



**Governing Council
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Global Civil Society Forum
Seventh session
Dubai, 5 and 6 February 2006

**Report of the Global Civil Society Forum on the work of its
seventh session**

Introduction

1. The seventh session of the Global Civil Society Forum was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 5 and 6 February 2006.
2. At its regional meetings held prior to the session, the Forum had prepared a statement on the key policy issues – namely chemicals management, sustainable tourism and energy for sustainable development – to be considered by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at its ninth special session, to be held in Dubai from 7 to 9 February 2006. At their current session, participants at the Global Civil Society Forum had the opportunity to discuss those issues further, identify priorities to be drawn to the attention of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and consider any other issues that warranted particular attention and possible submission to other international bodies. A copy of the statement is contained in annex I to the present report.

I. Opening of the session

3. The session was opened at 9.15 a.m. on Sunday, 5 February 2006, by Ms. Cristina Boelcke, Director of the Division of Regional Cooperation and Representation and Officer-in-Charge of the Division of Policy Development and Law of UNEP.
4. Opening statements were made by Mr. Mohammed bin Fahad, Chair of the Higher Committee of the Zayed International Prize for the Environment; Mr. Essa al-Ghurair, Vice-Chair of the Secretariat of the West Asia Civil Society Host Committee and Vice-Chair of the Emirates Diving Association; Mr. Muhammed Alsayrafi, Vice-Chair of the West Asia Civil Society Host Committee; and Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP.
5. In his opening remarks, Mr. bin Fahad welcomed the participants to Dubai and emphasized the commitment of the Zayed Foundation to partnership with national and international organizations, Governments, civil society and private enterprises. In that regard, he said that the current session had been born out of the long partnership between the Zayed Foundation and UNEP. Noting that the Zayed International Prize had been established to recognize and promote major pioneering contributions in the

field of environment and sustainable development, in accordance with the development philosophy and vision of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan and in support of global initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, he said that the Prize received the full support of Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Dubai. The Zayed Foundation would spare no effort in promoting the environment in the future, especially in areas relating to public awareness and education. In conclusion, he thanked the Executive Director for his initiative to hold the session concurrently with the ninth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

6. In his statement, Mr. al-Ghurair welcomed participants to Dubai and the United Arab Emirates and said that the Emirates Diving Association had been honoured to act as the secretariat of the West Asia Civil Society Host Committee of the seventh session of the Global Civil Society Forum and had provided administrative and logistical support in preparation for the session, which was the first of its kind to be held in the region. Reviewing the origins and growth of the Association, he said that it had gained widespread recognition through its involvement in a number of international projects to protect the marine environment, including through the promotion of environmentally friendly diving, and had been the first diving organization in the Gulf region to become accredited to UNEP.

7. In his opening statement, Mr. Alsayrafi also welcomed participants to the United Arab Emirates and thanked all those who had participated in the preparations for the session, which underscored the commitment of UNEP to involve civil society in efforts to protect the environment. Noting the good work performed by the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia, he also paid tribute to the Executive Director of UNEP for the vision he had shown in drawing civil society into the environmental negotiating process, through the creation of the Global Civil Society Forum, which had been his innovation.

8. In his statement, the Executive Director emphasized the central importance of involving civil society in the negotiation of international covenants, and thus the importance of the Forum. Expressing gratitude to those partners which had contributed to the preparation of the session, he welcomed in particular the efforts of the Zayed International Prize and the Emirates Diving Association, noting with regard to the latter that it was important to encourage people who used the natural environment for their enjoyment to protect it. Similar partnerships should be developed in other areas, in particular with respect to tourism, which should be made sustainable in all parts of the world.

9. He commended Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Dubai, on his visionary approach to development, which forged links between modern attitudes towards environmental protection and cultural identity and successfully married old knowledge and new solutions. He also expressed his gratitude to the late Emir Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum for his efforts to incorporate environmental sustainability and diversity into his vision of development.

10. In conclusion, he said that it was particularly appropriate to be holding the session in the United Arab Emirates, in a region rich in fossil fuels, yet which recognized the need to promote environmental protection and to develop alternative sources of energy. He urged participants to take the opportunity presented to them during the session to discuss the issue of energy and environment.

11. Following that statement, in response to a question from a participant, the Executive Director explained that the process to develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management would continue between meetings of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, under the supervision of UNEP and a range of other international organizations. It was hoped, in particular, that civil society would be involved in the process, which would have as its ultimate goal the target from the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to use and produce chemicals by 2020 in ways that did not lead to significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

12. Responding to a concern that the development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management was threatened by a lack of financial commitment to its implementation, he agreed that it was crucial to provide adequate financial resources at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels, and in that regard drew attention to the relevant commitments enunciated in the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. He urged participants not to be pessimistic and cautioned against the risk of abandoning the whole process because full expectations could not be met. He called instead for a constructive dialogue between all stakeholders.

13. Asked about the role of civil society in international negotiations, he assured participants that the voice of civil society was carefully heeded by UNEP, as evidenced by its creation of the Global Civil Society Forum in 2000 and the rapid growth in the number of organizations from all over the world which were accredited to UNEP. Once again, he urged participants not to be pessimistic about their role and assured them that partnership between Governments and non-governmental organizations was essential to progress.

14. In response to a question regarding the link between security and civil society, he urged participants to take advantage of such forums, particularly the current one, being held in a small country whose residents counted citizens from over 100 different countries, to foster greater understanding of one another's cultures and to develop mutual tolerance.

15. When asked for his view on the single most important way in which civil society could play a role in international discussions on the environment, he reassured the Forum that UNEP was keenly interested in and influenced by the views of civil society and he stressed that non-governmental organizations wielded considerable advantage over international organizations in that they had direct access to people and their day-to-day experiences. UNEP aimed to provide a meeting place where such organizations could exchange their knowledge and share their wisdom, thereby promoting transparency in their interactions. Accordingly, UNEP was always very pleased to receive guidance from the civil society sector on how it could improve its operations.

16. Finally, in response to a question about the promotion of ecotourism, he agreed that the outcome of the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002 had been widely disappointing and agreed that more effort should be made both to foster ecotourism and – as all tourists could not be ecotourists – in general to make tourism more environmentally-friendly. He outlined forthcoming international events which could be used as a starting point in that regard, in particular the events to mark the International Year of Deserts and Desertification 2006 and the award of the Zayed International Prize, which would involve a discussion on ecotourism.

17. During the opening segment, participants expressed condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Emirates and to Dubai on the recent death of Emir Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

II. Organization of work

A. Election of officers

18. The following officers were elected for the Global Civil Society Forum at its seventh session:

Chair:	Mr. Muhammad Alsayrafi (Qatar)
Vice-Chair:	Ms. Kate Davenport (United States of America)
Rapporteurs:	Ms. Esther Neuhaus (Brazil) Mr. Rakesh Jha (India) Mr. Jan-Gustav Strandenaes (Norway) Ms. Abby Mgugu (Zimbabwe)

B. Adoption of the programme of work and organization of work

19. The Chair presented a provisional programme of work for the session, as developed by regional civil society representatives in collaboration with UNEP and as orally amended in the session. The programme, as adopted, is contained in annex IV to the present report.

