

– *Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 26 August - 4 September 2002) - Council conclusions*

In view of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the Council held a wide-ranging debate focusing on the outcome of the fourth meeting of the Preparatory Committee in Bali (27 May - 7 June 2002) and the strategy on the way forward up to Johannesburg. The Council was unanimous for the EU to continue to be proactive, to show leadership and to take all necessary initiatives in view of bridging the gaps and making the Summit a success, while defending the EU's position and convictions.

The Council subsequently adopted the following conclusions setting out the EU's position to be forwarded to the Seville European Council, which should convey a strong political message to the Johannesburg Summit.

"THE COUNCIL:

1. REITERATES that all development should be sustainable and, to this end, the WSSD must be seen as part of a process in the search for a Global Deal encompassing also the Doha Development Agenda, the Monterrey Consensus and the World Food Summit Five Years Later. The Council stresses the importance of the international community's renewed commitment to the Rio Principles and Agenda 21, to Rio + 5 and to the internationally agreed development goals and targets, in particular those contained in the Millennium Declaration and in all major UN Conferences and international agreements since 1992.
2. RECALLS the Council Conclusions of 30 May 2002 on the External Dimension of the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy and for the Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Council Conclusions of 4 March 2002 on the Preparation of WSSD and the External Dimension of the EU Strategy on Sustainable Development, the Council conclusions of 14 March 2002 on the UN Conference on Financing for Development, both endorsed by the Barcelona European Council of 15-16 March 2002, and the ECOFIN Common Views for the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development of 4 June 2002.

3. EMPHASISES that, in accordance with the aforementioned Conclusions of 30 May 2002, the EU wishes to express its determination to exercise leadership and to continue playing a major role in global efforts to eradicate poverty and to achieve sustainable development at all levels, integrating its economic, social and environmental dimensions in a balanced and mutually supportive way. By the same token, it stresses the need for improved coherence between internal and external policies of the EU, as well as between policy areas, and to encourage reform of subsidies that have considerable negative effects on the environment and are incompatible with sustainable development.
4. STRESSES the EU is willing to putting forward constructive proposals so that WSSD becomes a success. The EU is determined to ensure that WSSD outcomes (Political Declaration, Plan of Implementation, and Voluntary Partnerships) are mutually supportive and focused in terms of reinforced commitments by all countries, as well as international institutions, civil society and business.
5. WELCOMES the identification by the UN Secretary General of five priorities for the Summit (water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity).
6. TAKES note of the results of the IV Prepcom in Bali, in which progress was made in the negotiation of the Plan of Implementation, and that consensus has been reached on many of the relevant issues for sustainable development although there remain some key outstanding issues in the draft Plan of Implementation for the World Summit. It welcomes the fact that countries' positions are getting closer on the following aspects: work programmes, including targets and timeframes to eradicate poverty, sustainability of consumption and production patterns, conservation and sustainable management of natural and environmental resources, including biodiversity and oceans, and strengthening institutional arrangements, including international environmental governance. It also welcomes the open and frank discussions held in the multi-stakeholder dialogue which contribute to ensuring the full implementation of sustainable development. The EU appeals to all countries to make concrete efforts towards bridging the remaining differences in the commitments of the international community.
7. CONSIDERS that the Plan of Implementation to be finalised in Johannesburg should be consistent in terms of work programmes, targets and frameworks, means of implementation, ensure that it is also consistent with the full and timely implementation of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus, contain a strong commitment to the respect of human rights and cultural diversity; recognition of the importance of strengthening governance for sustainable development at all levels, in particular, international environmental governance, including public participation; targets and timeframes (and related policies), especially on sanitation and renewables, as well as on loss of natural resources, reversal of fish stock depletion, biodiversity loss and chemicals.

8. UNDERLINES that globalisation should be treated in a specific chapter in Johannesburg and be addressed in a manner that helps make it work for sustainable development and ensures that it benefits and creates new opportunities for all, especially the poorest. There is a need to recognise that all individuals, in present and future generations, are entitled to live in an environment adequate for their health and cultural, economic and physical well being in harmony with nature. The EU wishes to stress the need for renewed commitment and responsibility and recalls that sustainable development is an overarching aim for the international community.
9. RECOGNISES that the achievement of Millennium Development Goals requires a substantially increased effort and good governance by individual countries and by the international community as a whole. It recalls the commitments made by the EU in the Council conclusions on the UN Conference on Financing for Development, agreed by Foreign Ministers on 14 March and endorsed by the European Council in Barcelona¹, to significantly increase its overall ODA spending, which paved the way for decisions in Johannesburg on the channelling of strengthened development assistance to promote poverty eradication, sustainable development and the integration of developing economies into the global system. While ODA can play a significant role as a catalyst, other private or public sources of funding should be included in the EU initiatives so as to accelerate change and maximise the benefit to developing countries.
10. STRESSES that the Political Declaration to be adopted in the Johannesburg Summit should include a renewed commitment to sustainable development. The EU position should stress the need to bridge the gap between rhetoric and action in line with the Plan of Implementation. WSSD is an exceptional occasion for reaching a global partnership to work towards general prosperity, peace and security, based on good governance, including democracy, respect for human rights, rule of law, fighting corruption and terrorism, gender equality, sound environmental, social and economic policies, respect for and promotion of cultural diversity and dialogue between civilisations, including with indigenous peoples, being all of them necessary foundations of sustainable development.

¹ § 13 of the Presidency conclusions from the Barcelona European Council: "... in pursuance of the undertaking to examine the means and timeframe that will allow each of the Member States to reach the UN goal of 0.7% ODA/GNI, those Member States that have not yet reached the 0.7% target commit themselves – as a first significant step – individually to increasing their ODA volume in the next four years within their respective budget allocation processes, whilst the other Member States renew their efforts to remain at or above the target of 0.7% ODA, so that collectively a European Union average of 0.39% is reached by 2006. In view of this goal, all the European Union Member States will in any case strive to reach, within their respective budget allocation processes, at least 0.33% ODA/GNI by 2006. ..."

11. STRESSES that in its 30 May Conclusions the EU has decided to make a strong contribution to a positive outcome of the WSSD by taking a further step in the definition of its Sustainable Development Strategy, in particular to its external dimension, and by identifying a specific set of key priorities for action at the WSSD. These priorities include, where appropriate, specific EU initiatives for partnerships. The EU moreover will continue to work on possible other areas, such as governance, and confirms that the EU remains open to discuss proposals which could be made by partners or which could emerge from the international debate until Johannesburg. The EU supports initiating, at the Summit, a process to strengthen sustainable development governance.
12. CONSIDERS that voluntary partnership initiatives should be grounded in the Plan of Implementation and the Political Declaration in order to promote an additional participatory framework that contributes to their effective implementation and thereby help achieve the further implementation of Agenda 21, Millennium Development Goals and the outcomes of the major UN Conferences and international agreements since 1992. Taking into account that ownership is a precondition for their success, these initiatives should be implemented in the framework of National Sustainable Development Strategies such as where applicable Poverty Reduction Strategies, with special attention paid to Africa.
13. STRESSES its willingness to initiate a dialogue with potential partners in accordance with the guiding principles on the partnerships of sustainable development, which it endorses. The Commission will continue consultations in that regard. The EU recalls that the development of partnerships must be driven by the priorities identified by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in support of their future development. They should build on existing institutions and structures and in particular identify the benefits to be achieved through regional co-operation such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).
14. STRESSES the importance of monitoring and follow up of the WSSD commitments, including those made in the framework of voluntary partnership initiatives, linked to the follow up of Doha and Monterrey."