

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BAGHER ASADI, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77 (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN), AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF CSD-10**

**New York, 30 April 2001**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, at the outset, to offer, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our most sincere felicitations on your meritorious election as well as that of the other distinguished members of the Bureau. Well, the words Dr. Topfer just said in his introductory remarks in introducing you does indeed show, in very clear terms, your long experience and work in the field of sustainable development. I am just too young for that. Moreover, it is a pleasure to see three old hands from the Rio times - yourself, Mr. Desai and Dr. Topfer - at the podium here today. It augurs well for the whole process. It is an important process and I am sure it will have a good outcome at the end of the day.

I should say right here that this intervention is not a prepared statement; rather a number of points merely reflecting the concerns of the Group of 77 and China. Fact of the matter is that our colleagues in the Chairman's team, and for that matter all our colleagues in G77 and all our negotiating partners were busy negotiating the final outcome of CSD-9 up to 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. I thank them all for the good work and excellent outcome. There has not yet been any opportunity for the colleagues in our team to work on a statement for the Group. The points I am going to raise here now are the product of an initial meeting of the Group earlier today on the CSD-10, on the process and on its agenda. Needless to say, I address both agenda items 3 and 6. My colleagues sitting right behind me will deal with all aspects of the issues in detail when the relevant agenda items come up for discussion.

Mr. Chairman,

All of you three distinguished colleagues have already said enough about the importance of the WSSD process. The very rich and visionary quotation Dr. Topfer just read did justice to the case. I missed your own statement this morning, but I have been briefed well and I thank you for the analysis and the vision. And I thank DESA for all the preparatory work for this session and the process in general, and also thank Mr. Desai for a very interesting and thoughtful statement. Let me underline right at this very point that we in the Group of 77 consider the WSSD a very important process and will be fully engaged in it in a very active, proactive and constructive manner. We hope that, as Mr. Desai said this morning, this process will result in a genuine global partnership at all levels, including between the South and the North. For the whole process we have the GA resolution 55/199, a very comprehensive and well-articulated text which contains a lot of clear provisions on all aspects of the WSSD.

On the process, I should emphasize that, in our view, the PrepCom is, that is, it should be, the sole body to discuss in an integrated manner all key issues related to the Summit and the sole body to decide its agenda. As everybody remembers almost two weeks ago we had a one-day ministerial meeting on International Environmental Governance (IEG). There I made a statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and made the point that we consider IEG within the framework of sustainable development and WSSD. I also emphasized that all other processes should as well be brought into the broader WSSD mainstream and discussed within its fold. Moreover, I proposed that the organizational session of CSD-10 should adopt a draft decision on the closer links between the IEG and the WSSD. I am very happy indeed to see that Dr. Topfer underscored the idea of linkage. On the comprehensive review, I fully concur with Dr. Topfer that we should make every effort to complete the assessment part of the process as early as possible in the preparatory process. And that the assessment should be based on the outcome of all the components of the process, in particular the regional processes, and then in an integrated manner. That is what we mean by a bottom-up approach.

The Group is committed to have an effective and meaningful participation in the preparatory process of the WSSD. But that requires assistance from the developed partners to the developing world. And for this participation we do not merely mean governmental representatives, rather, all major groups and stakeholders. We support their active engagement in the process. But, again, that calls for assistance and facilitation. As all of us know, there exists established procedures for the participation of major groups, and to be honest with the Group, I should say that it should be based, inter alia, on a non-objectionable basis. On the rules of procedure, my colleagues will discuss the Group's positions in detail when the agenda item comes up for discussion.

On the substance of the process, I just alluded to the GA resolution 55/199. Now I draw attention to paragraph 15 of the resolution and its sub-paragraphs. Here, I should emphasize the relevance of the three pillars of sustainable development; that is, economic development, social development and environmental protection, and then in a balanced manner. Also that Agenda 21 will not be re-negotiated. And further, injection of non-Agenda 21 issues into the process should be avoided. Moreover, new challenges and emerging issues should also be considered within the framework of Agenda 21. Sub-paragraph (e) of paragraph 15 is very clear and categorical on this. Before concluding, I deem it necessary to underscore the important principle we all agreed on in Rio; that is, the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities".

And to conclude, I would like to emphasize that the WSSD should address in all earnestness the question of the "means of implementation". We in the developing world have been waiting for almost ten years to see the implementation of the commitments undertaken in Rio, in the field of technology transfer, provision of financial resources and capacity building. The comprehensive assessment I referred to earlier should be able to show the constraints and the barriers that have stood in the way of full implementation of the Agenda 21 and its commitments. Only on the basis of such an assessment will we be able to see how we can move forward towards a satisfactory implementation of those undertakings and what we agree in this process.

Having made these preliminary remarks, Mr. Chairman, let me just underline that we look forward to a good participatory process and towards a vision for long-term sustainable development.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.