



**Governing Council  
of the United Nations  
Environment Programme**

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**Twenty-third session of the Governing Council/  
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 21–25 February 2005  
Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development:  
contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme  
to the forthcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**

**West Asian regional civil society statement to the sixth Global  
Civil Society Forum and the twenty-third session of the  
Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Note by the Executive Director**

The Executive Director has the honour to provide, in the annex to the present note, a regional civil society statement from the West Asian region developed in the course of the regional preparatory process for the sixth Global Civil Society Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi on 19 and 20 February 2005, with a view to providing a contribution by civil society organizations to the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The regional statement provided a basis for the development of a global civil society statement (UNEP/GC.23/INF/16) which was agreed at a global civil society drafting meeting held in Nairobi on 3 December 2004.

The statement is being circulated as received by the secretariat and has not been formally edited.

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\* UNEP/GC.23/1.

## Annex

### **West Asian regional civil society statement to the sixth Global Civil Society Forum and the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

The 3<sup>d</sup> Regional Civil Society Forum  
21-22 November 2004 (Manama –Bahrain)

#### **West Asia Civil Society (WACS) Statement**

1. While appreciating UNEP's work on the area of war and environment, West Asia Civil Society–WACS would like to see special emphasis on this region by exerting UNEP's influence on the Governing Council and the Environmental Ministerial meetings to direct more funding towards the occupied and afflicted areas.
2. The West Asia Civil Society (WACS) would like to obtain from UNEP additional professional, technical and sustained training for all stakeholders in the form of intensive courses and workshops on the national, regional and Global levels.
3. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) recommends that UNEP should advocate for official recognition by governments of the region of Civil Societies as partners in sustainable development.
4. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) attributes incomplete/inadequate environmental legislations in the Region as one of the major challenges in the realization of sustainable development. Therefore, West Asia Civil Society (WACS) requests UNEP to continue to exert pressure on governments to facilitate the development & implementation of adequate environmental legislation.
5. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) recommends that UNEP take a proactive role in facilitating exchange and transfer of experience and expertise amongst NGO's at the regional level and foster cooperation between them.
6. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) urges governments of the region to allocate regular and adequate financial resources to UNEP to support initiatives in the West Asia Region, in particular to support UNEP and civil society partnership programmes.
7. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) recommends that UNEP should take into consideration the particular sensitivities of West Asia Region, especially in issues pertaining to religion, culture and language. It strongly urges UNEP to have more information materials and other resource tools in Arabic Language, as Arabic is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.
8. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) endorses the idea of the evolution and upgrading of UNEP into a stronger body, i.e. the World Environmental Organization – (WEO). Such an attempt will have a positive impact on rapid implementation of the sustainable development agenda.
9. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) recommends building effective partnership with UNEP to emphasize and enhance environmental awareness through innovative use of Media on the Regional Level.
10. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) generally agrees with the comments and conclusions reached by the VARDA Group and supports its recommendations, especially with regards to the need to prioritize the activities of UNEP, transparency of the origin of resources and its distribution in a fair manner to all regions concerned, and the need to rationalize the presentation of the programme of work. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) also supports the recommendation relating to more meaningful involvement of NGO'S in the preparation of the programme of work.

11. Upon reviewing the programme of work and focusing on regional environmental challenges, West Asia Civil Society (WACS) would like to see UNEP direct its attention on crucial issues, like water, green and clean production, unsustainable consumption patterns, the highly significant issue of green architecture, etc.

12. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) welcomes the new emphasis put by UNEP on the collaboration with Civil Societies and the steps taken by UNEP to ensure effective and meaningful civil society involvement in the process leading to the Governing Council's upcoming session. West Asia Civil Society (WACS) urges UNEP to continue looking for ways to build bridges with Civil Societies, especially in this region.

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