

**RIO2012 PREP COM II****7-8 MARCH****BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY MAJOR GROUP: SESSION 1**

Thank you Mr. Chairman

Business and Industry is pleased to join member states and other stakeholders at this important PrepCom II session. During the January Inter sessional we announced the launch of Business Action for Sustainable Development 2012 (BASD2012). This temporary coalition of business organizations, convened by the International Chamber of Commerce, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact will ensure that the voice of business will be heard at Rio2012 and during this 15 month preparatory process. BASD is assembling a broad based business partnership representing all relevant sectors and a broad geographic reach.

In 1992 the role and contribution of the private sector towards sustainable development was not well understood or accepted. Today the role of the private sector as a constructive partner, and engine of growth and sustainable development is widely recognized as are the benefits that business is bringing: creating jobs, building skills and developing new technologies. Over the last twenty years, we have seen considerable successes and we can confirm our belief in the vital role that business plays in achieving the objectives of sustainable development in collaboration with governments and civil society.

Agenda 21 and the JPOI have defined a broad terrain of necessary areas for action. Recognizing that there are growing financial constraints and limited resources, the challenge at Rio2012 will be for governments and stakeholders to set priorities and deploy resources efficiently and cost-effectively. As critical as good policies are, without enabling markets and frameworks, their effectiveness will be limited. Business and industry encourage governments to consider the importance of the contexts of open trade and markets, rule of law and other necessary elements for successful business endeavors.

Today, there is ample evidence that business, with its resources and capabilities, has to play a vital role in helping achieve the goals related to sustained economic growth in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. Business provides conceptual solutions to sustainable development that focus on concrete actions and deliverable results.

Business and industry reaffirms sustainable development as embracing poverty alleviation, job creation, environmental stewardship and social empowerment. While prosperity can add environmental pressures, without prosperity to meet the needs and aspirations of growing world populations, there is little chance that economic, social or environmental challenges can be met.