20. The Forum agreed to establish working groups to consider the issues of sustainable tourism, energy for sustainable development and international environmental governance.

C. Attendance

21. The meeting was attended by some 125 representatives of civil society organizations from the following countries: Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Haiti, India, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Uganda, United Arab

Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Zimbabwe.

22. It was also attended by the representative of the Government of Norway and by representatives of UNEP. The full list of participants is attached in annex VI to the present report.

III. Resolution on chemicals management to be presented to the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session

A. Introduction

23. Mr. Daryl Ditz, Centre for International Environmental Law, prefaced his introduction of the resolution by pointing out that, while members of civil society supported a strategic approach to international chemicals management, there were important disputes among countries that threatened to undermine an effective legal convention on that matter. Reviewing the previous day's debate at the International Conference on Chemicals Management, he outlined main issues of contention, which included financial support for the proposed mechanisms; the principles and approaches that would underlie the proposed mechanisms; and the linkages between chemicals management and poverty alleviation. Noting that certain axioms of sustainable development were at risk of being removed from the draft convention, he suggested that a resolution from civil society to the conference might provide impetus to States to maintain focus on issues of sustainable development in their deliberations.

24. Other participants added that the resolution could also be made available to the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its ninth special session, as a separate submission from the proposed global civil society statement that was to be adopted by the Forum.

B. Discussion

25. Noting the importance of a strategic approach to international chemicals management to the protection of the environment and the health of current and future generations, one participant cautioned that, as the next meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management might not take place for several years, there might be a loss of intellectual momentum and a waste of current investments of time and other resources. Accordingly, he suggested that to maintain attention on chemicals management, interim arrangements in the form of a steering committee or meetings of stakeholders should be recommended in the resolution. In addition, there was wide support for including in the resolution statements to the effect that gender issues should be integrated into the proposed implementation process for the management of chemicals.

26. It was agreed to form an ad hoc contact group, chaired by Mr. Mahmood A. Khwaja, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, and Mr. Ditz, to prepare a draft resolution, incorporating the issues raised in the discussion. In its subsequent consideration of the draft resolution, some participants urged that the language be made stronger, to counter the tendency in the International Conference on Chemicals Management to weaken the text under its consideration.

C. Adoption of the resolution

27. Following further oral amendments, designed to place stronger emphasis on the importance of sound management of chemicals for women, youth and indigenous peoples, the Forum adopted the resolution and agreed to submit it as a conference-room paper to the International Conference on Chemical Management. The text of the resolution is contained in annex III to the present report.

IV. International environmental governance

A. Northern perspective

28. Mr. Jan-Gustav Strandenaes, Northern Alliance for Sustainability, gave a presentation on the Northern perspective on international environmental governance based on a detailed paper which he had prepared and distributed to participants. Noting the cynicism with which many people treated international environmental governance and the perception of international environmental governance as a nebulous concept, he also identified a number of issues which ministers at the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum had identified as core factors of international environmental governance. Those included the need for universal membership of the

Council/Forum; strengthening the scientific base of UNEP and financial support for its projects; issues of capacity-building and technology transfer; the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements; and the enhanced coordination of United Nations projects. He also outlined twelve key issues which, in his view, should be included in any civil society statement on international environmental governance.

B. Southern perspective

29. Mr. Davinder Lamba, Mazingira Institute outlined the Southern perspective on international environmental governance, remarking that international environmental governance was about securing the nexus between humanity and environmental well-being. He noted that those from the South would prefer to see a more human-centred approach to creating a linkage between humanity and the environment whereas those from the North preferred a more environment-centred approach. He said that, since the establishment of UNEP, the international system had become more complex both within the United Nations and more generally, with the creation of other supranational bodies such as the World Trade Organization and the emergence of a sort of institutional schizophrenia, as Governments prioritized trade issues which sometimes conflicted with their commitments under other agreements. Noting that definitions of international environmental governance often took a value-based approach, he stressed that civil society needed to build consensus on the precise nature of those values.

C. Discussion

30. In the ensuing discussion, one participant noted the problem posed by the numerous parallel processes under way dealing with environmental issues. Many civil society organizations lacked the resources to follow them all and she wondered, accordingly, what priority civil society organizations were able to give international environmental governance and whether they would give it greater priority if they had the resources. Another participant agreed that the United Nations needed to consider how better to streamline integrate its multiple environment-related projects.

D. Statement on international environmental governance

31. Following the discussion, it was agreed that the Forum would prepare a statement on international environmental governance for submission to the Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The drafting of the statement was entrusted to the civil society working group on international environmental governance, which was chaired by Ms. Susan Brown of WWF. Following the presentation of the draft statement from the working group by Ms. Brown, the Forum discussed the proposed text and agreed on the statement. The text of the statement is contained in chapter III of annex V to the present report.

V. Recommendations to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

A. Recommendations on tourism

1. Global perspective

32. Ms. Zoë Chafe, Worldwatch Institute, gave a presentation on tourism and the environment from a global perspective. She stressed that environmentally and socially responsible tourist options must consider the hierarchy of tourist needs, in which safety, health, accessibility and quality were prioritized, and value for price was considered. She clarified that ecotourism was a specific application of sustainable tourism, but that sustainable tourism practices could and should be applied to all parts of the industry. Demand for sustainable tourism existed, but both industry players and consumers needed to be educated and supported in developing interest in what was currently a niche segment of the larger tourism industry. Streamlining sustainable tourism certification globally could aid consumers in making responsible travel choices and increase the effectiveness of the certification programs. She highlighted the importance of directing tourism revenues to local stakeholders and offered examples from the movement known as “Travellers’ Philanthropy”, in which tourists and tour operators gave back to destination communities. Governments, she said, could encourage sustainable tourism by establishing environmental standards and regulations; supporting certification programmes; providing incentives for sustainable tourism; and better integrating tourism into multilateral environmental agreements, including those concerned with climate change.

2. West Asian perspective

33. Ms. Mehdi Sawsan, Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon, gave a presentation on the environmental impacts of tourism in West Asia. She noted that tourism was becoming increasingly important to many economies in West Asia, with potentially both positive and negative effects. She regretted that Governments in the region were focusing on conventional tourism, giving relatively little attention to sustainable tourism, and noted that existing regulatory and institutional frameworks were inadequate to protect the environment from the detrimental effects of increased tourism. Politicians and the media tended to separate the environment and economics, causing a lack of awareness amongst the public of the linkages involved. Accordingly, she recommended that, among other things, Governments should develop new regulations and requirements for sustainable tourism and stressed the need for enhanced synergies between all relevant sectors. Finally, she suggested some questions which the working group on tourism could consider, which focused on the linkages between the environment and the economy and on the role which Governments should play in ensuring sustainable tourism.

B. Recommendations on energy

1. Global perspective

34. Mr. Rakesh Kumar Jha, The Energy and Resources Institute, gave a presentation on recommendations to ministers concerning energy for sustainable development. He noted that energy was key both to enhancing economic development and to facilitating social progress and environmental protection. Highlighting the fact that many people still lived without electricity and that demand for energy would grow by 60 per cent by the year 2030, he outlined future scenarios for the year 2030 and considered possible measures to deal with them, which included investment in new technologies; a multi-stakeholder approach to energy planning; and ways of meeting the needs of high-energy-consuming sectors, such as transport. Finally, he identified three key needs in the global energy scenario: to integrate energy planning with overlapping sectors; to manage growing energy demands from developing countries; and to mobilize resources to create modern energy services.

