



# JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT 2002



WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA | 26 AUGUST–4 SEPTEMBER 2002

## Press Release

### UN Urges Governments to Maintain Pressure for Action After Johannesburg Summit

New York, 14 November – The Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development is urging Governments to fulfil the commitments they made in Johannesburg two months ago, as the first round of United Nations talks continues today on how to move the Summit agreements forward.

“We cannot stop now,” said Nitin Desai, the Summit Secretary-General, in his opening statement to Government delegates yesterday in a UN General Assembly Committee. “We need to maintain the pressure to do all that we committed to do in Johannesburg. We need to ensure that the resources promised in Monterrey and Johannesburg are actually provided,” he added, referring to the increased funding pledged at the conference on financing for development held in Mexico earlier this year.

Pointing to the Summit’s many achievements – especially the goals and targets agreed in the key areas of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity -- Desai said that the main concern now is how to strengthen implementation. He outlined several major challenges and questions, including:

- how to spur action and synergy on the partnership initiatives launched at the Summit and deciding what monitoring or coordination role the UN should play. Some 220 partnerships with \$235 million in resources were identified in advance of the Summit and 60 partnerships were announced during the Summit by a variety of countries.
- how to get the various UN agencies to collaborate better with each other and with strategies set by national governments, to translate the Summit goals and targets into action.
- how to restructure the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which has been mandated to monitor and follow-up on the Summit agreements. Desai suggested that the Commission could hold a short organizational session in early 2003, at which it would elect a new Chair, and then a longer session a few months later to tackle the details of setting a new work programme for the Commission in order to maintain the Summit’s momentum.

Venezuela, speaking for the group of developing countries, urged a joint effort to crystallize the Summit commitments, emphasizing that “the credibility of the multilateral system is at stake”. Denmark, speaking for the European Union, affirmed that the Johannesburg Summit, along with the Monterrey and Doha WTO meetings, has “set the multilateral agenda for sustainable development for the coming years”, in the broader context of the Millennium Development Goals. The EU underscored the importance of a coordinated and integrated conference follow-up at the national, regional and international levels.

At a roundtable discussion on how to integrate the follow-up to the major conferences the UN has held since the 1990s – on sustainable development, women, population, poverty and social issues – there was a consensus that the Millennium Development Goals, agreed by world leaders at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, could serve as the organizing principle to consolidate the range of conference agreements. Mr. Desai acknowledged that the cycle of conferences had come to its logical conclusion in setting the development agenda, and now it was time to focus on how to implement the agreements. Eveline Herfkens, recently appointed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as executive coordinator of the campaign for the Millennium Development Goals, said that she saw the UN’s role in the implementation phase to be one of monitoring and scorekeeping, tracking whether countries are on target to reach the goals and what areas need bolstering.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September, was attended by 22,000 delegates, representatives of civil society and the press – and thousands more participated in the many parallel events.

*For more information on the Summit, see [www.johannesburgsummit.org](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org)*

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