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Committee of Permanent Representatives to
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Joint Subcommittees I and II
Nairobi, 17 January 2006

**INPUTS BY ACCREDITED INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
TO THE UNEDITED ADVANCE ENGLISH COPY OF DOCUMENTS OF THE NINTH
SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL
ENVIRONMENT FORUM**

The secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has the honour to submit herewith, for the information of Joint Subcommittees I and II, the inputs to the unedited advance English copy of document UNEP/GCSS.IX/INF/3/ (Issues arising from the resolutions of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session that are of specific significance to the work programme of the United Nations Environment Programme: Note by the Executive Director), submitted by the following international non-governmental organization accredited to the Governing Council: World Harmony Foundation.

World Harmony Foundation

Comments by Richard Jordan, CEO of the World Harmony Foundation, accredited to the Governing Council, on UNEP/GCSS.IX/INF/2, Issues Arising from the resolutions of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session that are of specific significance to the work programme of UNEP

Perhaps it might be a consideration to mention para 169 "Policy" from the Summit Outcome Document, in which Heads of State and Government agree that a main horizontal theme such as sustainable development be included in decisionmaking throughout the UN system.

The World Harmony Foundation would go a little further and suggest that sustainable development, in terms of "knowledge management and partnership", be a priority theme in DESA and in UNEP. The World Harmony Foundation would suggest that both in DPI and DESA that Partnership Units include sustainable development in training sessions of Secretariat staff as well.

In this regard, UN University may be able to offer assistance, and the WHF would also call for a strengthening of staff for UNU and additional resources be provided in budget allocations for these purposes. It should be remembered that in this document, UNU was a co-sponsor of the Intl. Conference on Environment, Peace and the Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures, held in Tehran, 9-10 May 2005 (para 112 of this document).

In terms of the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (para 4), the WHF would suggest that there could be imaginative partnership arrangements for incorporating a greater input from ECOSOC NGOs, academia and others in terms of publications produced under the imprimatur of the UN60 commemoration (valid until 30 June 2006) concerning restoration of environmental landscapes in countries emerging from conflict.

If the WHF's information is correct, Timor-Leste, due to a variety of reasons, is finding that its national symbol, the sandalwood tree, is threatened due to actions stemming from poverty, not necessarily from conflict itself. We would advocate for dialogues among Member States, private sector organizations (the UN Global Compact has spent some good amount of time on the role of the private sector in areas emerging from conflict) and civil society in methods of restoring important environmental elements of a country's important environmental symbols.

Para 5: concerning system-wide coherence, it would be helpful if all civil society organizations accredited to the Governing Council be able to submit comments on ECOSOC reform to ECOSOC, in the manner the Commission on Sustainable Development puts forth a call for major groups to submit thematic papers on topics of debate.

Para 12: Strengthening the scientific base of UNEP, it would be helpful to keep in mind, while not prejudging the work of ECOSOC, that, according to our information, the Commission on Science and Technology may have a slightly modified mandate in the future.

Voluntary funds created through innovative philanthropic initiatives, especially in the light of the UN60, where science and technology funds to support the development of young scientists, may be created with country-specific focus.

UNEP might consider the examples of already-recognized outstanding youth technopreneurs, such as the Tunis phase of the WSIS technopreneur winner, Wu Yang of China, who has developed a program for the recycling of wastewater in new buildings in China.

Such young scientists, who also combine ICT (information and communication technology) expertise along with environmental skills, could be invited as observers to the meetings of the GEO committee of scientists. Accredited NGOs to UNEP could also be invited to these meetings, even if in a non-speaking status as observers.

Para 16: In terms of Nairobi Headquarters, it also is important to support enhanced conference services budgets in terms of staff and electronic capabilities.

Para 18: it could be helpful to link the CSD presentations to current and/or future World Environment Day events. The Summit on Desertification to be held in Algeria in October 2006 is an example where the host country, along with other Member States, NGOs and the private sector could demonstrate partnerships through knowledge management for the achievement of the MDGs, in a side event at the Summit.

There is very little mention in the current document about the role of local authorities or of the importance of the urban dimension in the environmental aspects of sustainable development, as far as the WHF can see.

Para 21: Again, the WHF wishes to underline the importance of knowledge management in DESA as an adjunct to fulfilling results-oriented initiatives. Knowledge management within UNEP might be introduced, if not already existing.

