

OUTREACH 1997

Countdown to Earth Summit II

Vol. 1 No. 5
Tuesday, 25 February 1997

CSDI SPECIAL EDITION

THE CSD INTERSESSIONAL BEGINS!

AT A GLANCE

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WELCOME

Dear Friends

This is the first issue of 'Outreach 1997' during the CSD intersessional and as such, there is much to cover so we will keep our welcome brief. Close to 200 NGOs have been accredited to this intersessional meeting - a little more than 40 registered yesterday. Unfortunately, there are few Asian and Latin Americans and even fewer Africans. Roughly 70% of the NGOs come from the North. The good news is that seemingly all NGO delegations have a very good gender balance.

Already, 90 NGOs have registered for CSD5 in April while more than 800 are expected to participate.

The NGOs got off to a good start. Over the weekend, they worked on a joint NGO statement with a number of recommendations for action to the Heads of State. A summary of this statement is presented in this issue. The complete document can be obtained in Conference Room C.

The CSD NGO Steering Committee will convene every morning throughout the Intersessional from 9:15- 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room C.

So, we welcome those who could travel to New York for this meeting and hope to keep well informed those who could not.

Esmeralda Brown & Michael McCoy
Co-Chairs of the CSD NGO Steering Committee

NOTE: Meeting space is available on a first come, first served basis. To book a room, contact NGLS by 4:00 p.m. the day prior to your meeting

NGLS: tel: 963-3125; fax: 963-8712.

MEETING CALENDAR

locations for some events have not been finalized. Please check posting outside Conference Room 4 on day of event.

DAILY MEETINGS:

9:15 a.m. Conf. Room C
CSD NGO Steering Committee

TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY:

10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Conf. Room 6
Informal consultations organized by the Vice-Chairman of the CSD Mr. Paul de Jongh on streamlining national reporting in preparation for the Fifth Session of the CSD.

1:00-2:45 p.m. check venue at Conf. 4
Briefing on Rio +5, Organized by Earth Council
Contact: Earth Council

1:15-2:45 p.m. Conf. Room 6
Presentation on the UNDP Energy Report

WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY:

1:15-2:45 p.m. Conf. Room 6
Presentation on national Agenda 21 implementation organized by Capacity 21 UNDP

2:30 p.m. Conf. Room C
WOMEN'S CAUCUS, Organized by WEDO

6:15 to 7:30 p.m. Conf. Room 6
UNESCO presentation, Chapter 36 of Agenda 21
Contact: UNESCO

THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY:

1:15-2:15 p.m. check venue at Conf. 4
Presentation of the first Global Environment Outlook report by UNEP

1:15-2:45 p.m. check venue at Conf. 4
Panel on Emerging Issues - Signals for the Future
Organized by the NGO Committee on Aging

6:00 p.m. Conf. Room C
TRANSPORTATION CAUCUS

FRIDAY, 28 FEBRUARY:

1:15-2:45 p.m. check venue at Conf. 4
Briefing by the GEF Secretariat on how NGOs can work with the GEF

OUTREACH '97
CSD NGO Steering Committee

World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)

Editors
Jan-Gustav Strandenaes
Sharon McHale
David Fingrut

OUTREACH 1997
Please send material/enquiries to

Jan-Gustav Strandenaes
Fax (212) 963-0447
Tel (212) 963-5610
E-mail: wfuna@undp.org

NEWS FROM THE CONFERENCE ROOM

SOME NGO REACTIONS TO U.S. AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON'S STATEMENT TO THE CSD INTERSESSIONAL:

Greenpeace:

"Unfortunately, Ambassador Richardson's statement overemphasized the accomplishments that have their roots in the Rio Earth Summit. There are successes, but they are few and far between in comparison to the failures by governments and industry in making real, noteworthy progress in improving the health of the planet and its inhabitants. As UNEP's recent Global Environment Outlook makes clear, almost all the basic indicators show that environmental degradation is worsening. Political will is lacking, and what is needed now by the United States and other industrialized and developing country governments is "real world" implementation of far-reaching targets and timetable that really make a difference."

