



CSD-13 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 15 APRIL 2005

On Friday morning, delegates met in plenary to provide initial comments on the Chair's draft elements for CSD-13's negotiated decision, which had been distributed the previous day. On Friday afternoon, an informal session took place, with delegates commenting on the preambular section, the first two operative paragraphs, and the section on international institutional arrangements for follow-up of CSD-13 decisions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHAIR'S TEXT

On Friday morning, CSD-13 Chair John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) introduced text containing the Chair's draft elements for CSD's negotiated outcome, and invited opening comments from delegates. Many speakers welcomed the text as a useful starting point for negotiations, although a considerable number of speakers called for further details or elaboration on various issues.

The G-77/CHINA, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, the EU and LOCAL AUTHORITIES commented on the need to identify which actors, at all levels, are responsible for which tasks. NGOs called for a country-specific table of commitments, requested a focus on monitoring as a multi-level process, and said efforts to compel countries to adopt pro-privatization policies should be rejected.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY urged stronger text on the importance of access to water, sanitation, and quality human settlements, linkages with health issues, anti-corruption measures, multi-stakeholder dialogue, and enabling frameworks to encourage entrepreneurship. He also commented that the distinction between needs- and rights-based approaches was unnecessary. CHILDREN AND YOUTH asserted that a shift from a needs-based to a rights-based approach is essential, and also urged an emphasis on affordability, sustainability, and follow-up within the UN system, including a clear role for UNESCO. The EU, WOMEN, and NGOs supported a higher profile in the text for cross-cutting issues, while AUSTRALIA said adding to text on these issues could lead to reopening of the JPOI consensus. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, with NGOs, highlighted the importance of time-specific commitments and deadlines. She urged clear recognition of indigenous

peoples' rights and knowledge, and the need for governmental accountability and transparency. LOCAL AUTHORITIES and the EU said the text should address CSD's contribution to the Millennium Review Summit.

The US commended the text, and called on Chair Ashe to ensure that participants produce a final version that is "worthy" of a reformed CSD process. Tuvalu, speaking for the ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (AOSIS), suggested including a reference to the unique situation and needs of SIDS, as well as to the convening of regular meetings to review the Mauritius Strategy within the CSD format. He also called for more collaboration among MEAs. AUSTRALIA commended the Chair's draft as "groundbreaking" and, with CANADA, supported AOSIS on a SIDS review process. The SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITY called for text reflecting the knowledge generated through research, capacity building in science and technology, and education and training, suggesting that this be placed in a separate section.

WOMEN focused on the central role of women and the gender factor in achieving the goals and targets related to the CSD themes, and made specific suggestions on textual changes in the Chair's text, including new text calling for gender disaggregated data. NORWAY proposed including reference to national ownership, good governance, and donor coordination. TRADE UNIONS suggested including references to the role of workers in water issues, education and training, and occupational safety, and on the need for strong public sector involvement.

UGANDA suggested text on African regional initiatives on water and sanitation. ICELAND proposed referring to the Global Plan of Action for the Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution (GPA). SIERRA LEONE called for increased use of local expertise, as opposed to international consultants, and supported donor coordination.

Following these opening remarks from delegates on the text, Chair Ashe suggested negotiating on different sections of the draft in two parallel sessions. However, the G-77/CHINA indicated that it would prefer to have more time for internal consultations, while the EU preferred to consider the document in just one group rather than two. After informal consultations, Chair Ashe announced that negotiations would begin later in the day in one group.

**FIRST READING OF THE CHAIR'S TEXT**

On Friday afternoon, delegates addressed the Chair's draft elements for decision. After an initial discussion and brief consultations on how the session should be organized, CSD Vice-Chair Khaled Elbakly (Egypt) announced that an informal session would convene immediately to undertake a first reading of the text, and invited delegates to indicate their alterations or amendments. Delegates then went through the text, starting with the preambular paragraphs, the first two operative paragraphs, and the section on international institutional arrangements for follow-up of CSD-13 decisions.

