

NGO Statement at the Opening Session of CSD 15 – 30 April 2007

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Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates,

Climate change and energy security are the dominant issues of international politics today. The Security Council, the G8+5, the World Bank and other institutions are talking about it; the Secretary-General plans a Special Summit on Climate Change; in many countries this issue is deciding elections; next week the climate negotiations continue in Bonn.

So the CSD has a unique opportunity to bring together climate and energy and work out an integrated agenda - yet at the IPM it has sadly missed the opportunity. Most governments complained about the damage wrought upon their countries by climate change, yet at the same time they promoted the further expansion of the very fossil energy system that is responsible for climate change. Can the CSD really afford to trail the international energy and climate agenda when it should be the spearhead? We don't think so.

Mr Chairman,

What we need today is a co-ordinated international response to the energy and climate crisis. According to the new IPCC report, global emissions need to peak until 2020 and then have to be reduced. In other words: the fossil energy system cannot stay for many decades to come, but has to be phased out. This is only possible by a simultaneous massive expansion of sustainable renewable energies and energy efficiency as well as energy conservation. We need clear time-bound targets both for renewables and energy efficiency. And we need funding for this transformation – a rapid phase-out of the billions of subsidies for fossil and nuclear energy, as well as radical restructuring of the energy portfolios of multilateral development banks who still spend close to 90% for fossil fuel extraction. Specific review mechanisms must be established to ensure these goals are met.

A global energy revolution is also a program for industrial development. Countries that have made the energy revolution their political priority have clearly demonstrated that this creates more jobs than fossil fuels, they have enjoyed more economic growth and it puts those countries in the vanguard of the future energy technology markets. But those countries that are now listening to the tune of the fossil lobby will be paying dearly in the decades to come. And this applies both to industrial and developing countries alike. Countries are now deciding whether they are going to import the windmills, solar panels and efficiency technologies in the future, just as they do import petroleum now, or whether they will create their own booming renewable energy markets.

The elements of a global deal for a below 2°C degree energy vision between the industrial and major developing countries need to be negotiated now – in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, leading to a second Kyoto commitment period and a package of energy agreements between industrial and developing nations.

Mr Chairman,

1.6 billion people still lack access to basic modern energy services. Energy poverty disproportionately affects women and is a crucial obstacle not only to development, but also to poverty reduction and social progress. Access to modern energy services and technologies must become an integral part of national sustainable development strategies, and we also need clear time-bound targets and implementation strategies for expanding access to energy. Decentralized power generation and energy service delivery are the most promising approaches for that. A sustainable energy future for all and the prevention of dangerous climate change is the challenge of the 21st century. We call on governments at CSD-15 to meet this challenge and agree on concrete steps.

Thank you.