*Comment by Clif Curtis,
Greenpeace International*

The Citizen's Network:

"As a U.S. based NGO who has followed the 'Rio Process' since 1989, we are pleased to hear Ambassador Richardson's recognition of the importance of Agenda 21. He in fact mentioned it five or six times in his short statement.

However, we are interested to learn from the U.S. whether these numerous references mean that the U.S. is finally committing to creating the necessary mechanisms at the national and local levels to implement Agenda 21.

This would be a welcome change, given that the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development was never intended to be a functioning follow-up mechanism, producing rather a single report in 1996."

*Comment by Angela Harkavy,
The Humane Society (US) & The Citizens
Network for Sustainable Development*

RIO GRINDS

overheard at the coffee bar

"What role will the Global Governance Report have in influencing the new UN Reform Czar Maurice Strong (is this a contradiction?) The report had recommendation on UN downsizing and a "Civil Society Forum" - perhaps seen by many of the NGOs as an out of date concept.

Is Mostafa Tolba's presence here confirmation of his ascendance to the chair of CSD5?

Is the selection of the UNEP Governing Council date for April 1st to be taken seriously? Or will UNEP's new Governance model be an April Fools Joke?

Is Agenda for Development where some of the key decisions on Sustainable Development are being made? Is this why NGOs are not allowed to attend and participate? Where is the transparency, governments!

NGOs have not yet reached a consensus on which English language countries wrote the Columbia Statement.

Ambassador Bill Richardson's speech to the CSDI, though interesting perhaps, should have been cut due to the lack of payment by the US to the UN.

Should US proposals for a 20% cut in US dues to the UN be accompanied by a 20% cut in speaking rights?

Rumor has it that the G77 have been seen revisiting a shrink for advice on multi-personality disorder....."

The **Steering Committee** has a web page. <http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/csd-97>
There is also a general list server for those interested it is csdgen@undp.org just send a message to be added to it.

The complete NGO statement referred to under "UPDATE" will be posted on the web site in a couple of days.

UPDATE...

excerpts from the NGO statement

The NGOs decided on the following introduction: "We are a group of local, national, regional and global NGOs who have

monitored and supported the CSD since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, and who are active in advancing the goals of Agenda 21 and other Rio agreements.

The vision that drew us to Rio continues to guide our efforts and energize our actions -- that the Earth in all its integral and interdependent life support systems must be sustained and its regenerative powers guaranteed for the present and all future generations --, and that the human communities true basic needs and all life activities must be fulfilled in relation to the carrying capacity of local and global ecosystems.

Despite the progress that has been made since the Earth Summit, sustainable development -- that over arching framework encompassing ecological protection, social development, and economic equity -- has not been achieved. Nor is any systematic means of monitoring progress in place. Accountability, renewed efforts and increased funding are urgently needed. Action, not words, should be the rallying cry at the Special Session / Earth Summit II.

In particular, we NGOs recommend the following actions: protect eco-systems; provide full support for sustainability; promote sustainable communities and societies; strengthen participatory institutions and decision making."

The NGOs then went on to give recommendations for action on more than 30 areas related to environment and development:

Sectoral Issues: Climate Change; Forests; Chemicals; Oceans; Energy; Transport; Food Security; **Cross Sectoral Issues:** Airfuel; New Financial Mechanisms; Aid; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Trade; Poverty; Small Island Developing States; Education; Corporate Accountability; Local Agenda 21; Fresh Water; Indicators; Tourism; **Institutional Issues:** DPCSD; UNEP; Reporting; Chair Elections; High-level segments; CSD Agenda 1998-2001; Earth Summit III; Integrated Monitoring; Co-ordination; High-level Advisory Board.; HABITAT; **Major Groups:** Dialogues; NGO Access to Earth Summit II; Indigenous; Gender.