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**Outcomes of intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the Governing Council/  
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Outcomes of major intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the  
Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Report by the Executive Director**

The present document contains a summary of the outcomes of the major intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held between the conclusion of the twenty-second session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2003 and 31 December 2003.

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\* UNEP/GCSS.VIII/1.

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## I. General Assembly and its organs

### A. Fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly

1. On 23 June 2003, the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/270B on the basis of the draft resolution contained in the report<sup>1</sup> of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on the Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow-up to the Outcomes of the Major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Economic and Social Fields.

2. The resolution reaffirms sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities. The work programmes of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly are both linked to the sustainable development agenda through references to poverty eradication and economic growth and to the importance of recognizing cultural diversity, human rights and freedoms, as well as ensuring peace and security. It was recommended that national development efforts, in particular those related to the internationally agreed development goals, should be supported by an enabling international economic environment. The various United Nations funds, programmes and agencies are requested to ensure the integration of conference and summit outcomes in their respective work programmes. Corporate environmental and social responsibilities are highlighted and industry is encouraged to improve their performance through voluntary initiatives in that regard. Environment management systems and codes of conduct are recognized as examples, as is the Global Reporting Initiative.<sup>2</sup>

3. No new mechanisms, other than those currently existing in the United Nations system, are envisaged for monitoring integrated follow-up to and implementation of summit and conference outcomes. The Economic and Social Council retains its overarching coordinating function and is requested, by 2004, to establish a multi-year work programme for its coordination segment, through which integrated follow up to major summits and conferences could be reviewed.

4. In terms of practical measures, the presidents and bureaux of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and the bureaux of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly, are requested to consult regularly and explore ways to ensure better coordination. The Second and Third Committees are also urged to consider joint informal debates on matters that inform each other's work.

5. A report on the resolutions of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly that are of specific relevance to the work programme of UNEP is given in document UNEP/GCSS.VIII/INF/7.

### B. 2003 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

6. The session took place from 30 June to 25 July in Geneva, preceded by preparatory meetings in New York on 24 March and 30 April.

7. The session was divided into segments (high-level from 30 June to 2 July, operational activities from 3 to 7 July, coordination from 8 to 10 July, humanitarian from 11 to 15 July and general from 16 to 21 July), with a concluding part on 24 and 25 July. The overarching theme for the session, in accordance with Council decision 2002/309 of 19 December 2002, was "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development". During the high-level segment, a number of ministerial round tables and breakfasts expounded on that theme. UNEP also hosted such a breakfast meeting, on 2 July, entitled "Poverty and Environment".

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<sup>1</sup> A/57/48.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.globalreporting.org/index.asp>.

8. The Economic and Social Council, in consideration of the overarching theme, also discussed during the various segments increased United Nations cooperation and coordination in its development activities, the importance of assisting countries facing complex humanitarian emergencies including armed conflicts and natural disasters in the transition from relief to development and the need to implement internationally agreed development goals.

9. At the conclusion of the ministerial segment a declaration was adopted<sup>3</sup> which called for the reduction and elimination of agricultural subsidies and urged developed countries to implement the commitments made at the World Trade Organization meeting in Doha in November 2001.<sup>4</sup> The operational segment focused on operational activities of the United Nations and stressed that predictable contributions to the regular budget were crucial to those activities.

10. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, the coordination segment had as its focus the role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. It was emphasized that without effective and coordinated implementation the Millennium Development Goals<sup>5</sup> would not be realized.

11. The humanitarian segment focused on the financing and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. In the concluding part, the theme for 2004 was agreed: “Resources mobilization and enabling environments for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010”.

### C. Eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

12. The eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development took place from 28 April to 9 May 2003.<sup>6</sup> It was the Commission’s first session since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002) and it concluded by deciding its future programme and organization of work for the next 15 years. The session started with a three-day high-level segment which featured statements by delegations on their visions for the Commission and a number of interactive ministerial round tables with the theme “Priority Actions and Commitments to Implement World Summit on Sustainable Development Outcomes”. Five regional forums were held to take note of initial steps taken in the regions to implement the Johannesburg Summit’s Plan of Implementation.<sup>7</sup>

13. In terms of its future organization of work, the Commission adopted a series of two-year cycles, each with a review session to evaluate progress made in implementing sustainable development goals and identifying obstacles and constraints preceding a policy session during which decisions would be taken on how to speed up implementation and overcome obstacles and constraints.

