

16 March 2011

Interactive Dialogue with the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability

Background

On 9 August 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability to “reflect on and formulate a new vision for sustainable growth and prosperity, along with mechanisms for achieving it”, in light of the growing strain placed on our planet by climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity and other interlinked challenges. Co-chaired by H.E. Mrs. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, and H.E. Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa, the Global Sustainability Panel (GSP) consists of 22 authoritative world figures who work together to produce a comprehensive blue print for a low-carbon, sustainable future. Their final report will be issued later this year to help inform relevant intergovernmental discussions.

Programme

The Interactive Dialogue with the Global Sustainability Panel offers an opportunity for Member States to hear from some of the Panel members on the work of the Panel as well as to share their views and suggestions.

Time	Programme
10 – 10:15am	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly • H.E. Mrs. Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General
10:15am – 12:50pm	<p>Moderated by H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mrs. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Co-Chair of the Global Sustainability Panel • H.E. Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa and Co-Chair of the Global Sustainability Panel (by video) • H.E. Ms. Hajjiya Amina Az-Zubair, Senior Special Assistant/Advisor to the President of Nigeria on MDGs • H.E. Mrs. Cristina Narbona Ruiz, Spanish Ambassador to the

	<p>OECD and former Minister of Environment of Spain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. James Laurence Balsillie, Co-CEO, Research in Motion, and Chair of the Board, Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), Canada <p><i>After all the Panel members have spoken, Member States are invited to engage actively in the discussions with the Panel members.</i></p>
12:50 – 1pm	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mrs. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Co-Chair of the Global Sustainability Panel • H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly

* The following nongovernmental and private sector representatives will be invited to speak.

- World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Director General- Mr. James Leape
- Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), Executive Director- Ms. Cate Owren

* A side-event for the NGOs will be organized by the Global Sustainability Panel Secretariat and the UN Non-governmental Liaison Service (NGLS)

- Select NGO representatives will have an opportunity to interact directly with the GSP members on Tuesday, 15 March, from 2:30 to 3:30pm in Conference Room 8, NLB.



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

**H.E. Mr. Pedro Serrano
Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

Interactive Dialogue with the Global Sustainability Panel

**United Nations
New York
March 16, 2011**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mister President, Excellencies, distinguished Members of the Panel, dear colleagues,

The recent tragic events in Japan have again shown how fragile and endangered our development achievements can be. Let me use this opportunity to convey the sincere solidarity and deep condolences of the EU and its Member States to the people and the government of Japan: Global sustainability and global solidarity must go hand in hand.

Mister President,

The EU and its Member States welcome the Global Sustainability Panel as a timely and visionary initiative. We are also grateful to you for giving us an opportunity to have an interactive dialogue with the Panel here at the General Assembly, and we hope there will be other occasions for continuing this dialogue in the future.

The Panel – through its distinguished panellists and dedicated secretariat – is helping to further increase high level awareness of the sustainability challenges and of the need to accelerate implementation of agreed goals and targets in the area of sustainable development. It can also reinvigorate the debate on the global transition to a low carbon resource-efficient economy - a green economy - while contributing to poverty eradication.

These deliberations should be a powerful contribution to inter-governmental processes such as the Rio2012 conference. We are therefore looking forward to concrete proposals from the Panel which, together with the input of other processes, will contribute to an ambitious and meaningful outcome of those upcoming negotiations. It is important indeed that some key outcomes of the Panel's work can find their way into relevant international processes. As far as Rio2012 is concerned, I will not repeat today the position and expectations of the EU and its Member States which are all relevant for the Panel and are available on the conference website.

Mr. President,

Action on global sustainability is urgent in view of the long-term global trends: our global natural resources are getting scarcer, while we need to feed an ever growing and more affluent population with unsustainable consumer habits and tastes. In parallel the wedge between the least developed countries and the developed world – as well as between the rich parts of populations and the poorest within many countries – is growing.

The necessity for a new vision for sustainable growth and prosperity for all parts of society is evident. Thus we regard the topics of the three working groups of the High Level Panel on Global Sustainability - Poverty, Paradigms, and Markets - as rightly chosen and highly relevant for the upcoming multilateral negotiations and especially the Rio2012 process.

