

CSD 8 High-Level Segment
Thematic Focus on Preparations for the 2002 Review of Progress since UNCED
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Expert Presentation
by
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Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

Ministers, Delegates, Dear friends and colleagues,

I had the pleasure in 1992 to be the Chairman of a National delegation to Rio. There was a lot of discussion of the spirit of Rio. If you ask now what was a precondition for the spirit of Rio, I think there was this nearly emotional-driven feeling that after the overcoming of the bi-polaric world, there was now a chance to fight against the remaining problems dividing this world - a gap between the rich and the poor.

There was a question of how can we stimulate economic development to overcome poverty without overloading the environment and bringing those costs of economic development to coming generations. That was the challenge and, therefore, it was not by chance, that the other title of this conference compared with Stockholm. In Stockholm, we had the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. In Rio, we had the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). That was the change and that was the challenge.

The outcomes of Rio are very well known: Agenda 21, Rio Declaration of Rio Principles, the Rio Conventions. The Rio Conventions, mainly an answer against the incredible externalizing of costs of the welfare and the economic development in one part of the world to the expense of the others, make a new culture of solidarity possible. That was the spirit of Rio, and going to Rio + 10, it is a question, first and foremost, of what the situation is now.

I believe this assessment is needed. I don't believe that this assessment should be made mainly during this conference. It should, as much as possible, be done prior to the Rio+10 conference in order to bring it to ECOSOC, to the General Assembly, and to discuss it here in New York. An assessment as important as this should not be concentrated on the Rio+10 conference only. I don't believe we need any reopening of Agenda 21 as it is a great basis for sustainable development. We have to ask where we are but we do not want to overload the conference by doing the assessment there. It should be done before.

Second, shall we have it as a Special Session as General Assembly here in New York or shall we go with the same format as we did in UNCED. I believe it would be a huge

endeavour (a new chance?) and challenge to have really such a global challenge. I will come back to this.

Learning from the most important bottlenecks after Rio, I believe we should concentrate our endeavour to bring this conference to the developing countries, to make it there happen so that we are directly confronted with environment and development.

We should perhaps discuss the name of this conference. Whether everybody of the world prefers Rio+10 or whether we should also add some substantive information in the title to provide a focus. In a world where we are confronted with media from morning to night, it is important to provide the message of the conference in the title. This can be considered.

I believe we need this global conference, that is not to question , Excellencies and Ambassadors, the outstanding chance to be here in New York, but to focus in the developing countries on this topic which I think would be a huge asset.

What needs to be discussed? I mentioned that I do not believe that as a main topic we should reopen Agenda 21. Making a simple assessment, and as seen in the UNDP human development report and others, you come to the conviction that between Rio and now, the gap between the rich and the poor was not getting smaller but, rather, it was widening. I think the main topic we have to discuss in Rio+10 is how to overcome poverty. How to overcome poverty without burdening coming generations, and which is not at the expense of the environment. Poverty and education, that is the main topic, linked without any doubt with the environment.

I can only underline what my good friend Yolanda Kakabadse mentioned that of course there is a new dimension of sustainability. This is not to create an inflationary used word, that is where each and everybody is integrating some other meanings to it. That would not help our negotiations. Overcoming poverty linked with specific new topics of the environment. For example, environment security - what can we do in a better precautionary aspect to handle river basins.

Is there a possibility to make some bricks available in such a conference in order to handle problems, such as early warning system, not on a case by case basis but to be a little bit more objective and to give the global families a chance to create instruments early so as not to be overloaded with specific, and easy to understand interests.

We learned that since Rio, the process of globalization has increased dramatically. What are the repercussions to sustainable development? We must find a clear profile to private business. We have to stimulate this dialogue more and also ask the questions in consequence. For example, what about liability of private investment in foreign countries, and what about standards for investment in specific industrial areas. We learned the lessons recently in Europe at this cyanide spill upriver in Romania. Do we need something like a corporation dispute, environment security water, question of liability? Do we need something like a broadening of our liability discussion in the Basel

Convention in the European Convention on trans-boundary rivers and others? I believe this to be a very outstanding topic.

[I know that 8 minutes is a very short moment of time so I come only to 1 second and I come from Nairobi, that's a long way to go and therefore, I have to use the 10 seconds Nitin offered me. That's the good cooperation of the UN family as you may mentioned.]

Of course, we have to ask the question do we have the right institution of the global level. Out of Stockholm was UNEP and out of Rio was CSD. We have to ask whether these are the best instruments for the future as well. Do we have to combine more for sustainable development? Do we have to do more for the environment? Very often, we stimulate this by a task force delivered to the Secretary-General with environment dimension and ?? hazards.

I believe it is a really outstanding chance to have this global conference and I sincerely hope that we also have the best preparation process with a regionalisation of suppressor. This is a topic-oriented preparation and if we can combine the one with the other. I think that is also very good to echo to the outcome of Rio+5. I know that my good old friend and predecessor, Mostafa Tolba was responsible for Rio+5. Hopefully, national reports on sustainable development will be available in the year 2000. We have to beg developing countries to do it. So, there is a lot to do.

Thank you very much for giving me this chance for 9 minutes or more. Thank you very much.