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**Commission on Sustainable Development acting as
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Chairman's Summary of the High-Level Segment

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1. The Ministerial Dialogue was formally convened with statements from Louise Fréchette, Deputy-Secretary General of the United Nations, and H.E. Megawati Soekarnoputri, President of the Republic of Indonesia. Both stressed the importance of the outcomes of the WSSD for the future of the world's people and environment, and urged Ministers and delegates to work toward a strong plan of implementation that would further the goals and principles of Agenda 21. Statements were also heard from the three Co-Chairs of the GEF Ministerial Roundtable on Financing for Sustainable Development.

2. During these sessions, Ministers addressed issues of preparing for implementation, developing guidelines for partnerships and suggesting elements for the political declaration. The Chairman stressed the importance of balancing the three pillars of sustainable development, and invited statements from the Ministers on these areas of discussion.

Ministerial Interactive Dialogue

3. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to Agenda 21, the Rio Principles and the other outcomes of the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and called for their full implementation. Many Ministers stressed the importance of working to preserve the natural environment and the natural resource base for future generations. A people-centred approach should be taken to sustainable development, keeping in mind the urgency of poverty alleviation. In the second decade after Rio, the world must work towards creating a culture of sustainable development. This should include ethical values that take into account cultural and traditional differences while acknowledging the need for all people to work towards living in harmony with nature.

4. Regarding the Plan of Implementation currently under negotiation, a number of Ministers stressed the importance of setting clear time-bound targets including commitments for new and additional resources. There was strong agreement that efforts should be focused on achieving the goals stated in Agenda 21 and that countries should not renegotiate agreed principles and commitments from Rio or from other international agreements and conventions. A number of Ministers called for ratification of existing agreements and conventions, including the Cartagena and Kyoto Protocols, emphasizing their incorporation of the precautionary principle. Several Ministers also reaffirmed support for the values and principles contained in the Earth Charter.

5. Changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns was emphasized as a critical objective that must be met in order to achieve the goals of Agenda 21. Ministers stressed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, calling on developed countries to take the lead in changing unsustainable patterns of behaviour. Concern over the emphasis on voluntary efforts was raised, and the need for more specific regulations was noted. Others noted that the role of the private sector in eradicating poverty and making globalization more sustainable could not be ignored, but stressed the need for equal partnerships within the private sector and among all sectors of civil society. While acknowledging that globalization offers both risks and opportunities, some said that an equitable approach involving all nations in decision-making processes was essential.

6. The importance of addressing discrepancies between current global trade regimes and sustainable development was a priority for many, and it was stressed that equity and equality should serve as key concepts in integrating social concerns into the architecture of global trade and finance. Specifically, Ministers emphasized the need for an enabling environment to implement agreements forged at Doha and at Monterrey, and several also indicated their willingness to work toward such action. A number of speakers called for elimination of trade-distorting subsidies.

7. Increased access to markets and debt relief were cited as crucial if developing countries are to gain the resources needed to implement Agenda 21. Many supported stronger financial commitments, including meeting the internationally agreed target of 0.7% of GDP for ODA, and transfer of clean technologies accompanied by training and capacity building. Some supported debt cancellation for the poorest countries. The creation of a Human Solidarity Fund was also discussed. Several Ministers expressed their commitment to halving the number of people living on less than US \$1 per day by 2015. Many expressed support for replenishing and strengthening the GEF, particularly its small grants programme. Several Ministers proposed incorporating the GEF as the financial mechanism for the UNCCD.

8. Providing access to water and sanitation, preventing desertification, and conserving biodiversity were repeatedly stressed as key areas where action should be taken and commitments made. Specific targets for sanitation, water and renewable energy were identified as the most realistic areas where commitments could be met. Strengthened local institutional capacities for human settlements, provision of adequate shelter, promotion of sustainable agriculture to ensure food security, and access to land and water resources were also highlighted as key areas of concern. Actions to address poverty and health issues were given priority by many Ministers, and in this context, the need to combat HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases was cited as critical to promoting sustainable development.

9. Education was cited as essential for poverty eradication as well as changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns. Improved education systems are also important for improving health and participation in decision-making.

10. Many agreed that scarcity of water is a fundamental issue. Water is an increasingly rare resource and has become a cause of conflict within and among countries. Many Ministers expressed their commitment to goals of reducing by half the number of people lacking access to safe drinking water by 2015. Several supported enhancing river-based initiatives involving countries sharing international river basins and highlighted the need to elaborate integrated regional programmes for integrated coastal and marine resource management. The need for an inter-agency coordination mechanism on oceans within the UN system was also identified.

11. Energy and agriculture were identified as other key areas for maintaining the strength of countries and ensuring sustainable development. Poor air quality, including urban air pollution and acid rain, were also cited major issues of concern. While these specific sectors were discussed at length, it was stated that sectoral issues should not be taken individually and attention must be given to Chapter 38 of Agenda 21, which calls for an integrated approach to

sustainable development. In this way, it is acknowledged that all sectors are interrelated and no one resource can be conserved without ensuring the protection of the others.