The EU is a firm supporter of multilateralism. Inclusiveness and solidarity are at the very core of the UN founding principles. We have to focus on resisting the pressures of further polarisation and fragmentation that are real threats to international cooperation if challenges like poverty, climate change and resource scarcities remain insufficiently addressed. We encourage the Panel to look at these global aspects and design proposals for truly functional

and comprehensive global governance structures, based on universally accepted values and responsibility.

Our global future need not be grim, and examining economic and sustainability challenges together reveals real opportunities. Green growth strategies contribute to higher resource efficiency, job creation, and increased innovation, as well as stimulating investment and providing access to new markets. These strategies are not only good for the climate and the environment but essential for relaunching our economies. We believe the Panel can inspire us on the road to a green economy.

Mister President,

When the Panel examines the cross cutting issues of greatest importance for achieving the sustainable development objectives, we believe that those could include water, energy and food security but also natural resources, in particular biodiversity, and sustainable consumption and production.

The EU and its Member States are also interested in learning more of the Panel's thinking on the role of partnerships, and how co-operation between all stakeholders can contribute to achieving the goals of sustainable development. It is also important to consider how best to promote market based solutions and secure that the private sector has incentives to support the shift to a green economy.

The international community needs courage, guidance and vision to help it make the right choices for the future. The work of the Panel is of great value in this context.

I thank you, Mr. President.

Global Sustainability Panel - dialogue organise par le PGA

16 Mars 2011

FRANCE

Intervention du Représentant Permanent Adjoint,

M. Martin BRIENS

== seul le prononcé fait foi ==

Monsieur le Président

- *Je tiens à exprimer la compassion et la profonde solidarité du peuple et du gouvernement français envers le peuple et le gouvernement japonais dans la dure épreuve qui vient de les toucher.*
- *Je tiens à remercier le Président de l'Assemblée Générale, de même que les Présidents Halonen et Zuma, les membres et le Secrétariat du Panel pour ce briefing.*
- *Je m'associe à la déclaration faite par la délégation de l'Union Européenne.*
- *La France salue les ambitions du Panel, dont nous attendons une contribution historique à la définition d'un avenir solidaire et durable, sur le modèle de la contribution du Rapport Brundtland avant le « Sommet de la Terre » de 1992.*
- *En suscitant des réflexions libres et sans tabous à très haut niveau, le Panel peut à notre sens répondre aux deux ambitions qui seront au cœur de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Développement Durable (« Rio + 20 ») :*
 - *D'une part, l'engagement de la communauté internationale sur la voie d'un futur plus durable, basé sur une économie verte sobre en ressources et équitable, qui garantisse la préservation de notre Planète tout en assurant un futur plus prospère pour tous ;*
 - *D'autre part, la capacité à redonner au système des Nations Unies une place prééminente dans la gouvernance mondiale, en montrant qu'il peut s'adapter aux évolutions du monde et contribuer à la formation d'un multilatéralisme renouvelé, capable de fournir des réponses concrètes aux défis mondiaux.*
- *Nous attendons du Panel des recommandations concrètes, appuyées sur des propositions ambitieuses de réforme de la gouvernance du développement durable qui placent les Nations Unies au cœur d'une structure de gouvernance renouvelée et plus crédible.*
- *Il nous semble particulièrement important de garantir une bonne articulation entre le calendrier de finalisation du rapport et les travaux préparatoires de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Développement Durable, afin de permettre aux Etats*

membres d'étudier les conclusions du Panel et de reprendre à leur compte celles qu'ils jugeront les plus prometteuses. Je me félicite que le Président Zuma ait indiqué l'intention du Panel de tout mettre en œuvre pour que ces recommandations, présentées avant la fin de l'année, puisse contribuer au processus préparatoire de cette Conférence. Je souhaite notamment attirer votre attention sur l'échéance cruciale que constituera la réunion d'intersession qui se tiendra mi-décembre 2011.

