

Summary of Discussions

The Convenor, Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs welcomed the Principals and confirmed their agreement to the draft agenda. He began by drawing the Principals' attention to the letter sent by Ms. Michelle Bachelet regarding UN Women's becoming a full member of ECESA, which was circulated to Principals on Monday, 4 July. *The Committee approved the request and officially welcomed UN Women as a full member.* Mr. Sha also requested UN Women to revive the work of the ECESA cluster on gender and the empowerment of women.

Mr. Sha introduced the agenda item on *the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)*. He informed Principals that preparations for Rio+20 are ramping up at all levels. In particular, to assist developing countries in their preparations for the Conference, DESA has taken the lead and allocated resources from its technical cooperation programme, working closely with UNDP to advance this work. Individual countries are organizing preparatory meetings on key issues related to the Conference themes. The five UN Regional Commissions are working on regional PrepComs, expected to be held between September and December this year. For the draft outcome document, member States, UN family organizations and civil society are expected to submit inputs to a compilation text by 1 November. The Co-Chairs of the UNCSD Bureau will present a zero draft in mid-January 2012. Negotiations will begin from then and be held for one week for every subsequent month.

Mr. Sha indicated to Principals that expectations are high for not only the Conference, but also for the preparatory processes. Every effort must be made to ensure success, and not only with respect to a negotiated outcome document. Rio+20 is about addressing the challenges of sustainable development in their entirety and the world's shared future. There is broad agreement that Rio+20 must move the international community forward, with no reversal of commitments – and with a focus on implementation. The preparations by the Host Country are well underway. He informed that he had been recently invited by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro and the Government of Brazil to attend the city and national launch ceremonies to mark the one-year countdown to Rio+20. In Brasilia, he met with President Rousseff, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Environment as well as other high level authorities. The Host Country is fully committed to make Rio+20 Conference a success.

Mr. Sha called Principals' attention to the expectation that the Rio Principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, should be considered non-negotiable. There is also some agreement on the "green economy" as a means to achieve sustainable development. It is neither a substitute for sustainable development, nor an end in itself, and should be pursued for the benefit of all, and not just a few. The outcome document is expected to address two main themes: 1) green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and 2) the institutional framework for sustainable development – and the Conference objective of achieving renewed political commitment to sustainable development. Member States have also identified issues related to energy, water, food security, oceans, population dynamics, urbanization and disaster preparedness as key priorities. The outcome document will have to reflect these adequately.

Mr. Sha emphasized to Principals that the UN system should work collectively towards a

economic, social and environmental. Thus far, the social pillar remains weak and more needs to be done to rectify this. He indicated that the Social Cluster of ECESA met with ECESA Plus on 29 June and that they are developing proposals to this effect. He suggested that other clusters of ECESA should also engage with ECESA plus and develop integrated proposals for the outcome document.

Mr. Sha indicated that the Bureau Co-Chairs prepared a guidance note to support Principals, which was before them, in defining their contributions to the compilation. He then invited Principals to give concrete suggestions and proposals for the expected outcomes for Rio+20, setting aside for the moment the issue of the institutional framework, and invited them to focus on the following questions:

1. What key actions should be proposed in the outcome document, particularly for advancing a vision of a green economy which would bring tangible benefits to all countries and contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication?
2. What practical initiatives can be launched at the Summit to complement the outcome document? What are your specific plans?
3. How do we promote and facilitate collaboration among the UN system, Member

Mr. Sha noted that the High-level Panel was an initiative of the Secretary-General, which was meant to generate important ideas and proposals. These would be brought to the attention of Member States, who were leading the inter-governmental discussions. He underscored that the theme of the green economy, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication was chosen by consensus by all Member States and the theme has therefore been mandated and must be addressed. While doing so, concerns of all countries should be taken into account.

ILO emphasized that, with respect to a new political commitment for sustainable development, and if sustainable development is to happen, then it is necessary to look at the growth patterns that have taken place until now. The present growth patterns have not been friendly to the environment or to the dignity of workers and decent work. They haven't made improvements in the real economy, but rather the financial sector has taken over. This is relevant because one of the biggest objectives of the 1992 Rio Summit in moving from focusing only on the environment, to the three pillars of sustainable development, was to change consumption patterns. There is enough knowledge in the UN system's institutions to

internal migrants. IOM noted that migration was not mentioned in previous documents, yet migration fits into the framework of the three pillars very well. Migration is a large social issue, and in terms of economic development, the remittances from migrants are a very significant amount, equal to the economy of Austria or Finland. In particular regarding environmental issues, migration is seen as a vital adaptation strategy. IOM also noted that in the SG's forthcoming MDG Report there is discussion of conflict-induced displacement but that there is scant attention paid to displacement from natural and climate-related disasters. Therefore, migration should be included as a key variable for the Rio+20 agenda.