14. For the first two-year cycle (2004–2005) the focus will be on water, sanitation and human settlements. Future implementation cycles will focus on energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change (2006–2007); agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa (2008–2009); transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and a 10-year framework on sustainable consumption and production patterns (2010–2011); forests, biodiversity, biotechnology, tourism and mountains (2012–2013); oceans and

<sup>3</sup> E/2003/L.9\*.

<sup>4</sup> See document WT/MIN (01)/DEC/1.

<sup>5</sup> See A/56/326 and A/58/323.

<sup>6</sup> The report of the session is given in document E/2003/29-E/CN.17/2003/6

<sup>7</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

seas, marine resources, small island developing States and disaster management and vulnerability (2014–2015); and overall appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21,<sup>8</sup> the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21<sup>9</sup> and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (2016–2017). During each cycle a number of cross-cutting issues – poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and health, education and sustainable development in a globalizing world will also be addressed, together with means of implementation.

15. In terms of the voluntary partnerships initiatives announced at the Johannesburg Summit, a set of criteria, together with future reporting guidelines, were agreed upon. A partnerships fair was held at the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, providing an opportunity to network to identify and launch new partnerships. A series of side events also took place at the eleventh session to share experiences and increase opportunities for dialogue, and a learning centre was provided where practical knowledge and tools relevant to the implementation of sustainable development were imparted.

16. At its eleventh session the Commission took a range of decisions on its practical methods of work; those decisions concerned regional and subregional inputs to the Commission on Sustainable Development process, strengthening the involvement of major groups in the Commission's activities and promoting greater collaboration and cohesion between the sustainable development activities undertaken by the United Nations system and other international institutions.

## **II. Other major intergovernmental meetings of relevance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

17. The present chapter provides a summary of other major intergovernmental meetings, of relevance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which addressed specific programme areas. The present chapter also provides information on the outcome of selected major regional intergovernmental meetings.

### **A. International Expert Meeting on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production, Marrakech, 16–19 June 2003**

18. The International Expert Meeting on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production was organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP and hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco in Marrakech from 16 to 19 June 2003.<sup>10</sup> A number of challenges in the implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies were identified, and it was concluded that institutional and social capacity-building, the development and diffusion of sustainable technologies and the financial means for implementing policies and programmes were major challenges. The dissemination of information was considered important and the need was highlighted for effective use of practical tools, including awareness-raising, education, training media and advertising. The Meeting concluded that the so-called Marrakech Process should consist of targeted responses by international organizations corresponding to Governments' priorities in that area.<sup>11</sup> Document UNEP/GCSS.VIII/6 contains

<sup>8</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

<sup>9</sup> General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

<sup>10</sup> A summary by the Co-Chairs of the Meeting is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/consumption/MarrakechReport.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Specific requests for actions to be taken by UNEP include enhancing the services of existing cleaner production centres; considering the establishment of an international declaration on sustainable consumption and production; harmonizing methodologies and tools through guidelines and databases;

additional information on the outcome of the Meeting as part of the progress report on the implementation of decision 22/6 (Promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns).

**B. Sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Havana, 25 August–5 September 2003**

19. The sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa made substantive progress on identifying ways and means to enhance the implementation of the Convention.<sup>12</sup> Over 2,000 delegates participated in the Conference, including 13 heads of State or Government and over 110 ministers and 100 parliamentarians from 173 States Parties. Some 150 non-governmental organizations and 40 international organizations were also represented.

20. Among the important decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties was the acceptance of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a financial mechanism of the Convention (decision 6/COP.6).<sup>13</sup> Although that development is expected to add critical momentum to the implementation of the Convention, many more needs remain to be met and calls were made from all sides for enhanced North-South as well as South-South cooperation. Whereas \$42 billion in income is lost every year as a result of desertification, the annual cost of a 20-year global effort to prevent land degradation is estimated at only \$10 billion to \$20 billion.

21. Delegates at all levels emphasized that the Convention was an important tool for poverty eradication, as identified by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and called on all development partners, including United Nations agencies and Bretton Woods institutions, to make use of the Convention in their strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Also, the heads of State and Government urged the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to provide, as a concrete example of South-South cooperation, the necessary financial resources to implement anti-desertification activities and projects. In that regard, it was reported that Governments were encouraging the expansion of economic and commercial opportunities in the drylands by linking private-sector initiatives to the identification of equal and fair economic opportunities for dryland goods and services.