Para 22: The WHF is concerned that, although there seems to be a great deal of information in this para on Antarctica, that the Assembly has now simply decided to "remain seized of the matter." Dropping this agenda item from the work programme of the GA would, in the view of the WHF, be an error and send a signal to governments and NGOs that the issue will no longer be on the radar screen.

Para 25: The WHF remains concerned that the issue of SIDS still is not being dealt with adequately, in terms of resource mobilization and in terms of South-South cooperation.

Perhaps through participation of the Diaspora in creating awareness through the media of the continued vulnerability of SIDS to natural disasters, the tenuous situation of SIDS could be underscored.

Para 34: While present as an observer in the meeting dealing with the "assessment of assessments", this individual would encourage UNEP to use the report in terms of knowledge management and as an example of a way to build coherence throughout the UN system on environmental issues.

Para 36: It would be important to consider the issue of harvesting of deep sea beds as a practice destructive of that underwater resource.

Para 37: It would be helpful for the review conference to consider the arrangements that the Member States made for civil society and NGO expert organizations in participation in the work of the Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, chaired at the time by Amb. Satya Nandan of Fiji.

Many of these organizations also have affiliation of some type with FAO, and their participation, especially by fisherfolk from developing countries, was most effective in that conference.

We would encourage UNEP to work with Member States in seeing about modalities of participation for such organizations at the review conference.

Para 41: the contribution of religions-spiritual traditions, along with the scientific community, are evidenced by the series of conferences organized by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Vartolomeos. The conference that visited all of the catchment countries of the Black Sea in the late 1990s was productive in its work and its results might be worth re-examination in the context of the Regional Seas programme.

Para 48 and para 50: To reiterate and underline the role in the future of the Commission on Science and Technology and to create voluntary funds for the support of young scientists in developing countries.

Para 49: encourage developing countries to hold workshops and conferences with the private sector and civil society in the creation of "social entrepreneurship" in terms of renewable energy industries.

Para52: In terms of sustainable mountain development, the role of sports and recreational facilities (para 145 of the Summit Outcome Document) should be included.

Para 54: The WHF believes that the creative partnering of civil society with the lead agencies in charge of the observance of the international days, years and decades could lead to greater synergies and development of knowledge management throughout the UN system.

Para 55 and para 56: It would be important to emphasize the contribution of the Algerian Environment Minister in the establishment of the World Deserts Foundation and the role that Algeria will play in World Environment Day and as host to the Summit on Deserts and Desertification in October.

The WHF has already submitted a proposal to the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN through its distinguished former Permanent Representative, H.E. Ambassador Abdullah Baali, for a program at the Summit in October.

Paras 64ff: It is important to note the role of artists (culture) and media in disseminating information on disaster reduction efforts and relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. While none of the GA resolutions include this consideration, certainly there are artists who have created support initiatives for the countries affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami, and these should not be overlooked in terms of awareness raising.

Para 84: The role of sports, especially of the role of women, for peace and development can be exemplified by no finer examples than the Tecla Uripe Peace Run and the work of UNEP in Nairobi linking children, the environment and education.

Para 91: Greater emphasis could be placed on sustainable human settlements in terms of the role local authorities.

The concept of sustainable and green procurement was examined in June at UN Headquarters by an expert group.

A recommendation put forth at this session concerned the sustainable procurement policies that could be adopted by bid and host cities for the Olympic Games.

Para 96: There are many other declarations besides those mentioned here on sustainable tourism and the importance of the Lanzarote Declaration of the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism (I served as the officially elected Rapporteur of the Conference) should not be overlooked.

The importance of civil society organizations, such as the Intl. Institute for Peace Through Tourism also is of value.

Para 98: The resolutions on the Olympic Truce and the conclusion of the International Year of Sports and Physical Education both could be related, and the work plan of the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sports, Peace and Development, Adolph Ogi, give further coherence to the concept of knowledge management in the area of sports and sustainable development throughout the agencies and programmes of the UN system.

Para 106: The role of partnerships in creating a context for knowledge management throughout the UN system should be further articulated, especially the role of the private sector following the Zedillo Report on the Private Sector and Entrepreneurship.

Para 112: The engagement of civil society by the members of the Alliance for Civilizations could go beyond this paragraph and also incorporate a regional dimension.

Para 116: Since the International Year of Rice did not seem to draw the important attention it deserved from the media, in terms of the FAO facilitating the year, it could be useful to consider modalities for the inclusion of member States, NGOs, the private sector and academia in events during the 2008 International Year of the Potato.

Submitted by Richard Jordan, CEO of the World Harmony Foundation
- 10 January 2006