

Comments submitted by Brazil on the possibility of holding a high level event on  
sustainable development  
26<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## **Background**

1. The Government of Brazil welcomes the opportunity to submit views on the possibility of convening a high-level event on sustainable development in preparation of the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in response to an invitation by the Secretariat as referred to in General Assembly resolution 63/212, paragraph 5.

2. Reference is made to the Concept Paper of 11 November 2008 (attached to this document), which set out the initial views of Brazil on a United Nations conference on countries and groups, especially the Group of 77 and China. We are committed to engaging with the wider membership, through the appropriate bodies of the United Nations, for preparations in an inclusive, transparent and results-oriented manner.

## **Areas for action**

4. Building on Brazil's initial proposal, the 2012 UN conference could address four thematic areas or clusters: (A) Review of implementation; (B) International governance for sustainable development; (C) Global pact around "Green Economy"; and (D) Water

### **A – Review of implementation**

5. The review of implementation will evaluate the long-term commitments for sustainable development that the international community agreed to at UNCED and afterwards, including the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Many of the goals therein should be attained by 2012. The focus should be on how to bridge implementation gaps, including by the provision of adequate and predictable financing.

A three-pronged approach is suggested:

(i). Review of the implementation of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which sets out the principles for international cooperation on sustainable development;

(ii). Review of the implementation of Agenda 21 and the 25,000 recommendations therein, the Program for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This task is linked to the contribution of the

Commission on Sustainable Development, the body tasked with following-up on these commitments; and

(iii). Review of the implementation of the three Rio Conventions: CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD. Since each Convention is independent and have their own governing bodies, it is intended that the preparatory process will involve dialogue with the conferences of the parties, in a manner similar to their engagement in the General Assembly and CSD. The purpose of evaluating the implementation of the Conventions is to provide input for the broader evaluation of implementation of sustainable development commitments, and not to detract from or establish parallel tracks of negotiation. For the UNFCCC, 2012 will mark the conclusion of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The 2012 Conference will provide an opportunity to contribute to the review of its implementation.

#### B – International governance for sustainable development

6. Notwithstanding the international consensus on the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among international organizations and environmental agreements, diverging views remain on how to reform the current United Nations system so as to enhance its efficiency for driving sustainable development. Overcoming this impasse requires a broader and integrated reflection in lieu of the fragmented approaches which have been attempted so far.

7. The 2012 conference could aim at debating on governance through a reform of the institutions currently involved in the implementation of the sustainable development

10. The response to the economic and financial crises has highlighted the need to reinstate the role of the State both as regulator and driver for sustainable development. The packages and plans put together as a response provide an opportunity for ensuring that the economic recovery is driven towards both social and environmental sustainability, thus bringing forth a greener, more sustainable economy where the three pillars are dialectically integrated.

11. It is vital to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals be attained by 2015. But securing those goals is only part of the answer to transform the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment into a virtuous cycle where prosperity is coupled with sustainability at the economic, social and environmental levels. In-depth structural changes are required to sustain that transformation.

12. Whereas there has been widespread perception that the integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of development is essential for providing adequate and sustainable responses to the global multiple crises, the concept of “green economy” has been used in the contexts of various differing approaches. A UN conference on sustainable development in 2012 would offer an opportunity to consolidate a broad-reaching agreement around the evolving paradigm of “green economy”, and allow for the involvement of a large spectrum of stakeholders (governments, civil society, businesses, academia, and so forth).

13. Translating the concept of “green economy” into nationally appropriate measures is a complex challenge. There are no universally applicable solutions: several alternatives of reform, regulation, fiscal stimulus, capacity building and prioritization of sectors and regions should be analyzed. These efforts must result from an in-depth dialogue with civil society and the private sector.

14. Stimulating the world economy through policies that give priority to sustainable patterns of consumption and production may prove to be a win-win approach, with the potential to generate environmental, social and economic benefits. New investment opportunities - in fields such as energy, transport, agriculture and infrastructure - can be coupled with incentives to sustainable innovation and technology transfer.

15. The resulting creation of “green jobs” would provide additional income and skills for the workforce, with significant impacts on poverty alleviation and enhanced prosperity, especially for developing countries. The transition towards the new model requires ample mobilization of the international community, in order to establish a renewed engagement for sustainable development and ensure the consistency of policies at all levels.

16. Financing and technology transfer are two elements that require cooperation at all levels among countries. They are crucial stepping stones for the success of the “green economy”. According to the principle of comm

#### D. Water

17. Water is essential for socioeconomic development and for maintaining the integrity of the environment. Its importance for the three pillars of sustainable development is recognized in the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992), the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals. Rio+20 would enable an integrated assessment of the challenges to the implementation of the commitments contained in those documents, by sharing experiences and strengthening the engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

18. Access to water is a theme that must be considered in the light of Principles 2 and 3

21. The main objective of setting 2012 as a deadline for the conclusion of the process is to channel attention to the implementation of Agenda 21 in each country, in order for it to be prioritized. In order to ensure the efficiency of the preparatory process, lessons learned from previous processes should be taken into account.

22. Preparations for Rio+20, in a context of the global economic slowdown, present practical difficulties, especially with regards to its financing. Nevertheless, such obstacles should not stop the convening of the Conference, which should be viewed as contributing to the global effort to respond to the crises and create conditions for the structural changes required to promote sustainable development.

23. The preparatory process should go beyond the establishment of National Commissions for the review of implementation of Agenda 21. The process should identify additional mechanisms for further implementing the commitments. At the



*ANNEX I*

RIO+20 CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
***CONCEPT PAPER***

**Government of Brazil**  
**11 November 2008**

**I. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVENING A CONFERENCE**

1. A new United Nations conference on sustainable development is needed in order to create the political momentum for concentrating disparate actions, channeling efforts and

instrument. The agenda of the second thematic area of debates would be established in a consensual and inclusive process, by decentralized decisions taken by the conferences of the Parties to each Rio Convention, in the preparatory process for Rio+20.

7. Another challenge related to the second thematic area is the improvement of the coordination and cooperation between international organizations and the MEAs. The conference might conclude the debate on international environmental governance by means of a reform of the current international institutions on sustainable development. This might be an important theme for the preparatory process.

8. The third thematic area of a Rio+204.5(ca92(ua)TJ1442295 0 TD.0026 Tc102012 Tw4(d)-6.4bthe)4.3(



development into concrete actions, by ensuring the provision of the required means of implementation. Greater emphasis will be placed on its preparatory process in relation to Rio+10. In this sense, the main objective of setting 2012 as a deadline for the conclusion of the process is to channel attention to the implementation of Agenda 21 in each country, in order for it to be prioritized.

12. The preparatory process should go beyond the establishment of National Commissions for the review of implementation of Agenda 21. The process shall identify

v) Contribute to, not detract from, other processes, such as the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the environmental conventions, by deepening engagements with sustainable development;

vi) Not renegotiate agreed instruments and documents;

vii) Mark the completion of a 20-year cycle of environmental negotiations, sending a strong political signal and marking the beginning

they have their own specific mandates and conventions. The sense of urgency associated with the serious environmental issues nowadays justifies holding a high-level conference.

*Value-added to ongoing processes*

23. A Rio+20 would allow for a broad overview of the different issues that are under negotiation under the various processes, with a view to providing political momentum to address the implementation gaps.