- *La France, qui assure la Présidence du G8 et du G20 cette année, se réjouirait en outre de pouvoir donner aux membres du Panel l'occasion de présenter leurs travaux dans ces enceintes.*
- *Remercier le PGA et les co-Présidents et membres du Panel pour leur participation à ce dialogue.*

**Global Sustainability Panel dialogue with the General Assembly
March 16, 2011
Statement by the representative of Germany**

Mr. President, distinguished panel members

At the outset let me join previous speakers in expressing the sincere solidarity and deep condolences of the people and the government of Germany to the people and the government of Japan in light of the unprecedented catastrophe which has struck the country. Our hearts and prayers are with the people of Japan.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the EU, who has very comprehensively and clearly pointed out the views and expectations of the EU towards the valuable work of the panel.

Germany welcomes the initiative of the PGA for an interactive dialogue of UN member states with the distinguished members of the SG's Panel on Global Sustainability. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn about the work of the Panel and to exchange views with its members. Germany would like to encourage the continuation of this dialogue in the next months and looks forward to a presentation of the final report of the Panel to the GA with a view to making it – as President Zuma has clearly pointed out in his statement – a substantive contribution to the Rio 2012 Conference.

As this intends to be an interactive dialogue with the distinguished panel members allow me to put forward some comments and questions to the panel:

We have had detailed discussions on the issue of “Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” on various occasions over the last weeks, lastly during the second PrepKom for Rio 2012 a week ago. For Germany, the concept of a “Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” will be a major

vehicle for sustainable growth that contributes to people's well-being and prosperity in all countries and parts of societies. It is certainly not meant to hamper trade or to impose new conditionalities on trade and development. There are different ideas on the table about how this concept can be implemented through practical steps and how the UN system can assist in this regard. I share the view expressed by many countries which have indeed requested more action and implementation in this regard. One idea is the idea of a green economy roadmap offering tailor made advice to interested countries on their transition path to a Green economy.

I would invite the panle to look into this proposal and would like to seek the views of the panelists on this issue.

Sustainable growth and sustainable development also needs a different set of institutional arrangements. Germany believes that strengthening of the International Environmental Governance (IEG) is a key element and condition for improving the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development. I would also invite panel members to elaborate on this.

Thank you !

Statement of Morocco

Dialogue Interactif de l'Assemblée Générale sur le Développement Durable Global,
(New York, 16 Mars 2011)

Monsieur le Président,

Le Maroc présente ses condoléances au Japon et exprime sa solidarité avec le peuple nippon.

Le Maroc soutient les efforts du Panel sur le Développement Durable Global et félicite ses deux Co-présidents pour l'excellent travail effectué.

Le Maroc espère également que le Rapport du Panel puisse constituer une meilleure valeur ajoutée, qui serait dédiée à la Conférence de Rio+20, avant la fin de l'année 2011.

Le Maroc affirme son soutien à l'instauration d'une Economie Verte, qui serait susceptible d'amortir les effets destructeurs du réchauffement climatique et des Désastres naturels, tels que celui, qui a frappé tout récemment le Japon,

Monsieur le Président,

La Gouvernance Environnementale Internationale est contingente et ne pourrait nullement être figée. C'est la raison pour laquelle le Maroc accorde son soutien à des réformes de la Commission du Développement Durable, lui conférer un certain caractère exécutoire. C'est la raison pour laquelle le Maroc accorde également son soutien à la création d'une Organisation Mondiale de l'Environnement, capable d'harmoniser les soucis environnementaux de la Communauté Internationale, soucis financiers, mais aussi soucis de libéralisation du Commerce et de transfert de technologie.

J'espère, Monsieur le Président que les résultats du Panel seront concluants. Il y va grandement de l'intérêt de la transition écologique des Relations Economiques Internationales, appelées aujourd'hui plus que jamais à se renforcer, à se consolider pour préserver son caractère irréversible.

Je vous remercie Monsieur le Président.



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

799 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017-3505

Remarks as delivered by Elizabeth Cousens, Principal Policy Adviser, USUN
PGA Interactive Dialogue on the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability
March 16, 2011