22. Substantive progress in the area of science and technology was also made: the Conference adopted recommendations by its Committee on Science and Technology which encouraged institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop and test benchmarks and indicators, invited Parties to carry out pilot studies on early warning systems and proposed the collection of case studies from local and indigenous communities on traditional knowledge. The final decisions adopted recommended that the Committee should continue to follow up the millennium ecosystem assessment and the land degradation assessment in the drylands exercises – for which progress reports were presented – and that both assessments should work closely with the Committee’s group of experts. The Committee also discussed the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies, in which UNEP had been involved, and a final decision was adopted that requested the Convention secretariat, the Convention’s Global Mechanism and other funding institutions to mobilize funding for the second phase of the survey.

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exploring partnerships on eco-labelling and education; broadening the existing advertising forum; carrying out training programmes, including training on the United Nations Guidelines on Consumer Protection (UNCTAD/DITC/CLP/Misc.21) and on sustainable procurement, and implementing integrated product policy approaches through international initiatives such as the life-cycle initiative. UNEP was also requested to facilitate partnerships including public-private and business-business partnerships to engage all stakeholders.

<sup>12</sup> The report of the session is given in documents ICCD/COP(6)/11 and Add.1.

<sup>13</sup> \$500 million has already been allocated by GEF to support, in the coming three years, activities that address desertification and deforestation.

23. The Conference also hosted the first interregional session of the Global Biodiversity Forum,<sup>14</sup> which produced working group recommendations related to managing water resources and wetland habitats in the drylands, environmental management in drylands from a community perspective and mobilizing financial resources to combat desertification. UNEP presented a paper on increasing human capabilities through an ecosystem approach for the drylands.

**C. Fifth World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference, Cancún, Mexico, 10–14 September 2003**

24. The fifth WTO Ministerial Conference was held in Cancún from 10 to 14 October 2003. Negotiations on the draft ministerial declaration were not successful because of disagreement over whether formal negotiations should be launched on new issues such as investment, competition, transparency in Government procurement and trade facilitation. However, progress was made in negotiations on the reduction of agricultural subsidies. The Conference was also notable for the emergence of new and effective developing-country negotiating coalitions such as the G20+ on agriculture. All formal negotiating sessions were suspended as of October 2003 and ministers mandated a meeting of the WTO General Council at senior official level, to take place no later than 15 December 2003, to determine how to continue the negotiations. There was no negotiation on the substantive trade and environment elements on the Doha Agenda.<sup>15</sup> Some countries opposed the efforts by the European Community in particular to formally consolidate observer status for UNEP and multilateral environmental agreements in negotiations on the relationship between WTO and those agreements.

25. Consequent on the Ministerial Conference UNEP is reorienting its trade work, including undertaking more trade-related work in the context of the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. A broader strategic planning process is under way focusing on strengthening the capacity-building elements, particularly at regional and national levels.

**D. First session of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, Bangkok, 9–13 November 2003**

26. The first session of the Preparatory Committee was held in Bangkok from 9 to 13 November 2003. Chapter II of document UNEP/GCSS.VIII/6 details the outcome of the Preparatory Committee as part of the progress report on the implementation of Governing Council decision 22/4 IV (Strategic approach to international chemicals management).

**E. Fifteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Nairobi, 10–14 November 2003**

27. The fifteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol was held in Nairobi from 10 to 14 November 2003. The meeting was attended by 132 Parties (27 of which were represented at the ministerial level), with a total of 474 participants. The Meeting was preceded by a three-day meeting of the Protocol's Implementation Committee, from 5 to 7 November 2003, which considered issues of non-compliance with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol by some 40 Parties. The Implementation Committee forwarded 32 draft decisions on non-compliance issues for the approval of the Meeting of the Parties. The Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties met on 8 November 2003. In preparation for the Meeting of the Parties, the Parties held a full-day meeting on 8 November 2003 on the issue of trade in hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) by Parties to the Beijing Amendment under Article 4 of the Protocol, in order to facilitate reaching consensus on that issue at the Meeting of the Parties proper.

<sup>14</sup> The forum's home page can be found at <http://www.gbf.ch/>.

<sup>15</sup> See web page [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/dda\\_e/dda\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/dda_e.htm).

