



SIXTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Outcome of United Nations conferences:

(b) World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10)

(Johannesburg, 26 August-4 September 2002)

Introduction

1. The Committee on Employment and Social Policy discussed the ILO's contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) at its 283rd Session in March 2002.¹ This document informs the Governing Body of the ILO's contribution to the preparations for the WSSD, provides a summary of the most relevant outcomes for the ILO and its constituents, and indicates possible opportunities for follow-up action by the Office.

Preparatory process

2. The Johannesburg Summit was requested to review progress made since the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 – and in fact progress made since the Stockholm Conference of 1972 – and to reconfirm commitments to accelerate the progress of implementation of Agenda 21 and other Rio outcomes. The mandate of the Johannesburg Summit, however, went beyond the environment and development perspective of Rio to focus attention on the concept of sustainable development and its three mutually supporting pillars – economic development, environmental protection and social progress. The enhanced emphasis on the social pillar provided the main impetus and focus for the ILO's contribution to the Summit preparatory process. The Office pursued a proactive strategy aimed at strengthening the social pillar of sustainable development and its more effective integration with the other pillars of sustainable development, especially highlighting the role of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and its tripartite constituency in achieving sustainable development.
3. The Office actively participated in all sessions of the Preparatory Committee, including the plenary discussions and informal negotiating sessions, and worked closely with a number

¹ GB.283/ESP/4 and GB.283/12.

of national delegations, other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and major groups to try to ensure that the labour and social dimension of sustainable development was reflected adequately in the draft implementation plan. The negotiation of this draft was especially complex and unfocused, since the text rapidly evolved during the second Preparatory Committee meeting in January into a very lengthy and all-encompassing document that was eventually set aside. A new and much shorter revised text was submitted to the third session in New York (March-April). Unfortunately, a similar process of rapid growth and diffusion occurred during that session, at which it was impossible to reach a final agreement on the text, as called for by the General Assembly. As a result, the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee in Bali (May-June) again had to focus almost all its attention on trying to reach a consensus on the rather long draft implementation plan (more than 50 pages) rather than prepare the draft political declaration. By the end of the Bali session, almost 75 per cent of the draft Implementation plan had been agreed, but the remaining 25 per cent represented some very major and complex political issues that required further negotiations before and at Johannesburg. During the final hours of Bali, however, many delegations set out possible elements for inclusion within the Political Declaration, but no agreement was reached regarding its possible content or format.

4. Between Bali and Johannesburg, the ILO was invited to participate in a special “mini-Summit” in Rio de Janeiro convened by President Cardoso of Brazil, which brought together Prime Minister Persson of Sweden and President Mbeki of South Africa and many other key leaders involved in the WSSD process. The ILO used this special meeting to build on the personal correspondence between the Director-General and these and other Heads of State, soliciting their support for the strengthening of the social pillar and stressing the crucial role of employment for poverty eradication and social dialogue for managing change related to both the transition to more sustainable production and consumption patterns and to the enhanced protection and management of natural resources. This meeting generated significant support for the ILO’s objectives that greatly facilitated the ILO’s efforts at Johannesburg.
5. In addition to actively promoting the ILO’s key messages during and between the various preparatory sessions, the ILO hosted a series of official side events. At the third Preparatory Committee meeting in New York, the ILO hosted an event called “Strengthening the social pillar: Employment, social dialogue and sustainable development”, which was attended by over 40 people representing Government delegations (including Brazil, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), intergovernmental organizations (World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)) and the major groups, including trade unions (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and business and industry (International Organisation of Employers (IOE)). Representatives of the Office drew attention to the critical importance of employment, social protection and social dialogue within the evolving draft implementation plan. A wide-ranging discussion took place that highlighted the need for an enhanced collaborative effort to strengthen the social dimension of sustainable development and mobilized support for such an effort during the remaining preparatory process. In Bali, the ILO convened a Tripartite Round Table on Employment, Social Dialogue and Social Protection called “Achieving sustainable development at the workplace”, which attracted a similar level of participation. The ILO presented its priority messages concerning the need to ensure that these issues were included in the WSSD outcomes, and government, employer and worker participants at Bali also indicated their priorities for the WSSD, and especially highlighted the role of social dialogue and action at the workplace to promote sustainable development.