Mr. Sha, in response to IOM, indicated that the issue of migration would be captured under the rubric of demographic dynamics.

UNEP addressed the issue of non-reversal and no reopening of previous commitments, stating UNEP's agreement that the emphasis should be on implementation. However, Rio+20

UNCTAD advanced five points related to the outcome: (i) it must facilitate the transition process by encouraging voluntary participation with incentives and with sequencing that allows ownership of the process by the countries; (ii) it must reflect an integrated effort, where issues are considered as an integrated whole, such as sustainable stock exchanges with countries exposing their carbon footprint every year to be listed; (iii) at the outset it needs to be understood that there will be standard setting; (iv) the political message must show that sustainability is an orderly part of transformation, where the concept of sustainability is inserted into everything we do; and (v) it should include specific initiatives and how to carry them out, such as technology transfers, including the establishment of a climate change technology center. It must also include some methods for urgent response to disasters and the disaster management process, sustainable agricultural initiatives and bringing in the private sector as early as possible, for example to finance pilot projects.

Mr. Sha gave the floor to WTO, with a specific request to address concerns about green protectionism.

WTO stated that, from a trade perspective, two outcomes were expected. One would be a consensus that trade opening can support sustainable development and the other would be that green protectionism should be avoided. There is fear of green protectionism by developing countries; hence it is important to provide the proper framework regarding the green economy. Sustainable development is enshrined in WTO's organizational charter, and members are given the policy space that they need. For instance, in the area of transport nothing prevents countries from requiring the greening of transport or taxing of energy. Provided that externalities are internalized, in a non-discriminatory manner, trade leads to more environmental sustainability: for example, trade in agriculture is water saving for the planet, with agricultural exports from water surplus countries to drier countries.

WTO emphasized that the process must be run in such a way that developing countries know that they will not be victims of green protectionism. On the issue of green subsidies, the experience has been that WTO has not had problems with this, at least none that have surfaced thus far. It will be important to ensure that measures presented as environmental packages, but that have trade protectionist intent, do not emerge. WTO has rules to protect against green protectionism. Another means to take away the grey areas is to have a more well-defined international environmental discipli

to 30-40 per cent of the world population; 4) urban job creation is critical to economic and social development; 5) the legality of urban structures are critical to guarantee safety and sustainability; 6) urban energy and urban mobility patterns are important for sustainable development; and 7) it is important to improve local governance and increase the financial capacity of cities to sustain infrastructure.

UNV emphasized that in order to see a real change to a sustainable society, significant changes are needed at the individual level. Therefore it is very important to bear in mind and have reflected in the outcome document the strong and necessary role that citizens can play to

options for how this potential problem could be addressed, perhaps through working level meetings of agencies.

UNDP announced that it will be stepping up the mobilization and support at the country level. Regarding the green economy, there is a need to provide information and perspective on the conditions that make green economy different. The UNDP Human Development Report will be on sustainable development and will be launched in November 2011. UNDP is working with UNIDO on energy issues and on the need to move away from overdependence on the GDP measurement. UNDP also addressed the issue of the Millennium Development Goals target date of 2015, stating that there would be an immense value of Rio+20 providing inputs to the post-2015 framework but also warning of the danger of trying to move too

FAO stressed that food security is a key priority item, as well as oceans and the “blue economy”. FAO is launching an initiative on greening the economy within agriculture, consuming fewer natural resources through improved efficiency and the promotion of sustainable agriculture. FAO is also promoting sustainable fisheries, and is organizing an expert meeting in September to feed into the outcome document for Rio+20.

The World Bank informed that it was undertaking a specific initiative with UNEP, the OECD and the Global Green Growth Institute, jointly developing a global Green Growth Knowledge Platform, to be launched in early 2012. The World Bank will be organizing several roundtables and conferences and will launch, in the spring of 2012, its green growth report. The World Bank will also be holding in Washington D.C., a high level workshop on low emissions (which took place on July 13, 2011). The World Bank also expressed its concern over the lack of inclusiveness of the preparation process of the HLCP report on "Moving towards a Fairer, Greener, More Sustainable Globalization".

UNCCD stated that it will contribute primarily to the issue of food security given its close linkage with land degradation, desertification and drought effects. The UNCCD Secretariat is already working with DESA on this matter. UNCCD also called on everyone to keep and adhere to Agenda 21, including its chapter XII. UNCCD further underlined the need that Rio+20 could support calls for target settings within the Convention process so as to enable proper assessment of achievements in the medium and long term. UNCCD would provide inputs to the process based on outcomes of the tenth Conference of the Parties to be held in October.

