



## **FINAL REPORT**

### **Major Groups and Stakeholders Preparatory Meeting**

### **Open Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (OE CPR)**

*February 14, 2016 in Nairobi*



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## OPENING AND WELCOME

**FACILITATED BY NORINE KENNEDY, USCIB, BUSINESS & INDUSTRY MAJOR GROUP**

- Introduction and congratulations to new Co-Chairs of UNEP Major Groups Facilitating Committee (MGFC):
  - Calvin James, Farmers Major Group
  - Leida Rijnhout, NGOs Major Group
  - Susana Rivero Baughman, Local Authorities Major Group
- Review of meeting objectives:
  - To be informed and understand OE CPR substance and process in order to engage productively
  - Share perspectives on issues to be covered in the coming week and at UNEA2, including with government representatives
  - Discuss how to inform CPR and UNEA2 deliberations
- Main Points:
  - UNEA2 will be the first major inter-governmental sustainability meeting since COP21 and will set the tone for priorities and implementation of the international sustainability agenda.
  - Success of 2015 outcomes was due in substantial part to engagement of Major Groups and Stakeholders, and this will be true for UNEA2 as well



**Amb. Julia Pataki, Romania and Chair, CPR; Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP**

- Main Points:
  - Major groups and stakeholders are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to attend CPR meetings, offering interventions with concrete recommendations and speaking to government representatives. Major Groups and Stakeholders can observe meetings of CPR Subcommittees also.
  - The success of UNEA2 depends on the involvement and contributions of Major Groups and Stakeholders. Major Groups and Stakeholders have resources at their disposal that can support and amplify UNEP's work and effectiveness, and they themselves are key actors for implementation. Major Groups and Stakeholders are part of UNEP's founding and history.
  - Major Groups and Stakeholders can engage on issues without the same political constraints that governments can face.
  - The history and culture of UNEP is strongly connected with cooperation and involvement of major groups and stakeholders. Major Groups and stakeholders and their self-organization is welcomed and appreciated.
  - Deliberations to resolve outstanding issues to reach agreement on the UNEP stakeholder Policy continue, with the aim to conclude at UNEA2.
  - Responding to the refugee and migration crisis is a high priority for governments. There are draft resolutions relating to conflict and environment aspects. UNEP seeks to provide information to governments on addressing environmental root causes and planning for environmental impacts. Healing the refugee crisis depends on addressing environmental factors that contributed to the cause for migration and that will be encountered upon return and recovery (scarcity of natural resources, energy poverty, etc).
  - Challenges ahead:
    - Integrated approach to SDGs; achieving one SDG should not be at the expense of another
    - Climate action, notable decarbonization
    - Decoupling economic growth from negative environmental impact while tackling toxics, waste, marine litter, circular economy
    - Ecosystem protection through biodiversity and CITES



- Implementation is a major challenge – public and private sectors need to increase investments and take decisions about where to disinvestment

#### **Comments from Major Groups & Stakeholders**

- It is important to pursue coherence between UNEP, UNEA2 and Habitat3, particularly in referring to the role of local authorities.
- Major Groups and Stakeholders, particularly regional representatives have direct experience with impacts of the refugee crisis from the standpoint of environment.

## **PREPARING FOR THE OECPR MEETING:**

**FACILITATED BY LEIDA RIJNHOUT, CO-CHAIR, MGFC AND NGO MAJOR GROUP**



#### **Guest Speakers: Jorge Laguna Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies, UNEP**

- UNEP is mapping the environment dimensions of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN 2030 Agenda has implications for changes to institutional frameworks for sustainable development, and UNEA2 should explore such new possibilities.
- UNEP strives to bring forward the best scientific information to policy makers, and in support of thematic reviews of the SDGs
- Stakeholders should express what they would like to see from UNEP in terms of deliverables. As UNEP seeks to broaden awareness of engagement to the world community of civil society, the website, MyUNEA.org has been an important vehicle for citizen involvement.
- Major Groups and Stakeholder representatives should seek to meet with the UNEA2 President during OE CPR, both on status of the UNEP stakeholder engagement policy and on the multi-stakeholder dialogue planned for UNEA2.
- Healthy Environment, Healthy people is a global thematic report which when final will be the focus of a ministerial discussion at UNEA2
- UNEP's Medium Term Strategy is being aligned with the SDGs, and includes many multi-stakeholder partnerships. In that regard, major groups and stakeholders are central to implementation.