Johannesburg Summit

6. The ILO delegation to the Johannesburg Summit was led by the Director-General. As decided by the Governing Body in March, he was accompanied by the three Officers of the Governing Body – Lord Brett, Ambassador Chung and Mr. Funes de Rioja. In addition, other ILO senior advisors and technical and support staff from both headquarters and the field participated in both the formal sessions and many of the parallel activities linked to the Summit, including the Civil Society Forum. A copy of the Director-General’s statement to the Conference is attached as Appendix I.
7. The ILO – and the social issues it was promoting – had relatively high visibility at the Summit. Several side events were well attended. The ILO Tripartite Round Table on Employment, Social Dialogue and Social Protection provided an opportunity for the Director-General and the Officers of the Governing Body to present their views on the role of the ILO and its tripartite constituency in the achievement of sustainable development. This event was moderated by Mr. Allan Larsson, Special Envoy of the Director-General for the WSSD process, and generated a very lively exchange of views with the audience of over 150 government, IGO and major group representatives. It included a special statement by the Minister of Economy and Scientific Research of Belgium.²
8. The ILO also facilitated a side event called “A Dialogue with Civil Society” convened by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and attended by seven Commissioners, including the two co-chairpersons, President Halonen of Finland and President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania. This event provided an opportunity for 10 representatives of the major groups³ to share their views on the social dimension of globalization and to suggest possible new policy approaches for consideration by the World Commission. Some of the more than 150 participants were also able to participate in the dialogue from the floor. The event drew attention to the linkages between the social dimension of globalization and the social dimension of sustainable development
9. The ILO participated in a special signing ceremony between the ILO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Government of Switzerland to launch a new collaborative partnership project to introduce labour-related services in a number of countries participating in the existing framework of 30 National Cleaner Production Centres. To date, these Centres have primarily focused on environmental services to national enterprises. Lord Brett signed the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the ILO.
10. Throughout the preparatory process, the ILO received particularly significant support from a number of national delegations (especially Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Sweden, Switzerland and South Africa), as well as from the extremely active trade union major group. The efforts of these “ILO friends” ensured that the ILO and its issues were kept on the negotiating agenda. It should also be noted, however, that the ILO’s visibility was also from time to time raised as the result of the opposition of some national delegations to include any reference to the ILO or to the social dimension of particular issues, such as core labour standards and trade and finance, which led to repeated discussions in various negotiating groups.

² An informal transcript of the side event is available on request.

³ The nine major groups included within Agenda 21 are women, children and youth, indigenous people and their communities, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and their trade unions, business and industry, scientific and technological community and farmers.

Johannesburg Plan of implementation

11. The Johannesburg plan of implementation⁴ contains 153 paragraphs (over 50 pages) and includes the following sections: poverty eradication; changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption; protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development; sustainable development in a globalizing world; health and sustainable development; sustainable development of small island developing states; sustainable development for Africa and other regional initiatives; means of implementation and institutional framework for sustainable development.
12. Many of the issues discussed led to extremely complex, difficult, and sometimes quite confusing negotiations and results over such issues as trade and finance; references to the Doha process and the Monterrey Consensus and other United Nations Conferences held since 1992; references and interpretations of specific Rio principles; the setting of specific goals and targets for action in such areas as sanitation, renewable energy and subsidies; and references to human rights, labour standards and rights, corporate responsibility and accountability, gender and health, to name but a few. Consensus on a number of texts was only reached late at night after often tortuous searches for compromise language. One cannot therefore describe the document as elegant or consistent in style.
13. While the negotiations were indeed complex and difficult, and the results sometimes confusing if not disappointing, it is also clear that the Summit was addressing the right question: How should the world integrate social, economic and environmental policies to achieve sustainable development? From the ILO's vantage point, a significant number of opportunities are provided within the adopted texts to facilitate the accelerated implementation of Agenda 21 and sustainable development. The Johannesburg Summit was intended to re-launch and re-invigorate implementation, and it is now up to governments, international organizations, the major groups and civil society to get on with the actual work.
14. For example, particular progress has been made in defining action within the five priority theme areas identified by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and now known as WEHAB – Water and Sanitation, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity. In the implementation plan, for example, the following commitments were made:
 - (a) *Water and sanitation*: Halve the proportion of people without access to sanitation by 2015 – this matches the goal of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015, included in the Millennium Development Goals.
 - (b) *Energy*: Increase access to modern energy services, increase energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy, as well as phase out, where appropriate, energy subsidies and support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) objective of ensuring access to energy for at least 35 per cent of the African population within 20 years.
 - (c) *Health*: By 2020, chemicals should be used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment. Countries were encouraged to implement the new globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, in which the ILO played a key role, as soon as possible with a view to their being fully operational by 2008.