2. Latin American perspective

35. Ms. Esther Neuhaus, Brazilian Network of Non-Governmental Organizations and Social Movements for the Environment and Development, gave a presentation on the issue of renewable energy for sustainable development from a Latin American perspective. Outlining the projected trends in global energy demands, she pointed out that developing countries, where most of the growth would occur, depended on energy supplies to meet their development needs. Noting that policy issues on energy should be linked to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, access to affordable services and poverty eradication, she emphasized the importance of regional initiatives to promote renewable energy and said that, although it provided opportunities for developing countries, biofuel production was not without risks and needed to be managed in a sustainable way. She urged the working group on energy to focus its discussions on identifying the precautions that were necessary in the large-scale development of bio-energy and on determining how hydropower resources could be developed in an environmental and socially-acceptable manner and how obstacles to the promotion of renewable and sustainable energy sources in developing countries could be reduced.

VI. Reports of the working groups

36. The rapporteurs of the three working groups – on sustainable tourism, energy for sustainable development and international environmental governance – reported on the work of their respective groups and presented the preliminary outcomes of the groups' discussions. Further discussion of those outcomes ensued, in the light of which the outcomes were amended. The outcomes are set out in annex V to the present report. It was noted that some of the text contained in the outcomes did not reflect the views of all the participants.

37. It was agreed the outcome of the working group on international environmental governance would be forwarded to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum for consideration at its ninth special session. It was not necessary to forward to the Council/Forum the outcomes of the working groups on sustainable tourism and energy for sustainable development, because those issues had been addressed in the outcome document prepared by the Forum at its preparatory meetings.

VII. Outcomes of the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment

38. Mr. Joaquin Nieto, International Labour Foundation for Sustainable Development (SustainLabour), gave a presentation on the outcomes of the first session of the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment, held in Nairobi in January 2006. He drew attention to a resolution prepared by the Assembly for presentation to the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its ninth special session. Noting that trade unions were working hard to incorporate environmental concerns into their agenda and expressing appreciation, in that context, to UNEP for its collaboration with trade unions, he said that trade unions were in a unique position to be able to integrate all three key aspects of sustainable development: economics; society; and the environment.

39. During the ensuing discussion, one participant suggested that the Global Civil Society Forum should provide formal support for the resolution through a statement to be presented to the Governing Council. The statement is contained in annex II to the present report. Other points of discussion included the importance of emphasizing gender equality; the protection of workers during the transition to using more sustainable technologies; and the methods for implementing the activities outlined in the resolution.

VIII. Youth and business perspectives

A. Business and industry perspective

40. Ms. Wendy Poulton, South African Electricity Supply Commission (ESKOM), made a presentation in which she described the perspective of business and industry on the policy issues under consideration. She noted that, although the business sector supported many of the recommendations contained in the outcome document to be presented to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, there were some areas in which its perspectives differed from those of other groups. She outlined the role of the business sector in finding solutions to the challenges of poverty reduction and sustainable development, which included efforts to promote technology support and capacity-building, and described how the business sector was in favour of strengthening the scientific base of UNEP. Referring in some detail to the role of the business sector in promoting the sustainable use of energy, she drew attention to the Business Action for Energy initiative that had been launched at the thirteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.

B. Youth perspective

41. Mr. Juan Hoffmaister, UNEP Tunza Youth Advisory Council, presented the standpoint of youth on issues which had been discussed during the Forum. He highlighted the need to consider the rights of children when setting chemical management standards. Regarding energy, he emphasized the need to continue to strive for sustainable and clean sources of energy in order to meet the needs of future generations and to safeguard the health of children. He encouraged Governments to develop diverse energy portfolios and stressed the need for adequate financial support for research and development into renewable and sustainable energy sources.

42. Ms. Alaa Ahmed, also from the UNEP Tunza Youth Advisory Council, presented the youth perspective on tourism. She noted the need to encourage ecotourism; to help local communities appreciate and protect their local environment; and to reduce carbon emissions through implementing such measures as the polluter pays principle. She encouraged the engagement of the private sector and local tourism councils in the promotion of environmentally friendly tourism and stressed the need to ensure that cultural considerations were incorporated into tourism management.

C. Discussion

43. During the ensuing discussion, attention was drawn to the importance of the media as a bridge between civil society and Governments; the role that the business sector could play in supporting small projects in areas which lack access to energy; and the importance of reflecting all perspectives at every level of debate within the process to develop a strategic approach to international chemicals development. The need for businesses to take cultural concerns into account when investing in projects was also highlighted and the absence of a business and industry position on tourism was noted.

IX. Outcomes of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

A. Business and industry perspective

44. Rainer Koch, International Council of Chemicals Associations, presented the industry perspective on the outcomes of the ICCM. He said that the global chemicals industry saw SAICM as an opportunity to improve public confidence in the safe management of chemicals and to promote the benefits of chemicals to society. Noting that business supports partnerships as a key capacity building tool, he said that the chemicals industry was willing to work with other stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the objectives of SAICM. In addition, he encouraged Governments to take a workable, risk management approach to the implementation of SAICM and to build on existing inter-governmental programmes and other successful initiatives.

B. Non-governmental organization perspective

45. Daryl Ditz, Centre for International and Environmental Law, presented the perspective of non-governmental organizations on the outcomes of the ICCM. While he regretted that the outcomes of SAICM fell far below the expectations of civil society, he encouraged non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts in this area. He noted that this was one step on a long journey and that participants should think more broadly than just SAICM by continuing to lobby for environmental change at local, national, and international level. He stressed the important role of civil society in the work on chemicals and urged participants not to be disheartened or frustrated by the political obstacles which arose during the SAICM process.

C. Trade union perspective

46. Mr. Björn Erikson, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), said that with some 145 million members from 155 different countries and territories, his confederation was a truly global organization. He explained that it was important for trade unions to participate in the process of developing a strategic approach to international chemicals management: while occupational safety and health had long been recognized as a trade union issue, the attention of trade unions was increasingly shifting to sustainable development and environment. Chemicals negotiations such as those on the strategic approach had initially been concerned exclusively with environmental issues, but, over time, had incorporated such issues as health and occupational safety and gender balance, largely under the influence of non-governmental organizations and civil society. He looked forward to the final outcome of the strategic approach process and stressed the need to focus not only on environment but also on occupational and public health and to draw synergies from their interaction.

47. He noted that the strategic approach to international chemicals management offered an opportunity for cooperation between relevant United Nations agencies and civil society organizations but cautioned that, as it would provide only a political commitment, which would not be legally binding, it had to be a strong instrument. In particular, developing countries needed an instrument that would offer more than promises: tangible steps needed to be taken to close the gap between developing and developed countries. He also cautioned that the negotiation process was inevitably driven, not only by altruistic concerns, but by trade interests: hence such sticking points as the voluntary nature of the process, the role of the World Bank and the incorporation of the precautionary principle. Whatever their final outcome, he stressed that the strategic approach negotiations offered an opportunity – particularly if the industry sector, Governments and civil society organizations fully cooperated – to move forward efforts to create a safer environment.

