

Statement by Ambassador Nassrollah Kazemi Kamyab (Islamic Republic of Iran), on behalf of the G-77 and China, on agenda item 98(a): Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Program for the Further Implementation Agenda 21, in the Second Committee of the General Assembly

New York, 29 October 2001

Mr. Chairman,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the important agenda item 98(a). Since we are going to engage in a substantive discussion for WSSD, early next year, my statement is limited to some general viewpoints of the Group vis a vis the WSSD, the report of the Secretary General and the report of the UNEP Governing Council.

The Group of 77 & China attaches great importance to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and its preparatory process. We have made it clear since CSD-9 that we are fully convinced and equally committed to engage actively and constructively in the WSSD process. This Summit should provide a unique and exceptional opportunity for the international community to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the achievements, constraints and shortcomings in the implementation of Agenda 21, a decade after UNCED. We firmly believe that this Summit should aim at the removal of obstacles impeding the implementation of the RIO commitments and provide, in particular, the developing world with adequate financial and technological support. For us, WSSD should arrive at concrete measures with specific timetable for their implementation. In our view, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which is as relevant now as when it was enunciated at Rio, should continue to be the guiding principle for the deliberations of WSSD.

Concerning the report of Secretary General, contained in document A/56/379 on the progress in preparatory activities for the WSSD, we would like to thank the Secretary General for his very informative report. Although the report covers the progress till the end of August, it contains some useful information on various events across the world in preparation for WSSD. According to the report, up to now, only 11 national assessment reports are received by the secretariat. We encourage, during very limited time left to the Precom in January, all countries to provide their national reports to the secretariat, paving the way for a comprehensive assessment to be done by the Prepcom. In this context, we call all relevant regional and international organizations to further step up their efforts in helping countries to complete their national assessment reports in time. In addition, we would like to reiterate the importance of continuation of provision of support by the Capacity 21 Unit of UNDP. The Group of 77 & China attaches great importance to the involvement of major groups in the public awareness raising and benefiting from their views in preparation of national reports. In this regard, we would be very willing to receive more explanation on the survey referred to in paragraph 11 of the report, which has been launched by different major groups and UNDP.

At the regional level, we have seen a number of meetings being held and contributing to the preparation process of WSSD. They have come out, though sometime with different wording, more or less with the same substance. The continued existence of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, inadequacy of means of implementation, poverty, income inequality, illiteracy, external debt, impacts of globalization, ...all indicate that what we have done, so far, obviously has not been adequate. Therefore, it's now even more clear for us that in WSSD specific measures with timetables have to be set for addressing these problems, in particular at the international level. While we find the information, provided in the report on different regional meetings, useful, we do believe these information should somehow be summarized and become available at least in the web site of DESA. This would be extremely helpful for countries to be aware of these inputs.

At the international level, there is an urgent need to launch comprehensive and productive public information campaign aimed at raising global awareness so as to ensure broad international support at all levels and the active participation of officials at the highest level possible in WSSD and its preparatory processes. In this regard, necessary steps should be initiated at the United Nations, to ensure successful outcome of the Summit. Meanwhile, we would also like to receive some clarification on the proposal of the secretariat in paragraph 27 of the report concerning the global thematic round tables, its objectives, participants, as well as its relation with WSSD Prepcom. We also would like to seek more explanation on the role, mandate and the relation of the panel of eminent persons and the special envoy, appointed recently by the Secretary General, with the WSSD and its preparation process.

Turning to the report of the UNEP Governing Council, I would like to draw attention to the on-going discussions on the International Environmental Governance (IEG), where the Group has been deeply engaged. From our point of view - quite known to all the colleagues here as well as to all the stakeholders - the proper, and overall context for the IEG is sustainable development. It is only within this broad conceptual framework that the rather delicate balance among the three pillars of sustainable development could be ensured. We agree with the necessity of strengthening UNEP in accordance with the provisions of the GA resolution 242. However, we believe that the Commission on Sustainable Development, as a unique forum for high-level policy dialogue on sustainable development, should also be strengthened. Moreover, the views of other relevant Conference of the Parties, agencies and institutions could as well help to enrich the on-going discussions on IEG and contribute to the final outcome of the process. Let me reiterate our firm conviction to actively participate in the next meeting of IEG in Montreal. In line with the provision of A/RES/55/199 and the decision of the Organizational meeting of the CSD, we are also looking forward to considering the outcome of IEG when it comes to the WSSD Prepcom.

In conclusion, I'd like to reiterate once again, the firm conviction of the Group of 77 & China for constructive and effective participation in the deliberations of the WSSD and its preparatory process.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.