Subsequently, the Parties took a significant decision, by consensus, on the interpretation of the Beijing Amendment on trade in HCFCs.<sup>16</sup>

28. The Parties approved 55 decisions. The principal outcomes of the Meeting concerned:

- (a) Critical-use exemptions for methyl bromide. Discussions on critical-use exemptions for methyl bromide for developed countries after 1 January 2005 were based upon the review by the Protocol's Technology and Economic Assessment Panel. The Panel's October 2003 supplementary report on critical-use exemptions identified four categories to classify the various nominations, recommended, noted, not recommended and unable to assess. Final decisions were deferred to an extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to be held from 24 to 26 March 2004 in Montreal, Canada;
- (b) The establishment of the terms of reference for a study on the management of the financial mechanism of the Montreal Protocol (the Multilateral Fund);
- (c) The request to the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel to assess the capabilities of the Parties to produce chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and carbon tetrachloride for the basic domestic needs of the developing countries, and the estimated costs;
- (d) Promoting the phase-out of the exemption that allows the continued use of CFCs under the essential-use-exemption provision of the Montreal Protocol;
- (e) Re-evaluation, new guidance on and approval of technologies for destroying unwanted ozone-depleting substances;
- (f) A plan of action, involving the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), to modify regulatory requirements that mandate the use of halon-1301 in new airframes;
- (g) Reporting by the Parties on the establishment of national licensing systems to monitor their international trade in controlled substances, pursuant to Article 4B of the Protocol;
- (h) A request to GEF to continue assistance to the countries with economies in transition, particularly for institutional strengthening, and also to South Africa.

## **F. Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Milan, Italy, 1–12 December 2003**

29. The ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the nineteenth sessions of its subsidiary bodies to was held in Milan, Italy, from 1 to 12 December 2003.<sup>17</sup> The Conference achieved its two main objectives, completing rule-making for implementing the Kyoto Protocol and establishing a new fund for technology adaptation and transfer for developing countries. The private sector continued to play an enthusiastic role in implementing the Kyoto Protocol. The main challenge was to maintain the confidence of civil society generally in Kyoto Protocol activities.

30. The main achievement of the ninth session was the agreement reached on the issue of how to account for carbon sequestration in various land-use activities. The Conference agreed on the details of what may be accounted as carbon sinks within the context of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and of what land-use activities may be included in the clean development mechanism. The

<sup>16</sup> Decision XV/3: Obligations of Parties to the Beijing Amendment under Article 4 of the Montreal Protocol with respect to hydrochlorofluorocarbons. In the report of the fifteenth Meeting, document UNEP/OzL.Pro.15/9.

<sup>17</sup> The final report of the session had not been issued before the date of publication of the present document. See web site <http://unfccc.int/index.html>.

second outcome was an agreement on the criteria for funding adaptation to climate change as the first priority of the newly established Special Climate Change Fund. The second priority of the fund will be to support technology transfer activities. Voluntary contributions to the Fund will be part of the additional \$410 million per year funding promised by Canada, the European Community, Iceland, New Zealand and Norway to climate change activities starting 2005.

31. Overall, the conclusion of the Conference was an increased confidence in the Framework Convention process despite uncertainty about the Kyoto Protocol. The three round tables held as part of the high-level segment in Milan reiterated the faith of an overwhelming number of Parties in the Kyoto Protocol. However, frustration at the slow progress in starting activities on the ground, both on the clean development mechanism and in climate-change adaptation, was strongly expressed by some countries.

#### **G. Special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, Maputo, 9–10 June 2003, and the second ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, Maputo, 10–12 July 2003**

32. The second special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held in Maputo on 9 and 10 June 2003.<sup>18</sup> The session was attended by ministers from AMCEN member States and representatives of African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, secretariats of various environmental conventions, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

33. The meeting endorsed a draft action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Participants were also briefed on the preparations for the proposed joint meeting of health and environment ministers planned to take place back-to-back with the tenth session of AMCEN, in 2004. The Conference noted the results of the fourth meeting of the Steering Committee of the UNEP/GEF medium-sized project on the environment initiative of NEPAD, held at ministerial level in Maputo from 23 to 24 April 2003. It welcomed the offer by Egypt to host, in October 2003, at ministerial level, the fifth meeting of the Steering Committee to fully develop a strategic plan of action on capacity-building. The Conference agreed to submit the draft action plan to the second ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union and to organize a donor's conference on the action plan in Algeria in December 2003. It agreed to keep under review the implementation of the action plan at the regular sessions of AMCEN and mandated the Steering Committee to continue playing a leading role in overseeing the implementation of the action plan and its annex on capacity-building.