IFAD stressed that a key outcome of Rio+20 would be ambitious key actions on sustainable agriculture, where agriculture, instead of being associated with environmental degradation, would be described as an area of huge opportunity to advance sustainable development. A key obstacle to this outcome is the current mindset of how agriculture is perceived. The role of agricultural smallholders as stewards of ecosystems is also important, as well as sustainable agriculture as a driver of green growth. At the next IFAD governing council in February, IFAD will further advance its call for an inclusive “evergreen revolution” powered by low-input sustainable agriculture and 21st century technology.

WFP stated that food security and disaster reduction are key priority areas. The discussion should also be very specific about people, putting them at the center and ensuring that they are able to build resilience, i.e., a people first/people-centred approach and then the other issues follow. The outcome document should include recognition of social protection as a public good and vital part of sustainable development. Not just a safety net, but a component of social protection that enables people to move from the margins into the center of development activities.

UNESCO expressed a preference for concrete initiatives. UNESCO currently has a wide number of projects, including regional meetings on science, projects on oceans and the blue economy, freshwater and disasters. The outcome should focus not only on obstacles, but also on new initiatives, such as higher education and sustainable development.

UNU shared that it is working on green economy concepts and is in the process of publishing a book entitled *Green Economy and Good Governance for Sustainable Development*. UNU is

sharing of information regarding green governance; oceans and sustainability; and the impact of climate change on health.

UNWTO emphasized that, as we approach Rio+20, tourism has become part of life, with 1 billion international arrivals of tourists worldwide, and three to four times as many domestic trips. UNWTO is working with eight other UN agencies in preparation for Rio+20 to show what tourism can bring to humankind. UNWTO's general association meeting in October is expected to provide a strong mandate for Rio+20.

IMO indicated that maritime activities contribute a lot to sustainable development. Shipping accounts for 98 per cent of world trade and creates many jobs. IMO will be participating in the preparations for Rio+20, especially in regards to oceans and maritime transport. IMO has also been participating in Delivering as One and the UN Management Group, providing supporting inputs on the green economy. IMO has also contributed to UNEP's green economy report and to a Report of the Secretary General via the submission of a completed questionnaire.

Mr. Sha thanked participants for a very rich discussion and for their thoughts and ideas. He requested that they kindly contribute inputs and forward them to DESA by the 1 November deadline.

Mr. Sha invited Principals to address the *second issue on the agenda under the item of the Rio+20 Summit, namely the UN's institutional framework for sustainable development*. He recalled the origins of the ECESA Plus Study, where the 26th Session of the UNEP Governing Council (GC) invited the Second PrepCom to consider initiating a full analysis of the financial, structural and legal implications and of the comparative advantages of the options contained in the Helsinki-Nairobi Outcome. It was also suggested that this analysis should utilize the expertise of relevant United Nation system entities, stakeholders and major groups, and the invitation was brought to the attention of ECESA Plus.

Mr. Sha indicated that the issue was discussed at the working level ECESA-Plus focal points on 14 April, where they agreed on four points:

- € First, the study should address institutional issues on all three pillars of sustainable development and their integration at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels.
- € Second, the study should therefore not be restricted to the environmental pillar, or International Environmental Governance (IEG), or to the five options communicated by the UNEP Governing Council.
- € Third, the dedicated secretariat would seek the views of all ECESA-Plus members on the outline and TORs for the study.
- € Fourth, consultants' reports would only constitute inputs into the study, and the final document would be a synthesis paper prepared jointly by ECESA-Plus, based on inputs from all member entities, and coordinated by the dedicated secretariat.

Mr. Sha drew Principals' attention to the agreed annotated outline of the study that was circulated, which highlights /P000

ICAO provided comments to the document and focused on efficiency of the United Nations in responding to challenges and using effectively the capacity that the UN system has. ICAO stated that Member States were concerned about overlap and streamlining, and that the UN also needs to be concerned with these issues.

UNCTAD, while not having yet given serious consideration to the issue, reacted that in order to have a real integration of issues one of the five UNEP GC options should not be selected at the detriment of others. For example, options two and four should not eliminate each other, as ECOSOC needs to be reformed. Option three also needs to be done eventually. UNCTAD argued that all five proposals need to be sequenced and taken up, and not just one option pursued at the elimination of the others.

UNCCD asserted that while the UN agencies may express views on the establishment of a specialized agency such as a world environment organization, the final decision on this

the UN system should focus on the two main th