D. Discussion

48. After the presentations a discussion took place in which the participants commended the transparent and inclusive nature of the SAICM process. One participant asked whether there were any tools to guide civil society organizations in how to play an effective role in chemicals processes at the local and regional levels. Mr. Erikson called for the forging of partnerships between those organizations, trade unions and Governments as a means of making progress. It was also noted that it could be useful to choose specific subjects on which to focus and that successes at the local and national level could serve as examples for others.

X. Global Environment Outlook

A. Presentation

49. Ms. Marion Cheatle, Division of Early Warning and Assessment, UNEP, presented an overview of the Global Environmental Outlook, which has provided periodic global and regional environmental assessments. She said that representatives of civil society have been involved in the writing of chapters, peer review, outreach and dissemination for the forthcoming edition of the Global Environmental Outlook, due in 2007. She concluded by describing the newly published UNEP Educational Poster Series entitled "The living Earth in the fight against poverty," copies of which were made available to participants.

B. Discussion

50. Several participants expressed the hope that the Global Environmental Outlook and the UNEP Educational Poster Series would be available in languages other than English, and Ms. Cheatle agreed that translations would be useful and necessary.

XI. Civil society engagement with the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

A. Presentation

51. Mr. Felix Dodds, Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future, and Mr. Nivla Silva, UNEP, briefed the participants on the agenda of the Council/Forum and discussed various methods by which civil society members might advocate their positions and present messages on issues related to chemicals management, energy and environment, and tourism and the environment, during the meetings of the Council/Forum as a committee of the whole and in ministerial consultations.

B. Discussion

52. The Chair said that places would be allocated for two representatives to attend the closed meetings of the Council/Forum at its forthcoming ninth special session. It was agreed that one of those places should always be occupied by a representative of one of the civil society working groups, to advocate the positions of the Global Civil Society Forum on issues relating to tourism, energy and international environmental governance, as appropriate. The second place could be occupied by interested participants on a rotating basis.

53. The following members of the respective working groups were selected by the Forum to present the agreed positions of civil society at the Council/Forum: Ms. Habiba al Marashi, Emirates Environmental Group, on tourism; Ms. Esther Neuhaus, Brazilian Forum of Non-governmental Organizations and Social Movements for a Sustainable Environment, on energy; and Ms. Susan Brown, Worldwide Fund for Nature, on international environmental governance.

XII. Other matters

54. Ms. Helen Bjørnøy, Minister of the Environment of Norway, was invited to address the Forum. In her statement, she spoke of her appreciation of the role that civil society had played in the advancement of environmental issues. Noting that a national UNEP committee had recently been established in Norway, she encouraged the development of similar initiatives in other countries as, in her view, they had great potential to raise awareness of environmental concerns; create strong linkages with local communities; and integrate environmental issues into all aspects of policy-making.

XIII. Closure of the session

55. The Chair called for comments on the outcomes of the working groups. The outcomes of the working groups on tourism and energy were accepted as guidelines of highlighted points to assist civil society representatives attending meetings of the Council/Forum, and the outcome of the working group on international environmental governance was adopted as an additional submission to be presented to the Council/Forum. It was agreed that the finalized outcomes did not necessarily reflect a consensus of all participants in the Global Civil Society Forum.

56. Mr. Strandenaes, on behalf of the rapporteurs, informed the Forum that a report of the meeting had been prepared, including a compilation of the outcomes of the working groups.
57. A few participants requested future guidance from UNEP in preparing for future meetings of the Global Civil Society Forum and the Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP. In reply, Mr. Dodds and the Chair recommended that participants should become involved in the processes of the Commission for Sustainable Development through UNEP.
58. Participants expressed their thanks to the Chair, Vice-Chair, rapporteurs, organizers of the Forum, chairs of the working groups, civil society representatives selected to attend forthcoming meetings of the Council/Forum and fellow participants for a productive meeting.
59. Mr. Ramakrishna Kilaparti, UNEP, assured the participants that the concerns of civil society have been recognized and acknowledged by UNEP. He said that Governments continued to depend on the inputs of civil society in their policies and that UNEP in particular relied on the engagement of civil society as well as other major groups and stakeholders.
60. In addition, attention was drawn to the importance of education for sustainable development and to the launching of the United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in 2005: it was essential for civil society to be more fully engaged in programmes related to the Decade, as it had both the capacity and willingness to contribute significantly to that process. The Forum noted that UNEP had developed a strategy for environmental education and training, which, in its view, could serve as a tool for the forging of formal links between UNEP and the Decade. Accordingly, it requested UNEP to include a discussion on the United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in the agenda of the 2007 session of the Global Civil Society Forum, with a view to ensuring the full involvement of civil society in the further development and implementation of the Decade.
61. In the concluding discussion, attention was also drawn to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, developed pursuant to UNEP Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 of 15 February 2002. Under the Plan, UNEP committed itself to contributing to efforts to step up assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. As UNEP had no strong presence in most such countries, it was noted that the UNEP national committees could play a useful role in contributing to implementation of the Plan.
62. Civil society therefore requested UNEP to include a discussion on national committees and on the Bali strategy during the 2007 session of the Global Civil Society Forum. It was suggested that, when preparing background documents for the 2007 session, UNEP should take into consideration that its national committees should be multi-stakeholder bodies, including non-governmental organizations, individuals, local government councils, the academic community, industry and other stakeholders among its members and that the purpose of those committees was to promote UNEP programmes at the country level; to increase public awareness of the mandate and functions of UNEP; to increase public awareness of environmental problems and the steps necessary to deal with them; and to mobilize public support for the provision of adequate resources for the solution of environmental problems.
63. After those statements and the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair delivered his closing remarks, requested the participants to pose for a group photograph and declared the Seventh Global Civil Society Forum closed at 6.15 p.m. on Monday, 6 February 2006.

Annex I

Global civil society statement to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its ninth special session

I. Introduction

1. Civil society organizations welcome the opportunity to present this global civil society statement to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the ninth special session of its Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. Over 300 non-governmental organizations and other civil society representatives met in six consultative meetings worldwide to provide input to this statement.¹

2. As Agenda 21 states:

“... the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries, which is a matter of grave concern, aggravating poverty and imbalances.”²

3. Given that only limited resources are available to sustain and promote human well-being, more efficient production and consumption patterns are essential. Achieving this will require scientific and technical advances; more importantly, however, it will also require fundamental changes in the values that drive societal development, as well as the political will needed to make such changes. We must develop a broader vision of welfare that aims to satisfy needs rather than increased consumption for its own sake. Government policies and multilateral financing mechanisms that are guided solely by market-oriented principles will not ensure the realization of this broader vision.

4. This global civil society statement begins by offering observations and recommendations of overarching applicability, and then turns to the three main issue areas on the agenda of the ninth session of the Council/Forum: chemicals management, energy and the environment, and tourism and the environment.

