

Draft statement on behalf of the G-77 + China
at the Committee of the Whole meeting on February 21st 2011

Brazil takes the floor on behalf of the G-77 + China. First, let me express our appreciation for the work of UNEP in the field of sustainable development as the main UN body responsible for the environment. The G-77 + China is looking forward to a constructive session of the Governing Council, at a pivotal moment in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which will take place in Rio de Janeiro, in 2012. This important conference will give strong impetus to the sustainable development agenda. UNEP is one of the main **fora** for the preparatory process, respecting the ongoing discussions of the Preparatory Committee. The G-77 + China have a significant role to play in safeguarding the interests of developing country and contributing to a successful outcome of the Rio+20 Conference.

The present session of the Governing Council will adopt significant decisions which will direct UNEP during this phase and beyond Rio + 20. The draft decisions under consideration constitute a set of policy definitions with an impact on the potential role that UNEP may play in this process and in the implementation of its outcomes. The draft decisions that the Governing Council will approve need to be, therefore, carefully negotiated. The G-77 + China emphasize the importance of further integration of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building into UNEP's Programme of Work.

The road to Rio is paved with challenges and opportunities for developing countries. The 1992 Rio Summit set out objectives for sustainable development according to an ambitious programme of action, Agenda 21, and principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration. Our hopes were only partially fulfilled, since much of what was then agreed has still not come into being. The Johannesburg Plan of Action was meant to give a new impetus to the implementation of the outcomes from UNCED. Again, the last decade stopped short of realizing the full extent of the commitments for international cooperation in sustainable development.

The 2012 Rio Conference constitutes a new landmark for the fulfillment of these ever so valid objectives. The agenda for Rio sets out new challenges which must be faced directly and with an innovative attitude. The concept of green economy, which is being developed associated with the goals of poverty eradication and sustainable development, must be better understood as a means for assisting developing countries to achieve sustainable development. At the Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, the group has appealed for a clear definition of the Green Economy and called for exploring its relationship with the economic and social pillars of sustainable development and for an understanding of the scope and possible benefits of a Green Economy approach as well as its risks and costs. As the G-77+China has indicated, this understanding is necessary to avoid a replicating discussion on the interrelationship between environment, economy and society, or on the distinctions between the development challenges facing the developing world and the situation of developed countries, that was conceptually concluded 18 years ago in UNCED.

UNEP has a fundamental responsibility in supporting developing countries. This support must focus, for instance, on the promotion of capacity for the adoption of clean energy solutions which are compatible with the environmental, social and economic situation of developing countries. Another priority is ensuring greater aggregated value to natural and agricultural products from the developing world

traded in world markets. The newly adopted Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing needs to be supported with financial resources and capacity building.

The contribution by UNEP in this regard will certainly strengthen its role as the authoritative voice on the environment. International Environment Governance needs to be improved. The G-77 + China recognize the need for increased resources to the UNEP's Environment Fund to support its Programme of Work. Our group wishes that the Programme of Work promotes greater coherence, cooperation and synergies with MEAs and increased responsiveness to country and regional needs.

We have a rich agenda to address and the G-77+China will engage in a positive spirit, seeking to advance towards the concrete implementation of sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental pillars. The G-77+China call upon all Ministers and delegations at this Session of the Governing Council to be ambitious with regard to the outcomes of this meeting, not only as a contribution to the Rio + 20 process, but also because the environmental concerns of developing countries deserve their political support and strategic policy focus.