⁴ http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/summit_docs/2309_planfinal.doc.

- (d) *Agriculture*: Development in Africa of food security strategies by 2005.
- (e) *Biodiversity*: Reverse the current trend in natural resource degradation, to restore fisheries to their maximum sustainable yield by 2015, and reduce biodiversity loss by 2010.

15. In addition, the United Nations system prepared preliminary “frameworks for action” for each of these themes that demonstrated how these issues might be dealt with in future. Unfortunately, these texts currently provide insufficient insight into the social dimension of these themes; nor do they adequately reflect the ILO’s potential role in support of them. The implementation of such commitments should provide new challenges and opportunities for employment and income generation activities, but should also lead to significant improvements in the quality of life and work of both rural and urban poor men and women and support the Decent Work Agenda. The ILO, therefore, may be expected to play an active role in the WEHAB process.

16. One of the paragraphs in the section on poverty eradication concerned the role of employment and the ILO. Following extensive negotiations, the following paragraph was approved:

9(b) Provide assistance to increase income-generating employment opportunities, taking into account the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

This section also includes explicit references to child labour and to the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), as well as to “decent employment” for the urban poor, the promotion of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and safe and sustainable livelihood opportunities in small-scale mining ventures.

17. The section on changing production and consumption patterns included references to action at all levels and drew attention to the role of cleaner production programmes and centres:

17(b) [to] encourage dialogue between enterprises and the communities in which they operate and other stakeholders;

17(d) [to] develop workplace-based partnerships and programmes, including training and education programmes.

18. The section on natural resources refers to the need for changes to the protection and management of resources related to forestry, mining, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, disaster management, biodiversity and climate change, all of which may have direct and indirect consequences for employment and decent work, especially at the workplace, and create special challenges and opportunities for the ILO’s social partners.

19. The section on globalization explicitly calls for action:

45(d) [to] Support the International Labour Organization and encourage its ongoing work on the social dimension of globalization, as stated in paragraph 64 of the Monterrey Consensus.

The section on health calls for action at all levels:

47(m) [to] strengthen and promote ILO and World Health Organization (WHO) programmes to reduce occupational deaths, injuries and illnesses, and link occupational health with public health promotion as a means of promoting public health and education;

48(c) protecting the health of workers and promoting occupational safety, by inter alia, taking into account, as appropriate, the voluntary ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, to improve conditions of the workplace.

20. The section on an institutional framework for sustainable development calls on the international community:

122(a) [to] enhance the integration of sustainable development goals as reflected in Agenda 21 and support for implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the Summit into the policies, work programmes and operational guidelines of relevant UN agencies, programmes and funds ...

122(b) [to] strengthen collaboration within and between the United Nations system, international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility and WTO, utilizing the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the United Nations Development Group, the Environment Management Group and other interagency coordinating bodies.

In addition, this section includes the following:

122(c) [to] strengthen and better integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development policies and programmes, and promote the full integration of sustainable development objectives into programmes and policies of bodies that have a primary focus on social issues. In particular, the social dimension of sustainable development should be strengthened, inter alia, by emphasizing follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development and its five-year review, and taking into account their reports, and by support to social protection systems.

The international community is also called upon:

122(f) [to] promote corporate responsibility and accountability and the exchange of best practices in the context of sustainable development, including, as appropriate, through multi-stakeholder dialogues, such as through the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other initiatives.

Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development

21. The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development was finalized during the very last days and hours of the Summit under the direct leadership of President Mbeki and the South African WSSD team of ministers and senior officials. It is a confirmation of the commitment of Heads of State and Government to sustainable development and reflects a number of the priority issues and commitments included in the Johannesburg plan of implementation. It provides a call for collective action by governments and major groups within an inclusive process of implementation, and reaffirms their commitment to multilateralism and the role of the United Nations. It also includes the following paragraph, which is the only reference to a UN agency in the Declaration.

28. We also agree to provide assistance to increase income generating employment opportunities taking into account the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

A copy of the full Declaration is attached as Appendix II.

