenda.

## **Preparations for Learning Center, Partnership Fair, Side-events and informal roundtable discussions**

12. The Secretariat reported to the Bureau on the current status of planning for the Learning Center, Partnership Fair, Side Events and informal roundtable discussions. There has been great interest in Learning Center activities, with many organizations, including the World Bank and UNDP, offering concrete support. The Secretariat is working closely with these organizations to ensure that a balanced, well structured, coordinated and stimulating programme be formulated as soon as possible to complement the work of CSD-12 while meeting the diverse needs of participants.
13. It was brought to the attention of the Bureau that the variety of activities being planned would have cost implications. In addition to building and meeting facilities costs, there would also be costs incurred in the provision of additional security. The Bureau agreed to seek funding support from interested member States.

## **Current status of documentation**

14. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the current status of documentation for CSD-12 and highlighted the ongoing collaboration with UN agencies and other partners in the preparation of Secretary-General's state of implementation reports.
15. It was pointed out that the overview report would reflect progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. It would be factual and highlight the implications of obstacles and constraints for implementation. The state of implementation reports on water, sanitation and human settlements, under preparation with data contributions and written inputs from UN partner agencies, would address these issues in an integrated manner while also reflecting new challenges and opportunities.

## **Major Groups Involvement**

16. The Secretariat reported to the Bureau on steps that have been taken to encourage and strengthen the involvement of Major Groups in the work of CSD. In addition to regular information exchanges, the Secretariat had held tele-conferences with the organizing partners and had received 13 written inputs so far as contributions to the reports of the Secretary-General. Major Groups will also submit 9 discussion papers to be issued in 6 languages as official documents of CSD-12.
17. The Secretariat highlighted the resources constraints facing Major Groups from developing countries, which had negatively affected their participation in CSD-related activities. Such constraints would certainly lead to continuing North-south imbalances in participation of Major Groups in CSD-12.

### **Next meeting of the Bureau**

18. The next meeting will be held in New York on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2004.
19. The Bureau agreed that at its January meeting in New York, it would take decisions on specific components of the organization of work at CSD-12, and would give a briefing to delegates on the status of preparations for CSD-12.

### **Major Groups Briefing**

20. Following its third meeting, members of the Bureau met with representatives of major groups. Minister Brende expressed his wish for close contact with major groups and welcomed their interactive contributions as the CSD shifts its focus to implementation and identification of obstacles to achieving internationally-agreed goals and targets. The ensuing discussion revolved around a number of issues raised by Major Group participants.