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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION: LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 13 July 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the joint summary of the Oslo Conference on Sustainable Development, held at Oslo on 9 and 10 July 1988, and to enclose to this summary.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for these documents to be distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under item 62 (g) of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Erik TELLMANN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Joint summary of the Oslo Conference on Sustainable Development

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive heads of 22 United Nations organisations and members of the World Commission on Environment and Development met in Oslo on 9 and 10 July 1988 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Chairman of the World Commission on Environment and Development, to explore how the United Nations system can promote sustainable development by enhancing global economic growth and social development as recommended by the World Commission on Environment and Development.
2. The gravest problems facing the world today, beside the threat of nuclear war, are the deterioration of the environment and its link with poverty and the bleak prospects for development. The growing interdependence between countries and the close interlinkages between issues present new challenges to international co-operation and to the partnership between Governments and the multilateral institutions.
3. The participants agreed with the Commission that the objectives for environment and development policies must include preserving peace, securing growth on a sustainable basis and eradicating poverty as a prerequisite to preserving the environment and to achieving sustainable development.
4. It was recalled that the General Assembly last year unanimously welcomed the report of the World Commission and set in motion a follow-up process for the entire United Nations system. The participants reaffirmed that sustainable development is a common objective of the United Nations system, including the financial institutions.
5. The participants noted that the failure of some countries to make full payment of their assessed contributions to the United Nations system was impairing its ability to respond most effectively to the environmental crises.
6. The participants identified the following priority issues for United Nations action on sustainable development towards the year 2000 and beyond: developing human resources and fully integrated population policies; protecting the atmosphere and the global climate, ocean and water resources; halting desertification and countering deforestation; controlling dissemination of dangerous wastes and aiming at the elimination of such wastes; increasing technology co-operation; controlling soil erosion and the loss of species; and, above all, securing economic growth, social justice and a more equitable distribution of income and resources within and among countries as means for alleviating poverty.
7. To achieve these goals a new global ethic is needed based on equity, accountability and human solidarity - solidarity with present and future generations - rather than on the tyranny of the immediate.

8. A more equitable economic and political partnership between developing and developed countries calls for a genuine dialogue among all countries. Global issues require global solutions based on global consultations.

9. The participants are convinced that a wider pattern of co-operation at the highest level is needed. It is time to restore the process that stopped halfway in Cancún, Mexico.

10. The participants agreed that debt relief, increased financial flows, and commodity earnings • □ necessary for developing countries to prevent over-use of limited natural resources. Both industrialised and developing countries have to undertake necessary structural adjustments respectful of human considerations.

11. They underlined in particular that poverty alleviation and • nvironmoatal preservation can be made cost-effective components of development plans and programmes and should not be considered as • trgonirtio with development itself.

12. Only through • ffootivo co-ordination and integration, on the national, regional and global levels, can a mutually reinforcing partnership between Governments and the multilateral organisations be • ahiovrđ. To this end Governments rhould • Stablišh a coherent national and foreign policy for sustainable development, boating in mind the medium- and long-term perspective.

13. The agencies of the United Nations system, including the financial institutions and the regional commissions, will furthrr develop compatible policies and • Stablišh common targets as well as a common data base. A Task Force to provide a framework and overall guidance for the system-wide • otivitiar • im8đ at sustainable development will be • rtrbłirhod under the authority of the Secretary-General.

14. The participant8 also agreed to include in the respective programmes and budgets for 1990-1991 and medium-term plans appropriate measures responding to the recommendation8 of the World Commission on Environment and Development.

15. The participant8 welcomed the proposal to use the United Nations Development Programme network and the United Nation8 Environment Programme and other • ☒□☐◆✕☐ to work together with Governmenta and private organisations at the country level,

16. Information, education and popular participation is vital, The United Nations will mobilise further the public opinion. In particular a dialogue with youth is called for,

17. Sustainable development requires a dynamic partnership with citizens' movements, non-governmental organisations, trade unions, • ntorprirer and the media. The United Nation8 system will take a special responsibility for launching this process in as many countries as possible.

1b. The participants felt that the discussions over the past two days were fruitful, and that a similar meeting should be held in 1990.

0810, 10 July 1988

Qro Harlem Brundtland
Prima Minister of Norway
Chairman of thr World Commission on
Environment and Development

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the United Nations

APPENDIX

The Oslo Conference considered the following actions in pursuing sustainable development:

(a) Adoption of sustainable development as a common objective of the United Nations system; each entity of the United Nations system should prepare its own blueprint on sustainable development (ref. Norwegian policy document);

(b) Incorporation of the substance of sustainable development as a priority in Our Common Future in the subsequent programmes, budgets and medium-term plans of the various organisations of the United Nations system;

(c) Elaboration of a new global ethic based on equity, accountability and human solidarity;

(d) Inclusion of the issues of poverty and its environmental consequences and human resources development in a new international development strategy that focuses on themes rather than targets of development;

(e) Promotion of research and development of guidelines for policies of sustainable development, inter alia, by launching country studies on the integration of environment and development at the policy level;

(f) Expansion of reporting monitoring and evaluation systems to provide the necessary information for co-operative efforts on sustainable development and to promote multidisciplinary research and information exchange;

(g) Development of environment statistics and indicators of sustainable development, harmonised and accessible data bases, and resource/environment accounting to assist in the integration of social, economic and environmental policies;

(h) Establishment of a task force, under the authority of the Secretary-General, to provide a framework of overall guidance for the system-wide activities aimed at sustainable development and of ad hoc task forces on specific issues;

(i) Application of the System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme as a framework for the concerted elaboration and planning of the programmes of the United Nations system that contribute to sustainable development;

(j) Strengthening of the role of the regional commissions in the implementation of sustainable development, particularly through the use of issue-related task forces and inter-agency joint units;

(k) **Fostering close co-operation between United Nations Development Programme resident representatives and resident co-ordinators, the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as other United Nations entities, government officials, and non-governmental organizations at the country level, inter alia, through special meetings or seminars on the implementation of sustainable development;**

(l) **Encouragement of countries to prepare national policy papers on sustainable development, with the assistance of United Nations organizations and bodies, to improve the consistency of policy directives;**

(m) **Preparation of an environmental impact assessment for every United Nations programme and project;**

(n) **Establishment of a focal point for developing a long-term perspective on energy production and use;**

(o) **Elaboration by the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme and the regional commissions of concrete proposals on technology for sustainable development and the financing of its transfer;**

(p) **Enlisting the support of social partners - trade unions and employers - for sustainable development;**

(q) **Extension of the activities of the International Board for Plant Genetic Resources (IBPGR) to cover all species of economic importance;**

(r) **Launching of a continuing effort with the Department of Public Information in collaboration with United Nations Environment Programme to publicize sustainable development matters;**

(s) **Mobilization of public opinion through new co-operative arrangements between the United Nations system, governments, non-governmental organizations and the media and communications industry;**

(t) **Forging a contract with the world's youth and embarking on a global educational campaign on issues of environmentally sound and sustainable development, possibly in the context of the proposed 1992 conference;**

(u) **Exploring the feasibility of a Cancún-type summit meeting to take up North-South issues relating to sustainable development;**

(v) **Convening a similar meeting on sustainable development in 1990.**