ILO follow-up action

22. Integrating social, economic and environmental policies at the national and global level is an immense and complex undertaking. However, partly as a consequence of the Johannesburg Summit, it is now widely accepted as an urgent necessity. Pursuing the policies agreed at the Summit will have major implications for the work of the ILO and its constituents in the years ahead, requiring analysis of the employment and social effects of the changing policy framework needed to achieve the objectives set in Johannesburg. A key contribution in follow-up action by the ILO will be to stimulate social dialogue at the workplace, company, sectoral, national and international levels and to assist the management of change.
23. The scope and the structure of the overall implementation of the Johannesburg outcomes will evolve with the review processes undertaken by national governments, the General Assembly, United Nations system Secretariats and Governing Bodies, and the major groups. Several areas can be identified in which the ILO may wish to focus its review of possible ILO follow-up activities.
24. First, in view of the relevance for the ILO of the series of major United Nations global conferences over the past decade, the Office has made serious efforts to mainstream their outcomes within the ILO's own strategic objectives, through an integrated approach. As regards the Johannesburg Summit, it is also clear that its outcomes will need to be effectively linked and mainstreamed within the overall process of managing the ILO's contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It will also be necessary to take into account the linkages between the Doha process, follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Summit outcomes.
25. Within such a mainstreaming approach, there are two priority areas that may warrant special attention by the ILO and its tripartite constituency. First, the role of the ILO in mobilizing advice and support to ensure that employment and income generating opportunities become a fundamental component of poverty reduction strategies, plans and programmes. The ILO Global Employment Agenda already provides a framework for such an initiative, related to improving our understanding and policy responses to the complex and rapidly evolving interrelationship between employment and sustainable development. Particular attention might be given to the establishment of an effective global alliance for employment and sustainable development, as proposed in the Global Employment Agenda. This initiative could be linked to the ILO's commitment to youth employment and the ILO's special role within the United Nations Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network initiative in collaboration with the World Bank and the UN. This initiative would, as provided for in the Johannesburg Declaration, take into account the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
26. The second major priority opportunity for ILO follow-up action is to identify how the ILO and its constituents might help facilitate the management of change, which is expected to escalate rapidly as a result of new economic, technological and social initiatives related to promoting change in production and consumption patterns, particularly in industrialized countries, and in the protection and management of natural resources. Such changes are expected to lead to a revolution in the next ten to 20 years in what we produce, how we produce and what and how we consume, that will affect a very wide range of sectors including forestry, agriculture, mining, transport, energy, tourism, fisheries, construction, and manufacturing. In view of the ILO's tripartite structure, existing social dialogue expertise and mechanisms, including the programme of sectoral activities, the ILO may be able to play a useful role in facilitating dialogue between the social partners and others on the ways and means to manage such change in an economically, environmentally and socially responsible manner, that is, in a more sustainable way.

27. The Committee is invited to share its views regarding the priorities of governments, employers and workers concerning ILO follow-up action at all levels linked to the Johannesburg Summit that would strengthen their own capacity to deal with these matters in future. The Committee is also invited to consider how action might be undertaken by the ILO to mainstream follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit across the activities of the Organization, taking into account the resources available under the ILO's present and future programme and budgets and the possibility of extra-budgetary support.
28. *The Committee on Employment and Social Policy may also wish to recommend that the Governing Body invite the Director-General to develop proposals for ILO follow-up action related to the Johannesburg Summit for initial consideration by the Committee at its meeting in March 2003 drawing on the outcomes of the Summit, ILO participation in inter-agency coordination of follow-up, the discussions of the Committee, and appropriate consultations. Such follow-up action would include the relevant elements of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2004-05, in addition to identifying opportunities for extra-budgetary support.*

Geneva, 2 October 2002.

Point for decision: Paragraph 28

Appendix I

Statement by Mr. Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Office, to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 29 August 2002)

Mr. President, Ministers, distinguished delegates, dear friends,

This Summit has one simple question to answer: How can we make the next ten years more successful in terms of sustainable development, job creation, the fight against poverty and environmental degradation, than the ten years since Rio?

First, let's acknowledge that changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns, through environmentally friendly technologies, means a revolution in the way we work and in the things we make. The current generations will have to retool our whole economic system, particularly its fiscal policies.

A daunting challenge, yes, but also a massive opportunity for technological breakthroughs, investment, skills development, gender equality and decent work. In short, sustainable growth. And developing, especially African, countries will need access to the necessary resources. Water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity; we should start by concentrating on these priority areas proposed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Second, let's root such a strategy in the workplace. That's where many initiatives will ultimately succeed or fail. Managing change by close collaboration between governments and the real actors of the economy is vital. It is organized workers and employers, women and men, who will play the primary role in making the technological transition to sustainability. Through our Decent Work Agenda, the ILO is committed to using its long-standing experience in social dialogue and consensus building to facilitate these changes. That's why our three top officers from the Government, Employers' and Workers' groups are at this Summit.

