



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO



**The Permanent Mission of Switzerland
to the United Nations**

20 March 2006

Excellency,

In reference to the letter dated 26 January 2006 from the President of the General Assembly, we are writing to you in our capacity as Co-chairmen to outline the way in which we intend to conduct our informal consultations on the issue of the institutional framework for the UN's environmental activities.

As indicated by the President of the GA in his letter, these consultations will be based on paragraph 169, section "Environmental activities", of the World Summit Outcome Document. This paragraph recognizes the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system and contains the mandate to explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework to address this need.

We are committed to carry out our consultations in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, and to bear in mind related processes. In a first phase, our intention is to call for informal discussions of the plenary to reach a clearer sense of the issues under consideration.

We propose that, in order to make the most of our discussions, it would be useful that delegations deal primarily with the two following questions:

1) In your country's view, what are the major problems and challenges of the UN system in its environmental work, specifically with regard to the needs identified in paragraph 169 of the outcome document?

- enhanced coordination
- improved policy advice and guidance
- strengthened scientific knowledge, assessment and cooperation
- better treaty compliance, while respecting the legal autonomy of the treaties
- better integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework at the operational level, including through capacity-building

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

2) What could be envisaged in terms of a more coherent institutional framework aimed at addressing these major problems and challenges?

We intend to start informal consultations on 19 and 25 April 2006.

Your ideas, thoughts and proposals to the suggested questions will help us to produce a preliminary assessment of the issues as well as of the desired outcome of this informal consultations and the way to proceed in the future.

Should delegations agree, experts may be invited to share their knowledge, especially in those issues that require technical or scientific information. Background papers could also be prepared if needed. In addition, we will keep in close contact with the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence, recently established by the Secretary General.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Ambassador
Enrique Berruga
Permanent Representative of
Mexico



Ambassador
Peter Maurer
Permanent Representative of
Switzerland