- Thank you Mr. President, President Halonen and President Zuma, and Members of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability who have spoken today. We thank you for organizing this important dialogue and welcome the opportunity to exchange views about the Panel's work.
- Before I begin, I want to reiterate President Obama's message to the people and Government of Japan, and echo others in the room today, by expressing our deepest condolences and steadfast support. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who have lost loved ones and to the entire country as it deals with this unfolding tragedy.
- Mr. President, we are all well aware of the global changes and urgent challenges before us in this interconnected century.
- We are also aware of the opportunities the 21st century uniquely affords to combat poverty and disease, generate sustained growth and prosperity, and steward the environment in ways that are truly sustainable for us all.
- The United States therefore appreciates the ambition of the Secretary-General in creating the Global Sustainability Panel and charging it with a task that could not be more important.
- The Obama Administration has placed new emphasis on many of these same issues through a series of its own government-wide initiatives: a new Global Development Policy that elevates sustainable development as a core pillar of U.S. foreign policy in the 21st century; a Global Health Initiative that partners with countries in new ways to improve and sustain health outcomes; a Global Food Security Initiative that aims to tackle underlying causes of global hunger and food insecurity comprehensively; and a Global Climate Change Initiative that aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and land degradation; support low-carbon development strategies and the transition to a sustainable clean energy economy; and invest in building resilience to unavoidable climate impacts.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

-- 2 --

- Here at home, we are also harnessing innovation and mobilizing new investment in sustainable futures in our nation's cities and states and targeting federal investments in renewable and clean energy technologies, all while creating new, sustainable jobs. President Obama also signed an Executive Order on Federal Sustainability in 2009, committing the Government to lead by example and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 28% by 2020, increase energy efficiency, and reduce fleet petroleum consumption.
- As we look to Rio+20 and other processes, we will draw on these and other efforts in our own contributions.
- Indeed, we hope the Global Sustainability Panel will canvass best practice and innovation from all countries and regions as a partial basis for its work.
- We are grateful for the opportunity today to contribute to the work of the Panel, beyond Ambassador Rice's personal participation. We would highlight five issues.
- First, while the Panel's recommendations need to be relevant to all countries, the United States believes that the Panel should give particular attention to the circumstances of most vulnerable who face the triple threat of poverty and its associated ills, environmental stress, and fragile institutions. The poorest are among those most threatened by environmental degradation, and they will see the most immediate benefits of reversing it. A true "green economy" will need to deliver for all communities. We are interested in seeing the Panel elaborate specific ideas about a critical path to make that happen.
- Second, we would like to see the Panel give balanced attention to sustainable development options for both rural and urban communities. Over two-thirds of the world's poor live in rural communities, dependent on agriculture or other natural resources for their livelihoods. Agriculture can be a powerful engine for growth and poverty reduction with the right policy and governance frameworks; yet it is also a major consumer of natural resources and a significant driver of climate and other environmental impacts that need to be managed more sustainably. Sustainable agriculture thus needs to be high among our shared priorities.
- Meanwhile, over 70 percent of the world's population will live in cities by 2050. While the growth of cities risks new competition over water, land, and energy, cities with far-sighted leadership can also be magnets for new economic opportunities, poverty reduction, and innovations in sustainability from key infrastructure to peri-urban agriculture.
- Food security and access to clean and affordable energy are obvious cross-cutting priorities.

- Third, we welcome the robust attention the Panel is giving to the role of the private sector and particularly the policies and governance arrangements that can help attract new investment into more sustainable activities.
- Fourth, we would like to see the Panel highlight the need for enhanced public participation in decision-making, which we believe in the first instance relates to improved information, communication, and transparency about investment and development plans and activities.
- Finally, a word on governance. The world we have inherited, and that we will bequeath, requires enhanced cooperation at all levels and governance arrangements that are shaped in relation to specific but evolving purposes. We understand that the Panel will address institutional arrangements at some stage in its work. We strongly encourage the Panel to focus first on functions and then on the form and nature of arrangements needed to achieve them. This can help provide all of us an essential basis for reviewing concrete governance options that stand to advance our core goals.
- Mr. President, this Panel is addressing some of the most compelling challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. The Panelists' commitment to fresh, critical thinking is encouraging. If the Panel's recommendations are additionally underpinned by rigorous and practical analysis of the challenges and options before us, it stands to make a major contribution not just to debate but more importantly to action.
- Thank you again for the opportunity to exchange views on this work and we look forward to working together on this important agenda in the weeks ahead.