34. The second ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union was held in Maputo from 10 to 12 July 2003.<sup>19</sup> The Assembly took a number of key decisions on the key organs of the Union, its operations and programme of work. It adopted 23 decisions and five declarations, including a decision on the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and the revised 1968 African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Algiers Convention). Those two documents were prepared with substantive support from UNEP.<sup>20</sup>

35. The Assembly elected Mr. Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali and Mr. Patrick Kayumbu Mazimhaka of Rwanda as Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union. In keeping with the gender equality concept, five women were elected to serve as commissioners on the Commission. The session also elected members of the African Commission on

<sup>18</sup> Meeting documents and reports are available through <http://www.unep.org/ROA/amcen/>.

<sup>19</sup> The Third Ordinary Assembly will be held in 2004 at the Headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa.

<sup>20</sup> Meeting documents and reports are available through <http://www.africa-union.org/>.

Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

## **H. Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water, Addis Ababa, 8–12 December 2003**

36. The Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water was held in Addis Ababa from 8 to 12 December 2003, and was attended by water and environment ministers from African countries and representatives of intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders.<sup>21</sup> The Conference addressed the implications of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development on regional water initiatives and Africa's role in implementing the outcomes of the Summit.

37. The Conference also provided a platform for African countries, the international community and United Nations agencies to reaffirm their commitment to solving Africa's water crisis and to implement actions envisaged in the African Water Vision, the NEPAD Water Agenda, the Johannesburg Summit's targets and the Millennium Development Goals on water. The Conference endorsed a portfolio of key water initiatives submitted by each of the five subregions. A number of significant initiatives were launched during the Conference.

38. The ministers reached consensus on the central importance of achieving the targets on water and sanitation, and agreed on a number of actions including incorporation of the targets as priorities in national development plans and the establishment of national task forces to prepare national plans by 30 June 2005. They welcomed the participation of civil society organizations in the Conference and undertook to ensure that civil society in general, and gender concerns in particular, are taken into account in policy formulation in all sectors of water, sanitation and human settlements.

39. The ministers committed themselves to establishing national task forces on water and sanitation, conducting negotiations with development cooperation partners and United Nations agencies and using the Conference's commitments and recommendations as a basis for developing a common African approach before and after the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. They underscored the need for sustained implementation efforts and prioritized expansion of new partnerships.

40. A training session for journalists took place, as did a civil society consultation exercises for the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The discussions during the civil society consultation were integrated into the special meeting, held during the Conference, on African inputs to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session. The outcome of that meeting will be transmitted to the United Nations Secretary-General to contribute to the preparations for the Commission's twelfth session.

## **I. Partners' Conference on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, Algiers, 15–16 December 2003**

41. The Partners' Conference on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was held in Algiers on 15 and 16 December 2003. The Conference enabled African Governments to inform and seek the support of development partners on Africa's main priorities, including the Environment Initiative, of which the Action Plan is an important component. A package of initial projects and the supporting capacity-building programme, which includes a programmatic approach to provide an impetus to the overall implementation of the Action Plan, was presented to development partners. A dialogue was initiated on mechanisms and mutual commitments for effective implementation of the Action Plan.

<sup>21</sup> Meeting documents are available through <http://www.uneca.org/panafcon/index.htm>.



42. The Conference adopted the Algiers Declaration for a Global Partnership on the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. The development partners expressed their appreciation for the efforts made by African Governments in the formulation of their priorities in the Action Plan and their commitment to its implementation, and recommitted themselves to entering into structured dialogue aimed at identifying their respective roles and responsibilities in support of the implementation phase.

43. The programme on capacity-building received special attention and was fully endorsed. A special Italy/Africa initiative for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was announced. It was agreed that a second meeting of the Partnership Conference would take place in Dakar in December 2004.

## **J. Other major intergovernmental meetings at the regional level**

44. The fifth Environment for Europe Conference was held from 21 to 23 May 2003, in Kyiv, attended by representatives of 51 countries, 35 of which were represented at the ministerial level.<sup>22</sup> A great number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations also participated. The core result of the Conference was the Ministerial Declaration<sup>23</sup> covering all the items dealt with at the Conference. At the Kyiv Conference, three important United Nations Economic Commission for Europe protocols were adopted and opened for signature: the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (the Espoo Convention); the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters to the 1992 Conventions on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents; and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention).