PREAMBULAR SECTION: Delegates offered a number of comments on the preambular section. This section recalls earlier decisions and internationally-agreed goals. The G-77/CHINA proposed additions to reaffirm several past commitments and principles. The EU agreed on the need for this reiteration, suggesting specific language on the JPOI, the MDGs, and general contextual information, including text on the mandate to contribute to the upcoming Millennium Review Summit. MEXICO and NORWAY agreed with the suggestion to recall these commitments, with MEXICO adding the UNEP Water Strategy to the list. However, the US stated that reiteration of many of these items was unnecessary, noting that it was comfortable with the preambular text as it stands.

The G-77/CHINA also suggested acknowledging that many countries will be unable to meet targets without "drastic" changes and identifying major implementation constraints. NORWAY proposed adding an affirmation that, if sufficient effort is made, targets are achievable. The US suggested characterizing the relevant goals as "internationally-agreed development goals, including those in the Millennium Declaration." He also proposed referring to the Millennium Review Summit as the "high-level plenary event," as contained in the resolution of the General Assembly, and suggested referencing the matrix developed out of the recent CSD Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM). The EU proposed numerous amendments, including adding language noting that progress on CSD-13's key themes underpins the attainability of the other MDGs.

OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS: A number of delegates also offered comments on the first two operative paragraphs, which precede the section of the text on water. The opening operative paragraph emphasizes: the linkages between water, sanitation and human settlements; governments' primary responsibility to ensure access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation, housing and related services; the need to integrate measures to achieve the MDGs and JPOI goals into poverty reduction strategies and national sustainable development strategies; and the fact that increased financial resources, debt relief, technical cooperation, technology transfer and capacity building will be essential in meeting the targets. The second paragraph identifies the stakeholders that must take action, including governments, the UN system, international financial institutions and other international organizations.

The EU suggested text emphasizing sustainability, land tenure, the need for donor coordination, IWRM, and good governance at all levels. SWITZERLAND suggested adding a reference to access to basic services for the poor, NORWAY to poverty reduction, and ICELAND to the GPA. The US suggested adding text on technology transfer "consistent with

international obligations," and specifying alternative language on "access to housing." He proposed language that would refer to the UN system in the context of "existing resources and voluntary contributions." The RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed taking into account national and other "specificities." AUSTRALIA suggested adding reference to trade liberalization and partnerships.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOLLOW-UP OF CSD-13 DECISIONS:

Several delegates made suggestions on this section, with the EU and the G-77/CHINA referring to their extensive textual proposals that they had submitted, and TUVALU adding a reference to the Mauritius Strategy review process. The US requested that the Secretariat provide guidance on the relationship between UNDESA and UN Water, and suggested text regarding reporting procedures and reaching out to others within the UN system. The EU tabled text on CSD-13's contribution to the Millennium Summit Review. ICELAND, the G-77/CHINA, MEXICO, AUSTRALIA and JAPAN also provided written contributions. SWITZERLAND and NORWAY proposed corrections related to the role and mandates of agencies and programmes. CANADA added text to ensure high-level participation in the follow-up review process.

Closing the meeting, Vice-Chair Husniyya Mammadova (Azerbaijan) indicated that a plenary session would be held on Monday morning, with the expectation that it might subsequently break into two parallel negotiating sessions.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The pressure seemed to rise on Friday as CSD-13 entered its negotiating stage. With Friday morning's preliminary exchange of views showing some divisions over the text, many delegates were suggesting that negotiations were likely to be complex and protracted. In particular, some thought that a desire on the part of the G-77/China and others to add various elements to the section on cross-cutting issues and on other matters might not sit well with other delegations such as the US, which seemed fairly comfortable with the text in its current form.

Tensions also rose over whether to hold just one negotiating session or two parallel sessions, with both the G-77/China and the EU apparently surprising many participants with their preference to keep the talks in just one group. There was also some discussion in the corridors about the EU's insistence on new text about CSD-13's contribution to the Millennium Review Summit—a proposal that initially elicited a lukewarm response from a few other groups.

With relatively modest progress made on Friday and so many issues on the table, few observers seemed willing to bet on an early finish to the negotiating stage of CSD-13's work. Several participants even joked that a technical problem at the start of Friday afternoon's negotiations, when the large projection screen used to show drafting progress suddenly collapsed, was a bad omen. To add to the uncertainty, some delegates left the session on Friday apparently confused about the negotiating procedure and how the session on Monday would be organized. "We could be in for a late night on Tuesday," predicted a delegate.