Free for publication on 16 March 2011 at 10 hrs 30 on local time (16 hrs 30 on Finnish time)

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Speech by President of the Republic Of Finland Tarja Halonen, Co-Chair of the Global Sustainability Panel, at the Interactive Dialogue of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 16 March 2011

I want to begin by expressing my deepest sympathies and condolences to the people and Government of Japan, and in particular to those who lost family and friends in the natural disasters last week. The on-going crisis is on all our minds.

It is a great pleasure to be invited to this interactive dialogue on the Secretary-General's Global Sustainability Panel. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this event. The interest of the General Assembly is important and encouraging.

The Panel has been mandated by the Secretary-General "to formulate a new blueprint for sustainable growth and low-carbon prosperity for all on a planet under increasing strain". The Panel is expected to report back to the Secretary-General in the end of this year.

The task of the Panel is to look in a holistic way at global challenges such as climate change and eradication of poverty. We try to build the bridges between those challenges and development.

The Panel is working to reach balance between economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development, so-called modern trinity. This means giving more emphasis to the social pillar in order to reduce inequality and enhance social justice. Empowerment of women is also crucial in order to build sustainable development in a balanced way.

In addition to the horizontal coherence across the three pillars, we have to pursue vertical coherence from the local level to the global.

We are aware that that progress has been made on addressing many global environmental concerns, for instance, on biodiversity. Commitments like Millennium Development Goals to eradicate poverty and promote social justice are remarkable achievements and must be kept. The UN has also made many efforts to make global economy more sustainable.

Yet, the Panel cannot be expected to give an answer to every global challenge. But the Panel is strongly committed to meet the high level of ambition of our mandate as well as the challenging timetable.

The Panel's recommendations can contribute to the intergovernmental decision-making processes such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Whatever recommendations on sustainability we will make, it is finally up to the Member States to adopt them. And, I suppose, a more efficient United Nations will be needed to carry them out.
Mr. President,

The Panel has held two meetings so far. Between these meetings background work has been done in working groups, as well as at Sherpa meetings and by the Secretariat. The Panel is also reaching out to major stakeholders and regional intergovernmental institutions.

The Panel is willing, even enthusiastic to fulfill its task, to offer a positive vision of sustainable future. But the biggest part of the work lies still ahead, and the Panel is fully conscious about that.

At our first meeting here in New York last September we had a general discussion on the mandate of the Panel and on the vision of the Panel. The discussion proved that the Panelists agreed on many fundamental issues.

There is no need to redefine sustainable development. The concept, launched about twenty years ago, has evolved but is still valid, but implementation is lacking. That is where the difficulties are.

There was also a general consensus that the Panel should produce as practical outcome as possible, preferably based on best practices.

At our second meeting three weeks ago in Cape Town the Panel concentrated on organizing its future work. The Panel gathered partly in a retreat mode.

We decided that our future work should be guided by the following question: “How to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality, make growth inclusive, and production and consumption more sustainable while combating climate change and respecting the range of other planetary boundaries?”

It was discussed that the solution is global sustainability, understood as a resilient planet that supports its people’s needs.

The core challenges mentioned included planetary boundaries and climate change, environmental degradation, population growth and other demographic developments as well as poverty and inequality. It was also highlighted that we have to pay attention to our general vulnerability to environmental, social and economic shocks. We have noticed this vulnerability once again in Japan.

In Cape Town, we also debated the goals to reach sustainability. Four wide goals or group of goals were proposed at this stage of our work.

First, we have to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and enhance social justice. Second, we have to shift to sustainable production and consumption as well as to inclusive growth which will generate welfare to all. Third, we must be able to manage scarcity, common goods, and ecosystems with respect to planetary boundaries. Fourth, security in a wide sense has to be enhanced.

We discussed that to get to these goals a wide range of means have to be deployed. At this stage we agreed that we should look for appropriate means, in particular, on four cross-cutting areas: markets and finance, governance, technology and gender equality and empowerment of women. In this framework the work of the Panel continues, and the work plan will certainly be elaborated as we proceed.

The next meeting will be held in Helsinki in mid-May. Two more meetings are planned for this year, first, during the opening week of the General Assembly in September, and then in the end of the year.

The Panel will maintain its openness towards the outside world. Our outreach will continue, and contribution will be welcomed from governments, stakeholder groups as well as non-governmental organizations.

