

Interactive Dialogue – Implementation of Sustainable Development
Tuesday pm
Workers and Trade Unions Major Group

Chair,

We need to transition to SD. All our decisions in the last 20 years repeat this common objective. Commitments have been made under different frameworks.

However, we have to collectively assume that the world is not better now than 20 years ago. Inequality is raising, so as environmental challenges, and the economy today is far from being a driver for development, for saying the less..

Being a bit provocative chair, I'm not even sure we would be able to agree on the contents of the Rio Declaration or the JPOI today..

This speaks a lot about the challenge we face regarding implementation.

Complementing what others have said, we consider that three additional issues need to be addressed in order to ensure we are able to move forward on implementation:

The first one relates to awareness and social pressure: in our view it is fundamental that the public (and in the case of trade unions, I would say workers) are aware of what is at stake when we think about moving towards a sustainable society, its challenges and its opportunities. This is in our view the only way for ensuring governments will feel sufficient pressure from their people to move forward.

My second issue is the role major groups play on implementation, and in particular our role as trade unions. As the panellists have mentioned, without a mobilised and organised civil society, small innovative actions will not be scaled up. As we have explained this morning, unions are engaged in ambitious actions to raise awareness among workers on environmental issues, as well as on traditional union ones (such as labour rights, poverty eradication, social justice). All over the world, we are organising trainings, lobbying for ambitious legislation, partnering with non-governmental organisations and youth, progressive business, academia, and the list goes on. We know that workers and their unions can make a difference in moving towards a more sustainable world, and we are making efforts to make this potential a reality. And with these actions, chair, we are implementing Rio and WSSD commitments. The initial acknowledgement of the importance of civil society coming from Rio should take a new shape, and become a reality in international decision making.

Finally, chair, I would like to address my third issue, which is the quality of CSD decisions. Today, we see other processes, including some related to RIO or WSSD decisions, which attract support and action by governments and civil society. Why do we see little motion on CSD decisions?

In addition to several reasons addressed by Felix and Tom, our sense is that if we want to progress on implementation, decisions coming from CSD need to be perceived as fair, sufficiently negotiated, owned and ultimately able to address the

challenge we are facing. Ambition and innovative ideas need to come back both in terms of process (by including civil society as equal partners in the decision-making process) and in content (taking decisions that go **beyond** the ambitions stated in Rio and JPOI, and with clear means of implementation for the old commitments). We honestly don't think the last years of negotiations qualify with this principles; and as a consequence of this they do not sufficiently motivate civil society to go and call for their implementation with their national governments.

We look forward for achieving progress in Rio+20, Chair, but we think ambition on commitments and implementation can also start now, and should not wait for a new Summit.