45. The Declaration contains an endorsement by the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) member States of the resolution on biodiversity of the PEBLDS Council, which includes nine targets for halting the loss of biological diversity by 2010. Also, it welcomes one of the greatest achievements of the Conference: the adoption and signing of the Framework Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. The Declaration furthermore welcomes the role and activities of UNEP in post-conflict environmental assessment, its role and participation in the Kyiv assessment prepared by the European Environment Agency and its role in improving monitoring and assessment capabilities in the region. It also expresses support for the work of UNEP in completing and implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on Social Development at the global and regional levels, and its involvement in the area of chemicals.

46. The Conference confirmed the value of the Environment for Europe process and supported its continuation through ministerial conferences every four or five years, which would continue to be prepared by an open-ended Environment for Europe preparatory body, serviced by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Georgia, Hungary and Serbia and Montenegro expressed their interest in hosting the sixth Environment for Europe Conference.

47. A subregional environment policy dialogue<sup>24</sup> was held on 19 September 2003 in Beijing, co-chaired by Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP, and Mr. Xie Zhenhua, Minister of Environment of China, the current Chair for the north-east Asia subregion (the Tripartite Environment Ministers' Meeting (TEMM)). The participants in the dialogue included ministers who chair the five

<sup>22</sup> See [http://www.unece.org/env/wgso/index\\_kyivconf.htm](http://www.unece.org/env/wgso/index_kyivconf.htm). The report of the Conference is given in document ECE/CEP/96.

<sup>23</sup> ECE/CEP/94/Rev.1.

<sup>24</sup> See [www.rrcap.unep.org/policy/Final\\_SEPD\\_Meeting\\_report\\_13\\_October\\_03.doc](http://www.rrcap.unep.org/policy/Final_SEPD_Meeting_report_13_October_03.doc).

subregional ministerial forums, five eminent civil society leaders from the subregions and representatives of UNEP. The objectives of the policy dialogue were to provide regional inputs to global events such as the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and multilateral environmental agreements; to provide a forum for consolidating Asia-Pacific views on global issues; to advise UNEP on critical emerging environmental issues; and to provide policy guidance for the effective implementation of the UNEP programme in the Asia-Pacific region.

48. The main outcomes of the policy dialogue were support for the lead role of UNEP at the subregional level in general; a collective regional input to the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and thus to the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development; agreement that the UNEP strategy for the region should be further strengthened with pragmatic programmes addressing transboundary and common issues of concern; endorsement of the UNEP proposal to work in a number of countries in close collaboration with United Nations resident coordinators through framework agreements at the national level; and an agreement that the dialogue should be organized annually with additional members.

49. The fourteenth meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>25</sup> was held from 20 to 25 November 2003 in Panama City, attended by 27 Government delegations from countries of the region and six observer countries. Also, 29 international, regional subregional and non-governmental organizations attended the Forum. The Forum exchanged experiences and information on emerging issues pertinent to the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), such as water resources management, sanitation and human settlements and also access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization. The Forum agreed on a strategy for the implementation of ILAC and agreed on further support for the initiatives and issues advocated by the Forum and linked to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals in particular, health and environment, environmental education and training, sustainable production and consumption, small island developing States and the issue of financing. The Forum gave strong support to the proposed UNEP strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean and to the regionalization policy reflected in Governing Council decision 22/21.

50. The fifteenth session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) was held from 8 to 9 December 2003 in Cairo. The meeting reviewed the activities of UNEP in the region, including the preparation of desk studies on the state of the environment in Palestine and Iraq, the implementation of the Arab Initiative on Sustainable Development, the preparations for the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and other elements of the joint programme of cooperation. CAMRE agreed that the Abu Dhabi Declaration<sup>26</sup> areas of emphasis, water, land degradation and management of marine and coastal resources, should be given priority for funding when implementing the Arab Initiative. In the area of governance, CAMRE intends to initiate steps to expand its mandate to include coordination of the region's efforts to achieve sustainable development.

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<sup>25</sup> The final report of the meeting, UNEP/LAC-IG.XIV/4, is available at <http://www.pnuma.org/panama/pan04mini-FinalReport.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.unep.org/bh/abudhabi.htm>.