12. Biodiversity and climate change were identified as areas that must be addressed in an integrated manner, as well as desertification, especially in Africa. A number of Ministers suggested cooperation should be fostered through workshops to exchange information and ensure common implementation frameworks within the CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD. It was noted that the Ministerial Declaration of Marrakech could contribute to the WSSD and ensure inter-linkages to climate change. Adoption of a goal to halt and reverse at the global and national level the current trend of loss in natural resources by 2015 was highlighted, as well as to halt the loss of biodiversity by having the necessary instruments in place by 2010, as agreed at CBD COP-6.

13. The importance of good governance and creating an enabling environment at both the national and international levels was discussed. Democracy and an open, participatory approach to decision making were stated as critical to furthering the goals of sustainable development. A gender-balanced approach should be taken to policy-making, with major groups including indigenous peoples and youth involved in sustainable development programmes and policies.

14. Armed conflict was highlighted as an impediment to sustainable development, and Ministers called for promotion of peace, solidarity and justice in areas ravaged by war. They urged that steps be taken to end foreign occupation and eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Several Ministers also stressed that unilateral sanctions created major obstacles to sustainable development and should be abolished.

Partnerships

15. On the issue of partnerships for sustainable development (“Type II” outcomes), Ministers engaged in discussions on the role of these partnerships in the context of the WSSD, with a view to the draft guiding principles for these partnerships to guide the development of these outcomes from the WSSD. It was widely agreed that partnerships are critical for implementation of the goals of Agenda 21 and may provide the best way to deliver concrete results. Ministers called for partnerships that incorporated the three pillars of sustainable development and were sensitive to regional and national characteristics.

16. Many Ministers repeatedly stressed that partnerships could not be used as substitutes for intergovernmental commitments, but should serve as mechanisms for implementing them. Most agreed that Governments should not use partnerships as a way to avoid responsibility. Good governance, particularly at the local level, and the importance of creating an enabling environment for the creation and implementation of partnerships was also mentioned.

17. Ministers agreed that participation of major groups and stakeholders from the early stages of the process of creating partnerships was required in order for initiatives to be transparent and fully participatory. The importance of ownership of partnership initiatives was stressed, including effective participation of youth, women and indigenous people. Principles of equality, responsibility and accountability were considered essential for sound initiatives. Elements of

efficiency, coherence, and impact or effect were also cited as valuable, as were mutual respect and trust. Some also supported consideration of spiritual and cultural values in promoting sustainable development.

18. The importance of securing resources for partnerships was discussed at length. Ministers stipulated that partnerships should not be made with already committed resources but with new financing, and that already existing programmes should not be renamed and launched as new partnerships for sustainable development. Resources should be distributed evenly and judiciously, and neither ODA nor resources for partnerships should be used for political purposes. The creation of a public-private joint venture capital fund for financing of partnerships was suggested. Others stated that it was important to minimize administrative costs and to ensure that the maximum amount of resources would reach the intended purpose of any partnership and that no unnecessary bureaucracy was created.

19. Several observed that partnerships had great potential to widen the resource base for implementation of Agenda 21, generate new resources and bring new and different actors together. One Minister highlighted the establishment of an environmental award providing US \$1 million every two years for an outstanding achievement at the international level, such as partnership for integrated management of water resources. The private sector was identified repeatedly as a key actor in developing successful partnerships and its role as both a stakeholder and an investor was discussed. Several underscored the need to address the relative power and influence of corporation in partnerships. In this regard, the importance of access to information by all partners was highlighted.

20. Partnerships for good governance were viewed by some as essential for enhancing synergy among governments and integrating the private sector, while others added that they should be open, transparent and accountable. Several called for promoting international joint efforts to provide adequate financial resources for developing countries to enable them to implement national and international environmental accords. Some pointed to the need for partnerships to take into account the difficult situations of the least developed countries. Others said that sustainable development principles and partnerships could provide a sound basis for economic reforms in countries with economies in transition. High turnover in government was recognized as a problem in this regard.

21. It was clear to most that serious attention should be given to the process that will conceptualize how partnerships will help to address the major areas identified by the Secretary-General, as well as other priority partnership areas such as education and capacity building. It was widely accepted that partnerships should be linked to Millennium Declaration goals.

22. While many endorsed the establishment of a set of guidelines for partnerships and the creation of a monitoring system to ensure implementation, others argued that voluntary measures allowing partners to create their own partnerships mechanisms for ensuring implementation and evaluation of progress would be most conducive to creative innovative initiatives. The need for development of indicators for sustainable development to monitor implementation of Agenda 21 was also highlighted, as was the potential for the CSD to serve as a focal point for partnerships and a forum for exchanging ideas and lessons learned. Many felt that monitoring and reporting

should not require additional layers of administration at the national level, and suggested a minimum level of detail be defined that could be incorporated in monitoring and assessment in the review process.