We will also be available to you, Mr. President, and the General Assembly, as well as the Preparatory Process for the Rio+20 Conference.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

16 MARCH 2011

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA

Esteemed President of the General Assembly,

Mr Secretary General and

Madam Deputy Secretary General,

President Halonen,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to present a short report on the progress that has been made by the Global Sustainability Panel established last year by his Excellency, Ban Ki-Moon.

The Panel has a significant challenge and only limited time in which to *“formulate a new vision for sustainable growth and prosperity”*.

The significance of the Panel lies in the fact that it has been tasked with addressing poverty eradication, development AND climate change in a coherent and systematic way.

This is the distinction of the work of this Panel. We are tasked with addressing the fundamental challenge of how to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, while at the same time, addressing the fight against climate change.

I am pleased to inform you that the 2nd meeting of the Panel, which took place in Cape Town, South Africa, on 24 and 25 February 2011 was both constructive and productive.

On this occasion, Panel members deliberated on the state of Sustainable Development over the last 25 years and agreed broadly that more needed to be done to create an enabling environment for implementing decisions.

Mr President,

Panel members also agreed that combating poverty and inequality should be at the core of any intervention the Panel report recommends. Noting that poverty is no longer a phenomenon

that is confined to the Global South, but that all countries; developed and developing, share equally and is our common enemy and the enemy of our collective progress.

During the retreat session Panel members discussed their common vision in depth and reached consensus on the Panel's overall goal. In summary this is to produce a body of work that makes a substantive contribution to the goal of; ***“eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, making growth inclusive, and production and consumption more sustainable while combating climate change and respecting the range of other planetary boundaries.”***

Mr President,

As an extension of the above narrative, the Panel also developed an illustrative framework which we hope can be developed further and refined so that it gives us a more meaningful basis to start work on the envisioned paradigm.

In the next few months the Panel will be hard at work, giving form and shape to the emerging thinking of the Panel and making certain the final product is as inclusive as possible.

We envisage being able to produce a final report at the end of the year, in time to make a substantive contribution to the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio plus 20, scheduled to take place in 2012.

We look forward to engaging broadly through an outreach programme during the work of the Panel and beyond to ensure buy-in to the Panel recommendations and implementation thereafter.

I thank you.

Interactive Dialogue between UN General Assembly and Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability

Statement by Ambassador Cristina Narbona Ruiz, Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD

Member of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability

March, 16th 2011

I address this Assembly fully convinced of the urgency and feasibility of a deep economic paradigm shift;

The crisis of the current paradigm has already caused immense social and economic damages:

- increasing poverty and inequality,
- massive destruction of jobs,
- closing of business,
- decline in public health services and education

And the economic paradigm is also primarily responsible for climate change, biodiversity loss and air, soil and water pollution.

To move towards sustainability it is essential that governments, businesses and citizens recognize the failures of this paradigm, and the lack of implementation and enforcement of international commitments on sustainable development and poverty eradication

Recall that the scientific community, UN agencies and many non-governmental organizations have warned, for a long time, the negative consequences of identifying the GDP growth with the overall rise of welfare and poverty eradication.

We must, above all, recognize the close interdependence between ecology, economy and social welfare as well as the interdependence among all countries in the world what requires global responses, since the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

The precautionary principle, the multidisciplinary, integrated and ecosystem approach, prices that reflect true social and environmental costs and long-term vision ... should guide economic activity, so that it respects the planetary boundaries, and to equitably meet the basic needs of all people:

all citizens of the world, living today and those who live in the future, have the same right:

- to breathe clean air
- to enjoy adequate food and drinking water

- to access to enough renewable, clean and safe energy.

That is, to enjoy the common goods essential to life, health and progress.

To secure these rights it must be strengthened and adequate local and national governance and, crucially, international governance. Better governance, more coherent, transparent inclusive and accountable, capable of integrating sustainability in all its objectives and actions.

So we need to integrate sustainability to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals, providing perhaps something new in the field of energy and moving beyond 2015.

For example, preservation of biodiversity, terrestrial and marine, is an essential prerequisite for achieving the food and health goals. It is therefore necessary to establish economic mechanisms that recognize the value of services provided by ecosystems.

The transition towards a more fair and sustainable economy, able to create more jobs, decent jobs, requires enough funding, building upon a more equitable distribution of income, that also encourages productive investments.