- Others issues for consideration:
  - how UNEA will relate to other UN assemblies, such as the World Health Assembly
  - modalities of the multi stakeholder dialogue during UNEA2
- Major groups and stakeholders should engage with the UNEA President

### **Comments from Major Groups and Stakeholders**

Major Groups and Stakeholders underscored the importance of coherence and consistency across stakeholder engagement policy and practice at the UN in New York, Nairobi and elsewhere in the UN system. Several Major Groups and stakeholders are active in multiple forums, and have experienced the challenges of inconsistent policies.



### **Speaker: Jan Gustav Strandenaes, Stakeholder Forum**

- Major Groups and Stakeholders are encouraged to review key UN documents and resolutions laying out stakeholder procedures and involvement in ECOSOC, the Rio+20 outcomes, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the High Level Political Forum and UNEP
- After intense activity and important outcomes of 2015, UNEP and UNEA2 are on the threshold of a new framework and work program, and major groups and stakeholders should be part of that conversation to offer their ideas.
- In discussion, and pending resolution of the UNEA cycle, it was suggested to schedule GMGSF meetings on “off-UNEA” years to gather timely and substantive suggestions from Major Groups and Stakeholders for OE CPR and UNEA sessions.

### Presentations by Major Groups and Stakeholders on Policy Priorities:

**Environmental Aspects of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** – Rhoda Boateng, Trade Unions Major Group and Olga Pozinova, European Regional Representative

#### Rhoda Boateng, Trade Unions Major Group

The 2030 Sustainable Development agenda brings together a strong, comprehensive list of objectives that link environmental sustainability and social development. The union movement has indeed mobilized for the past two

years to ensure decent work as well as ambitious solutions to tackling inequality such as social protection, which are factored in the agenda.

But our interests are not limited to those.

For the past years, and even more, taking the case of the Paris Climate conference, trade unions have mobilized under the banner “there are no jobs on a dead planet”, making clear that our ambition of achieving decent work for all and equal opportunities and a dignified life for everyone would remain a dream if we are not able to collectively address environmental degradation, including climate change, biodiversity loss, chemical pollution, among other threats. Millions of workers and their families are already paying the price with their lives and health of pollution, adding also a burden to health systems; jobs are being lost due to the aggravation of extreme weather events, and the list could go on for hours.

The trade union movement therefore sees the need to make substantial progress on so-called environmental goals and will work hard to ensure those are not forgotten when it comes to implementation. This is not to say that any policy would be acceptable.

Policies which must be put in place to achieve environmental goals must not be developed in isolation from the rest. We are more than even convinced that the success and social support for those environmental goals will come from their integration to job creation, social justice, women and youth empowerment just to mention a few cross-cutting elements.

Importantly, currently governments have agreed to the need not to go beyond 2°C average temperature increase, and even aim to 1.5°C. The only way to achieve those goals is to undertake deep transformations in our production and consumption systems. But those transformations can affect communities differently depending on the way they are designed. A massive, immediate increase in energy prices might lead to emission reductions –basically because millions would not be in a position to afford energy and would then cut consumption. Or you could shut down all fossil based power utilities and leave thousands of workers unemployed. This is not what we want. We think we can plan for a Just Transition, encourage companies to diversify their portfolios and assume the need to re-train their workers, and orient public resources for supporting communities which depend of polluting sites. We can make environmental goals positive for social goals. This way we will also win the hearts of working people.

On the questions of chemicals, progress to be made on sustainable management of chemicals depends on our capacity to connect this issue which is often treated as “for experts” to what it means: that millions are today being exposed in their workplaces and homes to substances that we know can cause cancer or other diseases. Securing more rights for workers to know what they handle, for ensuring prevention policies are put in place, for them to be able to reject dangerous work, or for fighting new regulations at the national level are critical tools for advancing this target. It shows that the realisation of this objective needs that some elements of the “social” agenda are secured as well.

Goal 8 on decent work already features as potential indicator for the decoupling of growth from environmental degradation, highlighting the importance of the world of work in increasing resource productivity; it also points out to the importance of securing health and safety at work. But all those will certainly have more strength if the global environmental community feels these are also yours, and not just a trade union business. We would have also liked to see commitments to grow decent jobs in renewable energies or other emerging sectors such as the circular economy. They will remain our demands.