II. Overarching issues

5. We welcome the commitment by UNEP to facilitate meaningful participation by civil society in UNEP activities and in international and national processes, programmes and initiatives. We note that participatory rights of civil society have improved in several international forums, yet those improvements continue to be resisted or even challenged by some Governments. Thus, we urge the Council/Forum and all Governments to renew their commitment to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development³ by, among others means, adopting and abiding by the principle of prior informed consent of affected communities; enhancing participation of indigenous peoples and other under-represented minorities and groups in sustainable development decision-making; and ensuring the active participation of all stakeholders in multilateral environmental, health and sustainable development activities. The participation of youth, including through youth employment, is also vital to finding solutions to global environmental problems.

6. Solutions to global environmental problems must be based on holistic approaches that facilitate coherence between multiple sectors and stakeholders. We therefore welcome UNEP sponsorship of the first global Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment in January 2006, and we encourage similar multi-thematic consultations.

¹ This statement builds upon the six regional statements developed during consultative meetings facilitated by UNEP in October and November 2005. The six regional consultations included Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. The six regional statements have been issued as addenda to the present document (UNEP/GCSS.IX/INF/7/Add.1–Add.6). The present global statement has been drafted in the recognition that business, industry and youth groups have their own processes in place and will present their views to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum separately.

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II, chap.4, para. 4.3.

³ *Ibid.*, annex I.

7. We call on UNEP, the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and all Governments to reinvigorate efforts to promote education for sustainable development by devising and making use of effective tools that encourage environmentally friendly behaviour by all actors. A strong, objective scientific approach is essential to foster understanding of the value of ecosystems services for conservation of life support systems and the alleviation of poverty. UNEP initiatives such as, inter alia, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building⁴ (Bali Strategic Plan) and civil-society-based national UNEP committees are important components in achieving those objectives.

8. The frequency and recurring devastation of natural disasters gravely concerns civil society. We ask UNEP, with all possible speed and in cooperation with appropriate relief and aid agencies and intergovernmental organizations, to develop, promote, and increase the preparedness of relevant entities to implement post-disaster emergency and reconstruction plans that incorporate sustainable and environmentally sound approaches to waste disposal and cleanup; rebuilding of transportation systems, energy systems and other infrastructure; restoration of agricultural and industrial capacity; provision of emergency and permanent housing; and renewal of commercial activities, including tourism. We would also draw attention to other vulnerable regions of the world, such as the Arctic region, that may soon develop into environmental disasters. The Arctic region bears today a disproportionate burden from the harmful effects of certain industrial activities, in particular, those related to energy and chemicals production, use and disposal. Civil society, including non-governmental organizations, call upon Governments and UNEP to eliminate the root causes of those harmful activities.

9. Civil society rejects the proliferation and continued stockpiling of nuclear weapons. Keeping in mind that issues of nuclear energy waste disposal have not been resolved, nuclear energy remains a security and health threat. We thus oppose the development of new nuclear energy plants and the continued use of existing nuclear plants. We ask Governments to deal immediately with the harmful effects on human beings and the environment in many of the world's regions from the production and storage of nuclear weapons and waste from nuclear energy plants.

III. Chemicals management

10. Chemicals offer many societal benefits, but the improper or inadequate management of chemicals, including substances in products and wastes and from accidents and releases, threatens the human rights to life, health and well-being of all people, especially children, vulnerable populations and future generations. Currently, decisions on production or authorization of chemicals are, too often, based on an evaluation of chemical effects on healthy adults, when they should instead be directed to protecting the most sensitive groups, particularly developing children.

11. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is the action plan to achieve the goal that by 2020 chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.⁵ SAICM is a crucial part of the global effort to protect human health and the environment and promote sustainable development. While civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, have been supportive of the SAICM process, we urge Governments to address its many gaps and deficiencies, including those related to pharmaceuticals, food additives and radioactive chemicals.

12. We urge all Governments and participating stakeholders in the negotiations on SAICM to agree as follows:

(a) That SAICM represents a political, moral and ethical commitment to work towards achieving the 2020 goal. We urge all Governments promptly to adopt and implement SAICM. Civil society organizations support SAICM and the concept that it will lead to the adoption of a legally binding international instrument;

(b) That implementation of SAICM must include measures to phase out and require safer substitutes and solutions when a chemical causes significant adverse effects to human health or the environment under its ordinary conditions of production, use or disposal in a country or region;

(c) That implementation of SAICM must embrace core principles and approaches of Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and other relevant international agreements, including the precautionary principle, liability and compensation, public participation, comprehensive right-to-know legislation, the

⁴ See document UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1, annex.

⁵ Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II. A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex, para. 23.

polluter-pays principle, and others. In addition, the principle of “no data, no market” should be adopted and implemented in all countries. SAICM should provide guidance on how these principles and approaches can be applied to sound chemical management;

(d) That the institutional arrangements for implementation of SAICM must be dynamic, fully participatory, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder. They should build upon the participatory practices of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), but they should provide more authority, be better integrated into the United Nations system and create a secretariat with sufficiently robust resources and mandate to ensure successful implementation;

(e) That SAICM can succeed only if it includes a financial mechanism that provides substantial new and additional funds to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and only if such funds are used effectively.

13. Civil society welcomes the adoption by the twenty-third session of the Governing Council of decision 23/9 on chemicals management, which instructs UNEP to further develop its Mercury Programme and requests Governments and other stakeholders to take immediate actions to reduce the risks to human health and the environment posed on a global scale by mercury in products and production processes. We recognize, however, that there is much additional work that remains to be done. We urge the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and Governments to make every effort:

(a) To phase out anthropogenic sources of mercury and other metals of concern by creating and implementing an effective and coordinated strategy for global reduction of supply, use and release, including through immediate reduction activities, the development of a legally binding global instrument on mercury and the addition of methyl mercury to the list of chemicals covered by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;

(b) To secure the ratification and consolidated implementation by all countries of the Stockholm Convention, and of any amendments for additional persistent organic pollutants, and of other chemicals and wastes agreements including the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, including its Ban Amendment; the 1996 Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention); International Labour Organization Convention C170 Concerning Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work; the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, and relevant regional chemicals and wastes agreements;

(c) To encourage donor countries and donor agencies to provide new and additional financial and technical assistance that enables developing countries and countries with transitional economies to implement fully all their commitments under international chemicals and wastes agreements and initiatives;

(d) To promote the establishment of a chemical safety focal area within the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with new and additional funds to encompass the present GEF Persistent Organic Pollutants Operational Programme, additional operational programmes that support implementation of other chemicals conventions and initiatives on mercury and other metals of concern, and the integrated approaches to chemicals management called for in SAICM;

(e) To encourage UNEP to collaborate with the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization and other relevant organizations to identify opportunities for promoting consistency between occupational and environmental protection from chemicals and for monitoring health and chemical exposures of workers and other sectors of the general population;

(f) To support and strengthen the capacity of the UNEP Chemicals Branch to facilitate the implementation of chemicals-related multilateral agreements and initiatives and to assist Governments and civil society in global actions for the sound management of chemicals.

14. In addition, we request Governments to take actions at the national and local levels:

(a) To prohibit, except for bona fide public health and research purposes, the production and export of chemicals and technologies when the use of those chemicals and technologies is banned within their own borders;

(b) To adopt zero-waste strategies, emphasizing source recovery, employment generation and community ownership;

- (c) To phase out all production, sale, and use of leaded gasoline.