23. Many Ministers referred to NEPAD as a good example of a regional initiative, and supported the adoption of decisions to foster partnerships for better coordination of regional activities and initiatives. Others emphasized South-South cooperation for partnerships and establishment of national and regional centers for sustainable development. Several spoke in favor of actions related to SIDS, supporting implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action. Announcing the goal of halving the number of those with lack of adequate sanitation by 2015, in addition to similar goals for water provision, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Campaign was presented as model of a multi-stakeholder partnership launched in South Africa this year. WASH is a demonstration of how global initiatives can connect with partnerships at local, national and regional levels.

24. Examples of partnerships at the national level were the focus of many statements, and several noted success in enacting national sustainable development legislation in their countries. Poverty alleviation was cited as a priority in partnership efforts at this level. Other important areas included health, education, water, desertification, energy, biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, and development and transfer of clean technology. Partnerships involving geothermal energy for use in developing countries and supporting sustainable mountain development in the UN Year of Mountains were also highlighted.

25. Local Agenda 21 was cited as the main instrument for enabling successful partnerships at the community level. Interlinked areas such as the status of women, health and clean energy were recognized as best dealt with at the community level through micro-level development and involvement of major stakeholders. Responding to a comment on mainstreaming sustainable development, one Minister said that participatory partnerships must ensure the involvement of voters and communities in understanding sustainable development.

Political Declaration

26. Ministers agreed that the Political Declaration should be short, concise, focused and action-oriented. It should reiterate basic principles, reaffirm commitments and strengthen multilateral cooperation for implementation of sustainable development.

27. High priority was given to reaffirmation of commitment to further implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Principles, through mutual global partnerships in line with common but differentiated responsibilities and upholding the three pillars of sustainable development. Many called for inclusion of language that would reaffirm the Earth Charter as an ethical basis for sustainable development. Support was also expressed for language on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, ensuring follow-up to the WTO Ministerial Round at Doha and the UN Conference on Financing for Development at Monterrey, implementing existing multilateral environmental agreements, and ratification of other conventions and agreements including the Kyoto Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol. Endorsement of and commitment to agreed time

targets on energy and other issues contained in the Plan of Implementation were also emphasized.

28. The eradication of poverty was identified by most as a top priority area to be addressed in the Declaration. To this end, suggestions were heard from many Ministers on taking concrete steps to establish an international solidarity fund, increasing developing country access to international markets and removing discriminatory trade barriers, and phasing out environmentally harmful and trade-distorting subsidies. Many supported language on meeting ODA targets, fostering coordination among Bretton Woods institutions, ensuring equity in global finance, enacting measures to combat corruption, and enabling an open and transparent participatory approach at all levels. For the highly indebted and least developed countries, references to debt swap for global ecological services and debt cancellation in least developed countries were suggested. A number of Ministers supported strengthening opportunities to work in partnership to mobilize resources to unleash human productivity, promote sharing of experiences within and among regions, reduce trade barriers, and meet the challenge of ensuring that all countries and all sectors of society could reap the benefits of globalization.

29. Several Ministers spoke out against foreign occupation and military conflict, calling for protection of those under occupation and addressing the need to minimize the negative impacts of sanctions on sustainable development efforts. The peaceful settlement of disputes, elimination of weapons of mass destruction, as well as an end to foreign occupation and unilateral sanctions were all deemed necessary by a number of Ministers as prerequisites for sustainable development.

30. Commitment to good governance and efforts to improve public management was mentioned by many Ministers, and several reasserted that governments have primary responsibility for sustainable development, while others noted that respect for the sovereign rights of states over natural resources should be recognized and upheld. Many called for reaffirmation of political commitment and determination to create the necessary tools for implementation. The need for commitment to sustainable development at the community level was also highlighted.

31. Capacity building and scientific and technological cooperation to bridge the digital divide and ensure follow-up and monitoring of the sustainable development progress was raised as another central issue to be addressed in the Declaration. Points were made on the need for dissemination of information to address gaps in sustainable development education and knowledge, and for global research centers for sustainable development that could provide access to information and develop support systems in connection with decision-making.

32. Many said that the Declaration should promote respect for human rights and cultural diversity, recognize the autonomy of indigenous people, reinforce the social pillar through employment creation for youth, in particular, stress the key role of women and their equal participation in sustainable development including access to natural resources, and articulate a vision for the future that could inspire hope in youth and children. Several Ministers also called for inclusion of educators and the media in major groups.

33. It was agreed that the political declaration should endorse the Plan of Implementation, express awareness of a new sense of global interdependence, recognize the complexity of the issues involved, and reflect the need to strengthen international institutional frameworks and integrate the environmental pillar into existing institutions. Some Ministers supported a section addressing deliverables of the Plan of Implementation attached to sustainable development principles in the five key areas of water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

34. Coordinated efforts to implement the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were highlighted by a number of Ministers, and many stressed the importance of biodiversity conservation and incorporation of the precautionary principle. Mountain and ocean ecosystems were highlighted as areas of importance in this context.

35. Commitment to the special needs of Africa and SIDS was reflected in support for regional initiatives and development frameworks, including the Barbados Programme of Action and NEPAD. South-South cooperation was emphasized as key to future progress in implementation, and strong political support was given for initiatives to combat HIV/AIDS.