Third, let's remember that it is through work – and work that is accomplished in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity – that people can rise out of poverty, earn a decent living and relate to society and the environment in a truly sustainable way. I welcome the recognition of this in the draft implementation plan. Active labour policies and a commitment to full employment are key instruments of poverty eradication, as we all agreed in the Social Summit.

Fourth, let's address the fact that the present form of globalization is exacerbating rather than bridging social divisions within and between countries. Many throughout the world are deeply disturbed, and downright angry, at the failure to reverse these trends. To humanize globalization, we need to build a strong synergy between social, environmental and economic perspectives. We need to develop our capacity for integrated thinking. And we must, we absolutely must, inject fairness and accountability into the international trading and financial systems. The fairness issue will not go away, it must be solved.

The ILO has established the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization to examine and report on these issues. The co-chairs, President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania and President Halonen of Finland, are holding a consultation meeting here with representatives of civil society.

Fifth, let's recognize that, if we are here today, it is because over the past 30 years, committed and concerned environmental activists have shaken up the establishment. They have moved sustainability from the margins to the mainstream of world politics. Within enterprises, trade unions, community organizations and all the major groups, there are now significant environmental initiatives, with at least some convergent ambitions.

I hope the Johannesburg Summit will help these forces drive forward Agenda 21 and maintain the pressure for essential, but sometimes uncomfortable, change. But we will need strong leadership in government to fully assume their own responsibilities.

Sixth, let's agree, "Business as Usual" is not an option. We have to be prepared to review, rethink and reorient the policies of the past.

South Africa is showing us the way. President Mbeki described the social divisions of the world today as a Global Apartheid. He went further, and compared the global mobilization needed for sustainable development with the response that drew the people of the world into the freedom struggle of the people of South Africa.

They succeeded and so must we. When we leave Johannesburg, let's all take with us some of their courage, conviction and confidence. It is a precious energy that should inspire us all. And all of you at this Conference who are fighting for a better world know full well that the energy of the struggle is a constantly renewable energy that ultimately makes change inevitable.

Appendix II

The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, 4 September 2002

From our origins to the future

1. We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa from 2 to 4 September 2002, reaffirm our commitment to sustainable development.
2. We commit ourselves to build a humane, equitable and caring global society cognizant of the need for human dignity for all.
3. At the beginning of this Summit, the children of the world spoke to us in a simple yet clear voice that the future belongs to them, and accordingly challenged all of us to ensure that through our actions they will inherit a world free of the indignity and indecency occasioned by poverty, environmental degradation and patterns of unsustainable development.
4. As part of our response to these children, who represent our collective future, all of us, coming from every corner of the world, informed by different life experiences, are united and moved by a deeply-felt sense that we urgently need to create a new and brighter world of hope.
5. Accordingly, we assume a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social development and environmental protection – at local, national, regional and global levels.
6. From this Continent, the Cradle of Humanity we declare, through the Plan of implementation and this Declaration, our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life and to our children.
7. Recognizing that humankind is at a crossroad, we have united in a common resolve to make a determined effort to respond positively to the need to produce a practical and visible plan that should bring about poverty eradication and human development.

From Stockholm to Rio de Janeiro to Johannesburg

8. Thirty years ago, in Stockholm, we agreed on the urgent need to respond to the problem of environmental deterioration. Ten years ago, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, we agreed that the protection of the environment, and social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development, based on the Rio Principles. To achieve such development, we adopted the global programme, Agenda 21, and the Rio Declaration, to which we reaffirm our commitment. The Rio Summit was a significant milestone that set a new agenda for sustainable development.
9. Between Rio and Johannesburg the world's nations met in several major conferences under the guidance of the United Nations, including the Monterrey Conference on Finance for Development, as well as the Doha Ministerial Conference. These conferences defined for the world a comprehensive vision for the future of humanity.
10. At the Johannesburg Summit we achieved much in bringing together a rich tapestry of peoples and views in a constructive search for a common path, towards a world that respects and implements the vision of sustainable development. Johannesburg also confirmed that significant progress has been made towards achieving a global consensus and partnership amongst all the people of our planet.

The challenges we face

11. We recognize that poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, and protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for sustainable development.