IV. Energy for sustainable development

15. Energy is both an engine of development and a source of many of the problems which the world faces today. Some 2.4 billion people in developing countries lack modern fuels for cooking and heating and approximately 1.6 billion people do not have access to electricity. Yet human activities, primarily the combustion of fossil fuels, have caused the Earth to warm and its climate to change on both global and regional scales since the pre-industrial era, with most of the warming occurring during the last 50 years. Global warming represents an ecological time bomb that threatens the very existence of small island developing States, other low-lying regions, Arctic indigenous cultures and other resource-dependent peoples, and also countless animal and plant species throughout the world.

16. The current energy infrastructure is unsustainable, vulnerable to natural disasters and woefully insufficient in many developing countries. Energy wastage during the course of production and transmission is a serious problem. Perhaps half of the forecasted growth in global green-house gas emissions could be avoided by greater energy efficiency alone. Energy poverty is a barrier to sustainable development for many poorer rural communities in all regions of the world. Although the Millennium Development Goals lack explicit targets related to the provision of energy to the poor, access to affordable energy is imperative for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development.

17. Pricing and taxation policies for petroleum should be restructured to reflect its true cost as a depletable resource, taking into account the social, economic and environmental concerns of consuming and also producing countries. Governments must adopt coherent and comprehensive energy strategies that include conservation measures, dramatic subsidies reforms and education and capacity-building regarding energy efficiency and renewable energy. Such strategies should integrate energy policy with land use, urban planning, eco-housing projects and viable transportation options to encourage the use of public transportation. Those Governments experiencing increasing oil revenues, both from production and taxation, should invest sufficient portions of those revenues into research and development regarding sustainable and renewable energy.

18. Governments should provide incentives, within legal and policy frameworks, for public, private and community-level action towards greater fuel efficiency and the use of appropriate technologies. Countries with such incentive systems can serve as examples of utility-based incentives for renewable energy technologies, tax incentives, fuel displacement levies and electricity feed-in legislation, extension of loans to promoters of renewable energy and to consumers shifting to renewable energy technologies, market mechanisms and pricing policies such as net metering facilities and tax exemption on public bus purchases. Such incentives have the potential to encourage private-sector players to promote the use of renewable energy, including wind, solar and hydropower.

19. Developed countries should further international cooperation to transfer renewable energy technologies and capacity-building to developing countries. However, efforts by developed nations to provide energy from waste incineration must be opposed as incineration emits large amounts of toxins and other substances harmful to the environment in general and to human beings in particular.

20. Governments should implement existing commitments with relevance to energy for sustainable development, including those made in Agenda 21 and by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly its Plan of Implementation. In addition, we call upon Governments to specify and agree on measures to address climate change in the energy sector at the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, in 2006 and 2007, when climate change will be on the agenda. It is critical for countries to implement fully and expeditiously the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, and also related climate-change agreements, policies and partnerships.

21. All stakeholders working within the intergovernmental system should explore all possibilities related to their work for decreasing and offsetting carbon emissions from civil aviation.

22. Under the Bali Strategic Plan of Action for Technology Support and Capacity-building to developing countries, UNEP should act as an intermediary in supporting the manufacturing base for renewable energy technologies in less-developed countries. Civil society strongly recommends advancing the technical development and commercial viability of renewable energy systems by implementing a supportive policy framework as outlined by the "Policy Recommendations for

Renewable Energies”⁶ emerging from the International Conference for Renewable Energies held in Bonn in 2004, and by committing long-term financial support to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership. Governments and UNEP should support research into the new development area of carbon capture and storage and on possible sustainable uses of fossil fuels, but this should not be used to divert support from research into and application of renewable energy.

23. The high dependency on biomass energy by populations in some regions, especially Africa and among marginalized communities in some developed countries, coupled with the fast-diminishing availability of forest products resulting from inefficient production and end-use technologies, is a source of concern for both developing and developed countries. We call on Governments to promote sustainable fuels and efficient equipment for heating, lighting, and cooking, recognizing that bio-fuels can play a significant role in meeting these needs, particularly in rural areas.

24. Though hydropower offers promising potential as an energy source, adverse effects must be prevented or managed through the promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogues involving civil society, Governments and other relevant actors to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams⁷ in specific national or regional contexts. We feel however, that the construction of big dams should be opposed.

25. Civil society requests UNEP to initiate and complete a multi-stakeholder process to develop a compelling vision for development based on affordable and secure access to environmentally, socially and economically sustainable energy services. This vision should include regional cooperation in research, production and distribution of energy, to secure equitable access and efficiency.

26. The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should mandate UNEP to develop, expand and implement a programme to train energy policy-makers to understand the implications of energy issues by evaluating the environmental, social and economic sustainability performance of conventional and emerging energy technologies and to consider how to promote enabling policy and legal frameworks for sustainable energy technology innovation and dissemination. UNEP can also facilitate exposure visits and knowledge-sharing between countries and civil society groups to assist them in the cost-intensive process of experimentation and learning.

27. Because of the vulnerability of the energy sector to corruption during the privatization process, Governments and development partners should ensure that appropriate mechanisms are put in place to ensure transparency and good governance as a prerequisite to privatization. Governments should also strengthen their regulatory role with regard to the energy sector so as to protect the public from exploitation by private-sector players, especially multinational corporations. Government should involve civil society in multi-stakeholder participatory processes during the design, implementation and monitoring of energy programmes.

V. Sustainable tourism

28. Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that integrates ethical, social and environmental considerations in an economically viable way. Tourism plays an important role in the global economy and in the livelihoods of millions of people across the world. More than 8 per cent of all jobs are linked to tourism and travel. Tourism can have key impacts in the fight to reduce poverty and in progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Because of its dependence on a healthy global environment, the tourism industry is acutely sensitive to environmental change and degradation, including from chemicals, wastes, increased pressure on scarce water resources and climate-change effects.

29. Environmental limits to the growth of tourism must be identified and enforced before irreversible damage, such as loss of species and habitats, occurs. Governments must minimize environmental degradation by ensuring that comprehensive and robust environmental impact assessments and audits are conducted for proposed and existing tourism activities. These should lead to better information for decision-making.

30. Natural resources integrated into tourism products provide substantial revenue for Governments, both directly and indirectly, but this revenue is not matched by the level of national budgetary allocations for natural resources management. UNEP and Governments should further develop and

⁶ Available at http://www.renewables2004.de/en/2004/outcome_recommendations.asp.

⁷ See *Dams and Development: a New Framework for Decision-making*, ed. World Commission on Dams, Earthscan Publications Ltd., London, 2000.

implement research and analysis methodologies concerning valuation of ecosystem services. The outcomes of these analyses should form the basis for allocating the necessary resources for the sustainable management of the natural resources base, and should include mechanisms that compel public- and private-sector institutions to pay the full value for ecosystem goods and services.

31. Governments should make efforts to create an enabling environment for sustainable tourism by incorporating the principles of partnerships, decentralization and participatory decision-making between all stakeholders.

32. There is an economic over-dependency on tourism in some developing countries which highlights the need to seek more balanced growth. Unsustainable tourism negatively impacts many people, especially women, children, and youth (for example, as a result of sex tourism), indigenous and other local communities, peoples of mixed descent and other marginalized groups.

