

Making A Difference: Interactive Discussions with Major Groups
Thursday, May 11, 2006

Education Caucus Statement on the Chairman's Summary, Part I

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Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Delegates, Major Groups, and NGOs, on behalf of Educators and the Education Caucus thank you for this opportunity.

In making a difference, the Chairman's Summary provides a good overview of the key points brought to bear on the thematic cluster of issues. In terms of education as a cross-cutting issue, we would like to see stronger language on implementation regarding education for sustainable development, meaning engaging stakeholders on three levels: the learning individual, the learning organization, and the learning society.

We would like to thank you and your colleagues for your continuing commitment to the education component of the work of the Commission itself. If the CSD is to have a lasting impact, the public needs to be sufficiently engaged in the Agenda 21 process by the governments, agencies, departments, and related institutions.

In the Review year we have not seen figures to analyze what has been done and where success has been achieved in engaging the public in the agenda. Without access to consistent data for analysis, the Commission, governments, agencies or stakeholders are unable to effectively contribute to the development of better policy and subsequent implementation.

In the section on climate change, we would have liked to see clear language on engaging stakeholders in sustainability efforts that links knowledge with action. Paragraph 233 exemplifies the problem of defining the function of education only in terms of training and dissemination. What is needed to address the complexity of these thematic issues is an exponential increase in access to knowledge that links the global to the local. Indeed, accurate judgment and assessment of concrete actions and measures to understand and enhance international cooperation is highly dependent upon education as a cross-cutting issue.

Under Agenda 21 and JPOI, education in all its forms engaging all sectors is to be built into implementation strategies and therefore should be reflected in the chapeau of the Chairman's Summary as such.

According to Paragraph 17, the matrix is designed to help organize lessons learned and best practices. Therefore education as a cross-cutting issue can be made stronger as a component of the matrix.

These points serve to clarify our progress in implementing the education provisions in Agenda 21, the JPOI, and the CSD Plan of Work as noted in Paragraph 19 which calls for follow-up arrangements that could be agreed upon at CSD-15.

"If government doesn't build the inner energy of the people, the energy resources it does build will not be sustainable."

–Chief Mrs. Bisi Ogunleye-Nigeria, CSD-14, 2006