

## **Note of the CSD-15 Bureau on its first Meeting**

1. The first meeting of the Bureau of the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) took place on 3 November 2006 at the United Nations Office in Geneva. H.E. Mr. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry, Qatar, and Chairman of CSD-15, was represented by his senior advisors. Ambassador Frances Lisson, Vice-Chair (Australia) chaired the meeting. Mr. Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, Vice-Chair (Brazil), Mr. Alain Edouard Traore, Vice-Chair (Burkina Faso) and Mr. Jiří Hlaváček, Vice-Chair (Czech Republic) attended the meeting. The meeting was also attended by the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development (CSD Secretariat), and an advisor from the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, as well as staff from the Secretariat.

### **Message from the Chairman**

2. In his letter to the Director of the CSD Secretariat, Minister Al-Attiyah conveyed his thanks to the Bureau members for consulting with their regional constituents on the organization of work for CSD-15 and its IPM. He emphasized the importance of deciding on the organization of work as soon as possible to allow for sufficient time for preparations for CSD-15 and its IPM.
3. In his message to the Bureau members delivered by his senior advisor, Minister Al-Attiyah emphasized that CSD-15 provides an opportunity for reaffirming political commitments in sustainable development. At the same time, participants will recall the provisions of Agenda 21, CSD decisions, JPOI, the Mauritius Strategy and the outcome of the 2005 World Summit. Therefore, CSD-15 should not renegotiate agreed language but should be forward-looking, focusing on implementation, and on concrete and actionable decisions in the thematic areas. To this end, he invites the CSD secretariat to consider putting together the relevant provisions from Agenda 21, JPOI as well as CSD decisions and other intergovernmental agreements, with a view to facilitating preparations for CSD-15 and its IPM.
4. Minister Al-Attiyah also recalled that CSD-11 decision entrusts the Bureau with the task of recommending the organization of work for CSD sessions. The Bureau, in accomplishing this task, should follow CSD-11 decision and draw lessons from the first cycle of CSD sessions and build on its recent successes.
5. Minister Al-Attiyah further noted that the High-level Segment is of critical importance in giving effect to CSD-15 decisions. Political guidance and endorsement by Ministers to the agreed policy decisions will generate momentum for the follow-up. It is therefore imperative that negotiations on policy decisions be completed on time ahead of the start of the High-level Segment. Otherwise, the value added of the High-level Segment will be lost. Negotiations overlapping or held in parallel with the High-level Segment should be avoided.

### **Preparations for CSD-15 and its IPM**

6. The Director of the CSD Secretariat presented the options on the organization of work for CSD-15 and its IPM, prepared at the request of Minister Al-Attiyah. She pointed out that the options were prepared following CSD-11 decision, and were based on the Ministerial guidance of CSD-14, which captured the review discussions. The options were aimed at facilitating an integrated and balanced consideration of the thematic issues, while taking into account the cross-cutting issues and inter-linkages.

7. Ambassador Lisson invited the Bureau members to report on the results of their consultations with their respective regional constituents. In the ensuing exchange of views and discussions, it became apparent that while regional groups of States were flexible on the organization of work, there were differences in their preferences. The Bureau members considered carefully the diversity of views and agreed that there was some common ground among the regional preferences. They invited the Secretariat to prepare - for consideration and decision by the Bureau at its next meeting - a revised organization of work for CSD-15 and its IPM, merging the proposed options.
8. The Bureau agreed that the IPM should not repeat the discussions at CSD-14 and the IPM discussions should be aimed at identifying policy options and possible actions for negotiations at CSD-15. To this end the IPM would serve as a funnel to focus attention on policy options and possible actions. There would be no negotiations during the IPM.
9. In the Bureau's discussions on the IPM and CSD-15, including its High-level Segment, the timely issuance of the report of the IPM to facilitate preparations by Member States was emphasized. Also emphasized was the allocation of sufficient time for negotiations. In this regard, the importance of completing negotiations before the High-level Segment was reiterated. The specific modalities for organizing the High-level Segment were discussed, including some innovative features.
10. The Bureau further highlighted the importance of CSD-15 to achieve results-oriented outcomes and to avoid general, non-specific talks.

#### **Documentation for CSD-15**

11. In response to the Bureau's emphasis on the timely issuance of documentation for CSD-15 and its IPM, the Director of the Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the current status, including the contributions by Major Groups. The Bureau's attention was drawn to the ongoing negotiations at the Second Committee of the General Assembly on a resolution on sustainable development, which, inter alia, would provide guidance on the number of Secretary-General's reports to CSD-15. The resolution was scheduled for adoption in December, while conference service has scheduled the submission of documentation for CSD-15 on 4 December 2006. Late submission of documents will lead to their late issuances in the six official languages.

#### **Major Groups' participation**

12. The Director of the Secretariat briefed the Bureau on Major Groups' preparations for CSD-15 and its IPM. The Secretariat has received from Major Groups a number of inputs, including their contributions to the Major Groups' Priorities for Action paper. The Secretariat maintains regular contact with Major Groups' organizing partners, including through monthly tele-conferences. The guidelines for Major Groups regarding CSD-15 and its IPM have been posted on the webpage devoted to Major Groups.

#### **Regional participation**

13. The Director of the Secretariat informed the Bureau that ECLAC had organized a meeting in Mexico City in early September as a contribution to CSD-15; ESCAP considered ESCAP's contribution to CSD-15 through its recent deliberations at its Committee on Managing Globalization; and ESWCA and ECE are planning similar events to provide inputs to CSD-15.

### **Planning for Partnerships Fair, Learning Centre and Side Events**

14. The Bureau was informed that there will be some Partnerships activities during the IPM, while a full-fledged Partnerships Fair will be organized at CSD-15. It has been suggested that representatives of partnership initiatives that have achieved concrete results in implementation be invited to speak during CSD-15 and its IPM to present the solutions they have successfully put in practice.
15. While there are no Learning Centre activities planned for the IPM, CSD-15 will continue to feature a full Learning Centre, with courses to be provided on a “no-cost to the UN” basis. The Bureau’s attention was drawn to the ongoing effort to facilitate provision of courses by experts from developing countries.
16. Regarding Side Events, the Bureau was informed that there will be facilities made available for organizing Side Events during both the IPM and CSD-15. An announcement on Side Events will be posted on the CSD-15 website shortly.

### **Other business**

17. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the background of the scheduling conflict between CSD-15 and the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies and drew attention to the ECOSOC decisions on the meeting period and dates of CSD sessions and the availability of conference facilities in New York. The Bureau was further informed of the communications between the CSD and UNFCCC Secretariats to resolve this matter. The Bureau expressed its hope that the upcoming COP-12 would take a decision on this matter so that member States would be able to attend both events.
18. Regarding future Bureau meetings, the Secretariat was requested to consult the Bureau members on their attendance at a proposed Bureau meeting in Doha toward the end of November.