33. Economic liberalization has, too often, jeopardized local and indigenous culture, and affected communities are often not involved in the development of tourism. Local populations and indigenous peoples should benefit the most from and play a leading role in tourism development, and must always have the right of prior informed consent. Efforts should be made to preserve local and indigenous cultures while upholding the commitment to human rights.

34. Civil society recognizes the important contributions to sustainable tourism made by the United Nations World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The sound environmental practices carried out during some recent mega-events such as the Olympic Games should be applied to other large sporting and entertainment events that draw large crowds of tourists.

35. Civil society urges all Governments to take the following national actions:

(a) Ensure integrated planning that adequately addresses tourism within national sustainability strategies by applying the precautionary principle based on the natural and social carrying capacity of the areas where tourism takes place, and by carrying out and publishing sectoral and regional environmental impact assessments, including the ecosystem approach of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(b) Apply caution in opening up their tourism markets and agreeing to progressive liberalization in the service sectors presently being negotiated under the World Trade Organization, recognizing that the influx of international tourism operators could displace local entrepreneurs and affect livelihoods;

(c) Ensure cooperation between ministries in promoting sustainable tourism and strengthen enforcement and monitoring capability on environmental legislation as it relates to tourism;

(d) Adopt and implement in a streamlined manner sustainable tourism certification and reporting schemes such as the Green Globe and the Global Reporting Initiative, with the goal of increasing accountability and promoting consumer support and action. Governments should publicly and regularly report on outcomes of their streamlining efforts;

36. We call upon Governments to take the following actions at the international level:

(a) Specify and agree on measures to address climate change in the tourism sector at the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, in 2006 and 2007, when climate change will be on the agenda. All actors in the tourism industry should explore decreasing and offsetting carbon emissions from civil aviation related to tourism;

(b) Recognize the impact of tourism on the mandates of various United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme's Poverty Alleviation Programmes, and call for greater coherence and coordination between organizations and agencies within the United Nations system regarding issues related to tourism. In this respect we believe that tourism can play a positive role in promoting zero-waste strategies, reduced energy consumption, especially for travel, and other sustainable development benefits.

37. We request UNEP and the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum to take the following actions:

(a) UNEP should convene a meeting of ministers of environment and tourism, together with their counterpart country representatives to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, to review issues of tourism and the environment;

(b) The Governing Council should ensure that increased and adequate funding is available to allow UNEP to carry out activities related to tourism and the environment in its programme of work.

VI. Conclusion

38. Civil society stands ready to work closely with UNEP and all Governments to face the complex challenges posed to sustainability on our planet. We request Governments, especially of developed countries, fully to honour their promises in Millennium Development Goal 8, particularly as they relate to export market access for developing countries, development aid and debt relief. We call upon all Governments and stakeholders from all sectors to join in a common effort to ensure a better, safer world for present and future generations.

Annex II

Statement of the seventh Global Civil Society Forum on the outcomes of the first meeting of the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment (WILL 2006)

1. The Global Civil Society Forum welcomes the outcomes of the first meeting of the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment, “Workers’ Initiative for a Lasting Legacy” (WILL 2006), organized by UNEP and the International Labour Foundation for Sustainable Development (SustainLabour), the International Confederation of the Free Trade Unions, the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Global Compact.
2. The Global Civil Society Forum also congratulates UNEP for having initiated this collaboration and encourages UNEP to continue to engage major groups, such as indigenous peoples, in order to achieve more effective environmental and sustainable development policies.

Annex III

Resolution on chemicals management for submission to the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session

1. Participants at the seventh Global Civil Society Forum draw the attention of representatives at the International Conference on Chemicals Management to the seventh global civil society statement to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum at its ninth special session, contained in information document UNEP/GCSS.IX/INF/7, and urge that the final resolution of the International Conference on Chemicals Management:

(a) Recognize that sound chemicals management, as reflected in chapter 19 of Agenda 21, through an effective strategic approach to international chemicals management, is essential for the protection of the environment and the health of current and future generations;

(b) Recognize and take into consideration that sound chemicals management is essential to poverty alleviation;

(c) Take into account the particular vulnerabilities to chemicals of children and women, including women of child-bearing age, as well as implications for future generations;

(d) Ensure that women, youth, indigenous peoples and marginalized stakeholders are full and active participants in the decision-making and implementation processes of chemicals management;

(e) Ensure, through the involvement of Governments, international financial institutions, the business and industry sectors, and others, sufficient new and additional financial resources to enable the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

(f) Embrace core principles and approaches, such as precaution, liability and compensation, public participation, access to information, and polluter pays, as included in the seventh global civil society statement and the draft proposal by the President of the International Conference on Chemicals Management; and

(g) Ensure that there is an effective follow-up mechanism for the continuity and implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, with the continued full and active participation of all stakeholders, including civil society, women, youth and indigenous peoples, at all levels.

Annex IV

Programme of work for the seventh session of the Global Civil Society Forum

Sunday, 5 February 2006

- 7.30–8.45 a.m. **Registration**
- 9–10.15 a.m. **Agenda item 1:** Opening statements
- Chair of the Zayed International Prize for the Environment
Vice-Chair, West Asia civil society host committee
Vice-Chair, Secretariat of the West Asia Host Committee, Emirates Diving Association
Executive Director, UNEP
- Questions and answers
- 10.15–10.30 a.m. *Coffee and tea break*
- 10.30–11 a.m. **Agenda item 2:** Organization of the Global Civil Society Forum
- Election of chairs and rapporteurs
Presentation and adoption of the agenda
- Agenda item 3:** Resolution on chemicals management to be presented to the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its first session
- Agenda item 4:** Ninth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum: International Environmental Governance. What is at stake during the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum?
- 11 a.m.–noon Northern perspective, Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED)
Southern perspective, Mazingira Institute
- Questions and answers
- Noon–3 p.m. *Lunch break*
- 1–2.45 p.m. Side event: Negotiating and implementing multilateral environmental agreements: training manual for non-governmental organizations working on multilateral environmental agreements
Sharing ideas on how to lobby at multilateral environmental agreements: discussion on new manual by Centro de Estudios Ambientales, Earth Media, Stakeholder Forum and UNEP
Questions and answers
- Agenda item 5:** Ninth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum: Ministerial Consultations on Tourism and Energy
- 3–4 p.m. Recommendations to the ministers on tourism
- Global perspective, Worldwatch Institute
West Asian perspective, Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon
- Recommendations to the ministers on energy
- Global perspective, Energy and Resources Institute (TERI),
Latin American perspective, Fórum Brasileiro de ONGs e Movimentos Sociais para o Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento (FBOMS),
- Questions and answers

Agenda item 6: Civil society discussions on tourism, energy and international environmental governance

4–6 p.m. Working groups

6.30–8.30 p.m. *Cocktail dinner*

Welcoming remarks, Executive Director, UNEP

Monday, 6 February 2006

Agenda item 6 (ctd.): Civil society discussions on tourism, energy and international environmental governance (continuation)

9–10.30 a.m. Plenary report from the working groups

10.30–11 a.m. *Coffee and tea break*

11 a.m.–noon **Agenda item 7:** Outcomes of the Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment

Presentation by SustainLabour Foundation
Questions and answers

1–3 p.m. *Lunch break*

Side event: “Toxic Free Future and the 2020 SAICM goal”, by the International POPs Elimination Network

3–3.45 p.m. **Agenda item 8:** Youth and business perspectives on the policy issues of the Seventh Global Civil Society Forum

Business and industry presentation
Youth presentation on energy, chemicals management and tourism

3.45–4.45 p.m. **Agenda item 9:** Outcomes of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

Business and industry perspective
Non-governmental organization perspective
Trade union perspective

4.45–5.15 p.m. **Agenda item 10:** UNEP Global Environment Outlook (GEO)

Presentation of the fourth report in the Global Environment Outlook series (GEO-4) and the 2006 GEO yearbook.