The international trade union movement is already working for these goals to be owned by each country, each union. All our efforts will certainly go in the direction of ensuring we make environmental goals also ours.

## COP21 Paris Agreement:

The Paris Climate Agreement committed to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and keep the temperature as far below 2 degrees as possible.

This will require industrial transformation that is deeper and faster than at any time in our history. Protecting those who will face change, sharing innovation and technology, strengthening skills, are all at the heart of raising ambitions in every nation.

The Paris agreement also confirmed the world's government commitment to ensure that this transition would be a 'just transition'.

Projected investment in infrastructure is some \$7 trillion per year. This creates jobs. However, there is also job displacement to be expected. Handling this requires social dialogue to be in place as well as developing just transition funds to secure workers' pensions, skills upgrading, redeployment and economic renewal in vulnerable communities.

Securing financing for developing countries to accelerate their implementation of the SDG and climate commitments is critical for meeting global targets.

## Climate Change:

Isis Alvarez, Women's Major Group; Yunus Arian, Local Authorities, and Fazal Issa, Regional Representative from Africa

### Isis Alvarez:

While the others might want us to move forward with the process, the Women and Gender Constituency provided a reality check.

So, what does it really mean to promote an effective implementation of a weak agreement? We are talking about a binding legal document that doesn't recognize historical responsibilities and continues to undermine the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; hence, it lets countries decide how much longer and how they still want to continue to pollute, leaving all commitments to weak voluntary Intended National Determined Contributions (INDCs).

It is true that Parties to the UNFCCC committed to maintain a global average temperature below 1.5°C but they failed to recognize and understand that in some areas such as Islands States, this 'limit' has been exceeded already by far and that it is already too late. The latest IPCC report says that doubling of greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere compared to what they were in 1750 will likely result in warming between 1.5°C to 4.5°C. Scientists haven't managed to narrow this down since the IPCC was first set up. So, if the low figure is true, really radical action could limit warming to less than 1.5°C but if it's the medium or higher figure then there's no chance at all. For the Women and Gender Constituency, seeing this goal on paper is not enough. We demand it in actions as the proof of full commitment to that goal, not vague aspirations.

Thus, *'making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilient development'* will result highly difficult especially in light of the corporate take over of the climate negotiations; the quality of and a goal for scaling up adequate and predictable, largely public finance which is highly needed, lost a lot of political strength while business interests that have lobbied hard in our home countries will be the first to benefit from the agreement as it fundamentally does not address the needs of the most vulnerable countries, communities and people of the world. It fails to address the structures of injustice and inequality which have caused the climate crisis and hold the historical polluters sufficiently to account. What happened in Paris was that governments maintained their commitment to corporations over people and signaled opportunities for profit to be made from crisis. The Green Climate Fund – for instance - is increasingly being captured by multilateral development banks and international private entities with poor track records. The lack of transparency and preponderance of big banks and international entities over national and sub-national entities blatantly defies the GCF mandate of being more responsive to the needs of vulnerable developing countries and communities.

What is left unclear in the Paris Agreement is how soon will the international community and specifically the world's rich countries succeed in raising the estimated 100 billion dollars per year needed by 2020? Paragraph 54 on the agreement means no money on the table prior to 2020, just intention of mobilisation. In Cancun, Parties had agreed to developed countries mobilising USD 100 billion per year by 2020. With the Paris Agreement, a five-year extension has been granted in order to reach this target and a new quantified goal will be set for the period after 2025.

The Women and Gender Constituency has long argued that climate finance should come from taxing the highest 1% of emitters. A tax on high emitters of between 5-10% would provide at least USD 150 billion per year. Funds can also be derived from harmful industries. 80% of GHG emissions are caused by the burning of fossil fuels and the subsidies to this sector accounts for USD 5.3 trillion a year. Redirecting these subsidies prioritizing women and the poor could anchor a transformative shift.

Besides, a common understanding on what entails truly 'sustainable energy' is urgently needed. Currently, 'clean' energy sources allow dirty energies like large-scale wood-based bioenergy to be recognized as a 'renewable' energy source, and even harmful hydropower also enters the category. But what does an innovative' large hydropower dam means for an entire ecosystem? What does the establishment of a single 500,000volt tower in a rural area means to people, plants, animals, soil organisms and water sources? We are sure that there are real solutions out there such as solar and wind-power, and that genuine transformation to a low carbon society

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