12. The deep fault line that divides human society between the rich and the poor and the ever-increasing gap between the developed and developing worlds pose a major threat to global prosperity, security and stability.
13. The global environment continues to suffer. Loss of biodiversity continues, fish stocks continue to be depleted, desertification claims more and more fertile land, the adverse effects of climate change are already evident, natural disasters are more frequent and more devastating and developing countries more vulnerable, and air, water and marine pollution continue to rob millions of a decent life.
14. Globalization has added a new dimension to these challenges. The rapid integration of markets, mobility of capital and significant increases in investment flows around the world have opened new challenges and opportunities for the pursuit of sustainable development. But the benefits and costs of globalization are unevenly distributed, with developing countries facing special difficulties in meeting this challenge.
15. We risk the entrenchment of these global disparities and unless we act in a manner that fundamentally changes their lives, the poor of the world may lose confidence in their representatives and the democratic systems to which we remain committed, seeing their representatives as nothing more than sounding brass or tinkling cymbals.

Our commitment to sustainable development

16. We are determined to ensure that our rich diversity, which is our collective strength, will be used for constructive partnership for change and for the achievement of the common goal of sustainable development.
17. Recognizing the importance of building human solidarity, we urge the promotion of dialogue and cooperation among the world's civilizations and peoples, irrespective of race, disabilities, religion, language, culture and tradition.
18. We welcome the Johannesburg Summit focus on the indivisibility of human dignity and are resolved through decisions on targets, timetables and partnerships to speedily increase access to basic requirements such as clean water, sanitation, adequate shelter, energy, health care, food security and the protection of biodiversity. At the same time, we will work together to assist one another to have access to financial resources, benefit from the opening of markets, ensure capacity building, use modern technology to bring about development, and make sure that there is technology transfer, human resource development, education and training to banish forever underdevelopment.
19. We reaffirm our pledge to place particular focus on, and give priority attention to, the fight against the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people. Among these conditions are: chronic hunger; malnutrition; foreign occupation; armed conflicts; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; natural disasters; illicit arms trafficking; trafficking in persons; terrorism; intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.
20. We are committed to ensure that women's empowerment and emancipation, and gender equality are integrated in all activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of implementation.
21. We recognize the reality that global society has the means and is endowed with the resources to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development confronting all humanity. Together we will take extra steps to ensure that these available resources are used to the benefit of humanity.
22. In this regard, to contribute to the achievement of our development goals and targets, we urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the internationally agreed levels of Official Development Assistance.
23. We reaffirm the vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development.
24. We welcome and support the emergence of stronger regional groupings and alliances, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to promote regional cooperation, improved international cooperation and promote sustainable development.

25. We shall continue to pay special attention to the developmental needs of small island developing states and the least developed countries.
26. We recognize sustainable development requires a long-term perspective and broad-based participation in policy formulation, decision-making and implementation at all levels. As social partners we will continue to work for stable partnerships with all major groups respecting the independent, important roles of each of these.
27. We agree that in pursuit of their legitimate activities, the private sector, both large and small companies, have a duty to contribute to the evolution of equitable and sustainable communities and societies.
28. We also agree to provide assistance to increase income generating employment opportunities, taking into account the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
29. We agree that there is a need for private sector corporations to enforce corporate accountability. This should take place within a transparent and stable regulatory environment.
30. We undertake to strengthen and improve governance at all levels, for the effective implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of implementation.

Multilateralism is the future

31. To achieve our goals of sustainable development, we need more effective, democratic and accountable international and multilateral institutions.
32. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter and international law as well as the strengthening of multilateralism. We support the leadership role of the United Nations as the most universal and representative organization in the world, which is best placed to promote sustainable development.
33. We further commit ourselves to monitor progress at regular intervals towards the achievement of our sustainable development goals and objectives.

Making it happen!

34. We are in agreement that this must be an inclusive process, involving all the major groups and governments that participated in the historic Johannesburg Summit.
35. We commit ourselves to act together, united by a common determination to save our planet, promote human development and achieve universal prosperity and peace.
36. We commit ourselves to the Johannesburg Plan of implementation and to expedite the achievement of the time-bound, socio-economic and environmental targets contained therein.
37. From the African continent, the Cradle of Humankind, we solemnly pledge to the peoples of the world, and the generations that will surely inherit this earth, that we are determined to ensure that our collective hope for sustainable development is realized.

We express our deepest gratitude to the people and the Government of South Africa for their generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.