For example, by establishing an international financial transactions tax.

There is unique potential for technological change, many answers already exist, but a more equitable distribution of information, knowledge and technology through cooperation and transfer is required.

For example, the proposal to be discussed by the next congress of the World Meteorological Organization, which aims at the creation of a Global Framework for Climate Services, a Framework capable of carrying weather and climate forecasts to the "last mile" of the poorest country through a regional centres network driven by the international community. This comprehensive framework would prevent and mitigate natural risks, strengthening the resilience of the least developed countries.

And today we hope, with the utmost attention, questions and proposals.

Statement by Mr. James Leape, Director General, WWF International

Mr. President, Presidents Halonen and Zuma, members of the Panel,

Thank for the opportunity to speak here today. WWF welcomed the creation of this Panel. With such a distinguished group, and the leadership of Presidents Halonen and Zuma, we have high hopes for your work.

The past year has brought a series of catastrophes – floods in Pakistan and Australia, a heat wave in Russia, a drought in China – of the kind scientists tell us to expect from a changing climate. So, as we approach the 25th anniversary of the Brundtland Commission, it is more urgent than ever that we find a way to turn the idea of sustainable development into reality.

The good news is that there is a growing recognition in many quarters, among both governments and businesses, that the pressing challenges of food, water and energy security are intertwined, that they are central to the challenge of development and to the future of the economy. There is also growing recognition that even though most of us now live in cities, our prosperity continues to depend upon the health of the Earth's living forests, rivers, and oceans. It is clear that we will only be able to eradicate poverty and sustain a prosperous society if we take care of those resources.

We believe the Panel has the opportunity to show the way forward, to inspire action to move the world on to a more sustainable path. To that end, I offer four suggestions for your consideration:

I. ARTICULATE CONCRETE VISIONARY GOALS

To get beyond the abstract discussions that have plagued the sustainability debate and galvanize action, the Panel should propose goals that are both visionary and concrete. Here are three possibilities:

- **ENERGY: Shift to a 100% renewable energy, meeting *everyone's* energy needs, by 2050**

A WWF/Ecofys study released last month demonstrates that, with technologies available today, by 2050 we can meet all of the world's energy needs with renewable energy. A shift to 100% renewable energy is, of course, fundamental to meeting the challenge of climate change. It could also bring modern energy to the 1.4 billion people who currently don't have electricity, and create tens of millions of jobs in the process. Such a shift requires a big push on energy efficiency, on electrifying transportation and other uses, and on driving renewables into the marketplace. (The WWF/Ecofys report can be found at <http://wwf.panda.org/energyreport>.)

- **OCEANS: End overfishing**

Overfishing and destructive fishing practices are destroying ocean ecosystems and the fisheries that provide livelihoods and food to hundreds of millions of people. Ending overfishing would help ensure that those resources are secure for generations to come.

- **FOOD: Freeze the footprint of Agriculture**

With rapid growth in both population and per capita consumption, world food production will have to increase by 70% or more in the next few decades. We can meet that demand without increasing agriculture's ecological footprint – without clearing more forest, drawing more water, or using more pesticides. We should commit ourselves to that goal.

II. ADDRESS THE FUNDAMENTALS

In addition to specific goals like those I've just suggested, the Panel should outline the broader concrete steps governments need to take to bring sustainability into the heart of the economy. Two specific suggestions:

- **Indicators**

To build a sustainable economy, we need to build indicators that measure the pressure we're putting on the Earth's resources and track the health of natural systems, as a part of GDP or as complements to it. Global standards for such indicators would help governments implement them at the national level.

- **Eliminate the perverse policies that take us in the wrong direction**

Many current policies actually bias the market against sustainability. Obvious examples are the massive subsidies to fossil fuels, and subsidies that drive overfishing. Eliminating those perversities would help level the playing field for more better technologies and better practices.

III. ENCOURAGE NEW COLLABORATIONS

While the Panel will naturally address the role of government, it should also recognize the exciting potential in ambitious collaborations among businesses, NGOs, and governments. One example illustrates the possibilities: In Cancun last November, the Consumer Goods Forum, an association of more than 400 consumer goods companies and retailers with revenues totalling \$2.8 trillion, announced their commitment to achieving zero net deforestation by 2020. Twenty of the CGF's leading members have are now working with WWF to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains altogether. These kinds of initiatives promise to yield real results on the ground, and also to help drive broader policy reforms.

