

## **Note of the Bureau of the 13th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its First Meeting**

1. The first meeting of the Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) took place on 30 September 2004. The Chairman of CSD-13, H.E. John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), chaired the meeting. The following Vice-Chairs attended the meeting: Ms. Husniyya Mammadova (Azerbaijan); Mr. Khaled Elbakly (Egypt); Ms. Dagmara Berbalk (Germany); and Mr. Boo-nam Shin (Republic of Korea). 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 Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda and Permanent Mission of Germany.

### **Activities of the Chair and Bureau members**

2. Chair Ashe briefed Bureau members on his activities as Chairman of CSD-13. He had been invited to speak at a number of international events on sustainable development and on water, sanitation and human settlements. There was strong support for CSD-13, as well as high expectations for the outcome of CSD-13. In this connection, one Vice-chair brought to the attention of the Bureau several forthcoming activities that relate to CSD-13.

### **Scheduling conflict of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council and CSD-13 meetings**

3. It was brought to the attention of the Bureau that the UN-HABITAT Governing Council meeting (11-15 April 2005) overlaps with the first week of CSD-13 (11-22 April 2005). The Bureau was informed of the background of this matter, the consultations undertaken so far and the options under discussion. The Bureau agreed that moving CSD-13 to the weeks of 18-28 April 2005 or 18 April to 2 May 2005 is not a viable solution. In the first instance, CSD-13 would lose one working day (totalling 18 working hours provided by concurrent activities in three conference rooms); in the second, the session would be split into three weeks, with an extra weekend in between, resulting in substantial extra costs to both the Secretariat and delegations. Both alternative dates would seriously disrupt the organization of work of CSD-13.
4. The Bureau decided to keep present dates of CSD-13 (11-22 April 2005), make arrangements for UN-HABITAT to report in the week of 18-22 April 2005 on the outcome of the Governing Council meeting as an input to policy discussions at CSD-13, and schedule the High-level Segment from 20 to 22 April 2005. The Bureau agreed that the overlap was most unfortunate and requested that measures be taken to avoid overlaps with any major UN meetings in future.

### **Organisation of work for the intergovernmental preparatory meeting**

5. The Bureau considered a proposal by the Secretariat on the organisation of work for the intergovernmental preparatory meeting (28 Feb. – 4 March 2005). As decided by CSD-11 and endorsed by ECOSOC, the objective of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting is to discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles in implementation that were identified at CSD-12 (the review session). The discussions will be based on the outcome of the review session, reports by the Secretary-General as well as other relevant inputs. In this context, the Bureau agreed that the proposal provides a good basis for

the organisational modality of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting. The proposal will be further considered at the next Bureau meeting along with the organisation of work for CSD-13.

### **Organization of work for CSD-13**

6. The Bureau held extensive discussions on the organisation of work of CSD-13, as well as the outcome of CSD-13. Bureau members shared their views on what CSD-13 should achieve and how the activities of CSD-13 could be organised to facilitate the achievement of that outcome. In this regard, the Bureau recalled that by CSD-11 decision, the Commission's policy session is expected to take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in water, sanitation and human settlements, taking account of the discussions of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting, the Secretary-General's reports and other relevant inputs.
7. The Bureau agreed that CSD-13 should focus on deliverables and should mobilise further concrete and tangible action to expedite implementation. CSD-13 should not seek to redefine problems or challenges. The outcome of CSD-13 should support and expedite implementation, be action-oriented, and be practical. In this sense, the idea of a framework of policy options and practical measures was explored.
8. The Bureau decided to continue its consideration of the organisation of work for CSD-13 at its next meeting; in the meantime, Bureau members will consult with their respective regional groupings and invite their inputs.

### **Documentation**

9. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the status of documentation for CSD-13. Preparation of three Secretary-General's reports, focusing on policy options and practical measures in water, sanitation and human settlements, respectively, is proceeding according to schedule. The advance unedited copies are scheduled to be posted on the CSD-13 website before the end of December 2004. Official versions of the reports in six languages will be available ahead of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting (28 Feb - 4 March 2005).
10. The report of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting, which includes the Chair's text, will be translated into official languages and submitted to CSD-13.

### **Major Groups' Participation**

11. The Bureau emphasised the importance of Major Groups' participation in CSD-13, including the intergovernmental preparatory meeting, and considered a number of possible formal entry points for their contributions, as well as the possibility of additional inputs as time permits
12. The Bureau took note of the combined report that the nine Major Groups will submit to CSD-13 in which they will present Major Groups' views and aspirations for action to expedite implementation.

### **Forthcoming regional meetings**

13. The Secretariat provided an update on the forthcoming regional meetings that are of relevance to CSD-13. The Bureau emphasised the importance of regional inputs to the policy

discussions at CSD-13 and discussed the possibility of participating in selected regional meetings.

#### **Planning for Partnerships Fair, Learning Centre and Side-events**

14. The Secretariat provided a brief update on the current status of planning for the Partnerships Fair, Learning Centre and Side-events. Three interactive discussions on practical issues related to partnerships based on experiences of CSD-registered partnerships will be organised during the intergovernmental preparatory meeting. A full-fledged Partnerships Fair will take place during CSD-13, highlighting the lessons learned from partnership initiatives for sustainable development, especially those in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements.
15. Learning Centre activities will be organised only during CSD-13. Courses will be scheduled from 11- 19 April 2005 and will reflect the focus of CSD-13 on policy options and practical measures for implementation.
16. Side events, sponsored by Governments, intergovernmental organisations, UN funds, programmes, specialised agencies and other entities, as well as Major Groups, will continue to be organised as a complementary part of CSD-13 programmes to generate informal opportunities for exchange of views and practical experiences in implementation.

#### **Future Bureau meetings**

17. The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting in early November, to be followed by a third meeting in December, a fourth meeting toward the end of January 2005 and a fifth in February 2005 before the intergovernmental preparatory meeting.