Introduction to the UNEP educational poster series (“The Living Earth in the Fight against Poverty”)

5.15–5.45 p.m. **Agenda item 11:** Civil society engagement with the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

Presentation by the representative of the Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future

5.45–6 p.m. **Agenda item 12:** Closing ceremony

Closing remarks

Chair of the West Asia civil society host committee
Deputy-Director, Division of Policy Development and Law, UNEP

Annex V

Outcomes of the working groups

I. Statement on sustainable tourism

1. The non-governmental organization major group is very pleased that the issue of tourism is being addressed in this forum. After extensive deliberations at the Global Civil Society Forum, we would like to emphasize strongly the following issues related to sustainable tourism. Tourism is becoming increasingly important to national economies, and it must not be underestimated as a means of increasing intercultural understanding and promoting peace in our troubled world.
2. It is vitally important that sustainable tourism principles are applied to all aspects of the industry. Biodiversity, cultural diversity and sustainable tourism development are crucially interlinked. The local community should retain ownership over tourism development and be directly involved in participatory planning and implementation processes in the short and long term.
3. Labelling for sustainable tourism products is an effective way of identifying tourism products and services that are truly committed to the principles of sustainable tourism. We request that UNEP join the steering committee of the Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council, a global body to accredit and harmonize existing certification programmes on a voluntary basis. We look forward to the day when so-called “destination labelling” will further assist consumers in making sustainable tourism choices.
4. We call on Governments to work vigorously with the International Civil Aviation Organization to lessen the impacts of air travel on the environment, especially because international aviation emissions are not included under the Kyoto Protocol targets. One way of compensating for the environmental impacts of air travel emissions is to offset the carbon released by investing in renewable energy products. We call for UNEP to set an example to the rest of the international community by offsetting all employee travel in this manner.
5. Environmental education is also a key component to sustainable tourism. Through awareness-raising, formal education and training opportunities, we can educate local populations and tourists alike. To this end, we urgently support the Decade for Education on Sustainable Development and would like to see this initiative supported by Governments and by UNEP.
6. Tourism is integral to the International Year for Deserts and Desertification. We request that Governments include, in the provisional agenda of the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, discussion of ecotourism issues in the subitem entitled “Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind.” We have begun a productive dialogue on tourism and the environment and heard many admirable statements here today. Let it not end without specific resolutions on how best to harness the positive potential of this growing industry. We ask that tourism, as a cross-cutting issue, be given a special focus both in multilateral environmental agreements and in the UNEP programme of work. Will sustainable tourism be operationalized and sufficiently funded at the national level? We hope so.

II. Statement on energy for sustainable development

7. The failure of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development to make substantial forward progress on the energy question, points once again to the need for a home for energy within the multilateral system.
8. We have all heard about the imperatives for a revolution in the way in which we produce and consume energy: that air pollution is killing children by the millions in the developing world, and that climate change poses an overwhelming threat; and that access to energy plays a central role in rural development.
9. Renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies are technologically mature and market-ready, already enjoying exponential growth rates as the fastest growing part of the energy sector. Other technologies show potential future promise. But what is necessary now is the political will: we need political will to agree to cooperate with diverse stakeholders; we need political will to transfer subsidies from fossil fuels to renewable energy; we need political will to develop renewable energy feed in laws; and we need political will for renewable technology transfer adapted to local contexts.
10. The use of unsustainable energy technologies that are sometimes promoted as a solution for climate change and energy security should be opposed. This includes nuclear energy, waste incineration and large hydropower.
11. Carbon sequestration technologies require several decades of development before becoming economically mature, while we only have one or two decades of development to achieve a shift in the energy sector to prevent adverse climate change impacts. As a result, youth and environmental non-governmental organization do not support investments in such technologies that will divert funds from existing proven successful solutions.
12. Bio-fuel has been highlighted as a potential alternative fuel several times throughout this discussion. We urge the consideration of the fact that large-scale bio-energy can be very destructive, with threats of monoculture and deforestation that exacerbate environmental concerns. We do urge the support of smaller scale bio-energy projects that support livelihood development and the generation of bio-fuels from organic waste, which can serve as a sustainable solution to the classical problem of managing solid waste in the developing world.
13. The non-governmental organization major group, along with other members of civil society, recognizes that energy efficiency is critical to any comprehensive sustainable energy strategy. Joint efforts by Governments and stakeholders are key elements in the continued promotion of enhanced energy efficiency. We strongly highlight that consumer awareness and reaction are key to success in addressing the energy challenge.

III. Statement on international environmental governance

14. Environmental authority within the United Nations system must be significantly strengthened and built upon a formidable scientific base from which credible political decisions may be formulated. Civil society therefore welcomes a long overdue movement to have a United Nations environment organization, at a minimum situated at agency level.

15. We urge that membership be universal and that any new organization be predictably, consistently and substantially funded; we see the need to strengthen the multistakeholder processes and the relationship between governments at all levels, the multilateral organizations and civil society. We seek a greater and more formal role for civil society in this new organization; We urge more accountability, transparency and open access to all information and are aware there is much to be gained when civil society and Governments together work towards sustainable development;

16. When creating such a new organization, we urge you to consider the following:

- (a) Strengthening cooperation and cohesion and harmonization between multilateral environmental agreements and other United Nations bodies;
- (b) Clustering conventions and multilateral environmental agreement, avoiding duplication and maximizing their effectiveness;
- (c) Strengthening the process of the Environmental Management Group and implementation of its partnership forum;
- (d) Using legitimate powers for compliance, enforcement and implementation;
- (e) Making economic decisions and trade regimes environmentally sensitive and restructuring in international financial institutions, WTO and other economic processes to comply with this approach;
- (f) Developing a mechanism or instrument for the implementation of international environmental decisions and legislation by national Governments;
- (g) Incorporating all the Rio Principles agreed to at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

17. We remind Governments of their commitments under the Bali Strategic Plan, which could start delivering some of these requirements immediately given goodwill and resources.

18. With reference specifically to the Environmental Watch proposal and to the Global Environment Outlook, we draw the attention of Governments to the considerable scientific experience and rigour that civil society has to offer and urge them to give civil society scrutiny of and a greater role in the development of the conceptual framework and value base of the assessment component.

19. On financing, civil society has watched in dismay as our natural systems suffer for want of attention and we know there is much goodwill in this room for adequate financing. We offer our help to work with all Governments to ensure the full replenishment of GEF, for this and future rounds.

20. We therefore offer to join with you in partnership in approaching your finance ministries, development ministries and other stakeholders, such as the international financial institutions, as you collaborate to implement commitments under multilateral environment agreements.

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