

NGO MAJOR GROUP STATEMENT

HLS: Implementation Challenges & Opportunities for Themes of Current Cycle, 13 May 2010

We have reached a stage in history where words can no longer substitute for action. 20 years after the Rio summit, and 10 years after the message was reaffirmed in Johannesburg, ecological and social trends are still worsening. Democratically-elected governments, ostensibly accountable to their citizens, have not kept their promises and commitments. Today we are asking that they assume their solemn responsibilities and begin immediate and effective action.

Sustainable consumption and production is the material heart of sustainable development. It is not just another overarching theme; it is the mainstay of the framework that will enable us to meet the consumptive needs of all, as articulated in the MDGS, within the ecological carrying capacity of the planet.

The WSSD called on the international community to support the work being done at the regional and national level through a ten-year framework of programs. Indeed, many great, innovative initiatives and strategies to accelerate this shift to sustainability already exist, and would benefit from coordinated support, including financial support.

We would like to suggest a key possible program based on discussions thus far:

- It is necessary to reform national accounting and develop new measures of economic progress that incorporate well-being and welfare. Agenda 21 is clear on this point, and we need **an international program which draws on the work already being done on new sustainability indicators and on measures of progress, for example the Beyond-GDP exploratory work.**

We support statements by several delegations including Finland, Barbados, Indonesia, and Switzerland, among several others, for the Marrakech Process to continue and to be formalized within the CSD process. We support discussion on format and substance of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes and wish them to be open and all-inclusive going forward to CSD 19.

In addition, we would like to emphasize the following tools for change:

- Firstly, **green, or sustainable, public procurement** is fundamental and a key leverage point to help transform patterns of consumption and production. Green procurement also demonstrates government commitment to this transformation.
- Secondly, we remind delegates of the **critical role of education for sustainable consumption and production**, which is at present fragmented, weak, and in many cases absent from learning situations. We call for governments to focus on education for sustainable consumption and production on all levels, and for people of all ages.
- Finally, NGOs are disappointed to see that mention has not yet been made in this session of the **UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, in particular section G on sustainable consumption.** Many governments have yet to apply the Guidelines, or in some cases even familiarize themselves with them.

To conclude, we call on Member States to commit to concrete action on this urgent area of production and consumption, with clear timelines for delivery. This must include, inter alia, comprehensive programmes of support. Therefore, we call on this Assembly to commit to the effective and formal integration of the Marrakech Process into the CSD structure.