IV. REFORM INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Finally, the Panel should also address the reform of international environmental governance. Here we would offer two suggestions:

- We need a stronger voice for the environment within the UN system, and so we recommend that UNEP be elevated to agency status. UNEP has a critical role in helping all of us put the “green” in the “green economy.”
- At the same time the Panel should also explore the possibilities for creating an innovative platform for fostering collaboration across government, business, and civil society.

I hope these suggestions will help the Panel define a robust agenda for its work. We stand ready to support that effort in any way we can.

Statement to the GSP Interactive Dialogue

Cate Owren, Executive Director

WEDO

16 March 2011

Thank you, Mr. President.

Madame President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen: good morning.

First, let me join all colleagues in extending our deepest sympathies and wishes for the men and women of Japan.

Mr. President, I am honored and deeply appreciative to have been given this opportunity to take the floor. My name is Cate Owren and I am speaking on behalf of WEDO – the Women’s Environment and Development Organization – a women’s global advocacy organization, working to enhance the interlinkages of women’s human rights and justice, gender equality and sustainable development. I would like to support several of the points already made this morning – and emphasize about four.

A new course is surely needed – and the mandate for this High-level Panel is particularly timely, warmly welcomed and applauded. A paradigm shift must be multi-directional: grown from the bottom up and fostered at this, the highest levels.

Fortunately, there is another kind of paradigm shift to look to for inspiration. Quite momentarily, over the last few years, thanks to combined efforts of governments and civil society alike, climate change has become recognized as a gender issue, and gender equality issues have become recognized as inextricable to effectively, efficiently responding to this urgent crisis. The Cancun Agreements included eight references to women and gender, across all major sections. This paradigm shift signals that Parties from every region are ready to tackle this – a historically environmental or economic issue – with social dimensions well integrated.

Let’s look at climate change for another example. Building community resilience is a foundation of adaptation. It requires promoting and capitalizing on women’s leadership and innovations in areas such as preparedness and response; safe, clean and renewable technologies; agriculture and food security. Local communities are successfully bridging the three pillars of sustainable development. Their experiences should be scaled up and adapted to the national level to bridge some of the gaps in implementation.

As it was in Rio, the Human Rights Based Approach must be front and center, as an overarching guide to systemic change. It provides a framework that addresses the most marginalized and excluded in society, strengthening social, political, economic and environmental justice and equity. Human rights principles

can drive every activity, across every sector and drive the design, implementation and monitoring of sustainable development policies and programs.

The Human Rights approach coexists with many key Rio Principles, of course – including common but differentiated responsibilities, access and participation, gender equality, polluter pays and the precautionary principle – that should remain part of any new vision.

As the panel looks at the role of business and the private sector, a structure for corporate accountability needs to be incorporated. While the private sector has developed innovative sustainable development initiatives and a robust field of corporate social responsibility, programs are largely voluntary. Going forward, a question to the panel might be: can governments and civil society work together with business to create corporate accountability indicators and metrics to ensure corporate actions build upon these programs which are working, pushing a transformation of consumption and production patterns? This might help to integrate the three pillars. And women's entrepreneurialism will no doubt to be found at the heart of this transformation.

Finally, sustainable development requires the ability to adapt plans for the future and measure progress. It is now more than evident that using GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress is out of sync with the day-to-day reality of our world and the challenges we face. We require measurements which value equally the dignity of all human life and the integrity of the environment; indicators which measure quality of life for both women and men, paid and unpaid work time and leisure, political participation and rights; indicators which measure ecosystem degradation, carbon emissions, and natural resource management. Much has been done to develop these indicators which go 'Beyond GDP' and we recommend that the panel work to build upon this, forming synthesis among complex ideas and competing perspectives, and creating a new and viable set of indices which can be effectively employed at all levels.

Once again, and on behalf of our constituents, I applaud the Panel's efforts to drive a paradigm shift, and I encourage you to continue to seek bold, innovative mechanisms and to consult with civil society at all levels as you develop recommendations for the way forward.

Thank you.