

NETWORK 2005

Promoting International Sustainable Development

RELAUNCH EDITION

Analysis: Peace, Security & the Environment

Environment & Development in 2005:
A Challenge for Tony Blair

Events Planner for the year ahead

Interview: Malini Mehra
on UN-Civil Society Relations

Under Threat:
Stakeholder Involvement
at the MDG+5 Review

Stakeholder Forum Update



Plus CSD-13:

Special Supplement on Water, Sanitation & Human Settlements



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STAKEHOLDER FORUM FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

DEC
2004

Major Groups' Participation at CSD-13 – 2nd Bureau Meeting Decisions

The Bureau agreed to meet with organising partners of Major Groups on 27 February 2005 and 10 April 2005, respectively. The Bureau reiterated that as implementation actors, Major Groups complement Government action in expediting implementation. In this context, Major Groups should be given opportunities at the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting and CSD-13 to highlight their contributions to implementation, while taking into account the intergovernmental nature of the CSD processes.

The Chairman invited Bureau Members to mobilise funding support for broader participation of Major Groups from developing countries,

while keeping in mind the need for balanced participation regarding gender and geographic representation.

The Bureau decided to hold its third meeting on 20 December 2004, to be followed by a fourth meeting on Friday 28 January 2005 and a fifth on Sunday 27 February 2005, before the start of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting.

To keep up-to-date with further CSD-13 developments, view the CSD website at: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd.htm>

For further details on CSD-13 preparations, see the accompanying Network 2005 supplement.

EDITORIAL

2005: The Year Ahead

Welcome to the re-launch edition of Network – Stakeholder Forum's monthly e-magazine dedicated to promoting international action on Sustainable Development.

What a year we have in front of us! 2005 will see the 5-year review of the MDGs, and the 10-year reviews of the Beijing Women's summit, the Copenhagen Social Development Summit and the Small Island Developing States' 'Barbados plan of Implementation'. CSD-13 will decide on policy options on Water, Sanitation & Human Settlements, and there are crucial steps to be taken on UN reform and the inclusion of stakeholder voices. Add on the coming into force of the Kyoto Protocol and you start to feel out of breath!

Also during 2005 the UK government will hold the Chair of the G8 and the Presidency of the EU, and Prime Minister Tony Blair has pledged that his two central areas of focus will be Africa and Climate Change: Sustainable Development will be at the heart of international politics and processes.

So: **Network 2005** is here to help! This e-magazine will be concentrating all its efforts on helping stakeholders to get to grips with the crowded international agenda we all face over the coming 12 months. We believe that 2005 will present significant opportunities for ordinary people to make a big difference to the future of the world: through getting involved; advising decision-makers; working with other stakeholder groups; and campaigning for change.

Let's start the ball rolling now: this edition includes analysis of the UN report on Peace and Security; an interview with Malini Mehra; a questionnaire on stakeholder involvement in the MDG+5 review; a challenge for Tony Blair; and our events planner for the year ahead. We launch our CSD-13 supplement as well.

Here at Stakeholder Forum we aim to help catalyse international stakeholder action over this hectic coming year – watch this space!

The Editor

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UK Africa Commission: Consultation Continues

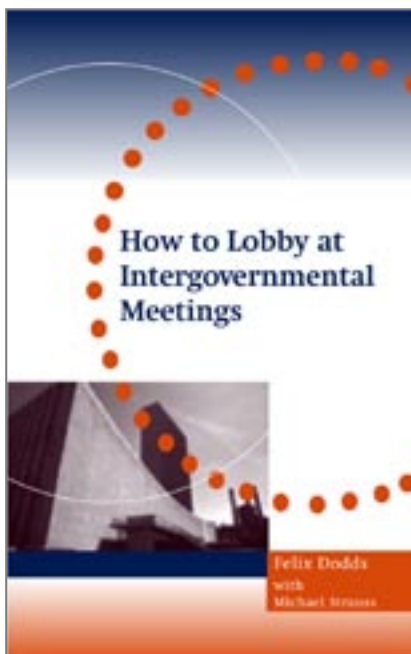
The UK Africa Commission was set up by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair to drive forward Africa's development. It will publish its report next spring, making recommendations to the G8, the EU, other wealthy countries, and to African countries.

The timing of the Commission's work is intended to seize 2005 as an opportunity to make a difference for Africa. 2005 will see the coincidence of the United Kingdom's chairmanship of both the G8 and, in the second half of the year, the European Union, with Africa high on both agenda. 2005 offers a further opportunity around the United Nation's review of implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals, with the knowledge that the goals will not be met in Africa by the 2015 deadline unless there are new ideas and action.

The Commission's work will not however duplicate or replace existing international processes, It will seek to support and encourage the best of existing work, in particular the African leadership shown through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the African Union. It will also seek to generate increased support for the full implementation of the G8 Africa Action Plan.

The Commission's 16 page consultation document was published on 11 November 2004, and they would like to hear stakeholder views by the 17th December. You can email your comments to: Africa_Secretariat@dfid.gov.uk. Full instructions for contributing comments are available on the Africa Commission website, as are versions of the report in French, Portuguese and Arabic.

www.commissionforafrica.org



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Peace, Security and the United Nations: the Environmental Imperative

Is environmental degradation being treated as a key issue for the United Nations in its work to enhance international peace and security? Malcolm Harper considers whether it is being taken seriously enough.

The report of the UN's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, "A more secure world: our shared responsibility", which was published earlier this month, states clearly that the environment is a critical factor in the pursuit of enhanced peace and security.

Indeed, both environment and development issues feature prominently in the six 'clusters' of threats identified by the report:

- war between States;
- violence within States, including civil wars, large-scale human rights abuses and genocide;
- poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation (my emphasis);
- nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons;
- terrorism; and
- transnational organized crime.

Previously, the UN's concern for Peace and Security has often appeared to be limited to a narrow focus on war and violence between and within Member States. It is therefore encouraging that the report not only seeks to improve the UN's effectiveness in regards to its traditional peacemaking and peace-keeping roles, but also stays true to the panel's title and includes a wider focus on the other critical threats and challenges faced by the world.

In fact, for some time now the UN Security Council itself has looked at "threats to international peace and security" in a wider context than had been possible during the Cold War. With the concept of the "peace dividend" being popular (albeit for a disappointingly short period) in the early 1990s, environmental degradation, abject poverty and massive and sustained human rights abuse started to attract the Security Council's attention.

This background should be kept in mind, especially considering the fact

that most of the discussion of the report to date has concentrated purely on its recommendations for Security Council reform (in doing so continuing to reflect on the recent splits in the international community regarding the use of force against Iraq).

It is indeed true that Security Council reform is a key issue, not least regarding fairer international representation, and the report does well in outlining two possible models for the General Assembly to discuss and hopefully to decide upon. But, however, the report also quite rightly argues that this single item should not be allowed to dominate the agenda to the extent that everything else in the report falls by the wayside. The Security Council is a mechanism for responding to threats to our common security, and we should be careful to maintain attention on the goals we face rather than just the process of attaining them.

On the Record: The report of the UN panel on Threats, Challenges and Change

"Today, more than ever before, threats are interrelated and a threat to one is a threat to all. The mutual vulnerability of weak and strong has never been clearer." (paragraph 17)

"Poverty, infectious disease, environmental degradation and war feed one another in a deadly cycle...[and] climate change exacerbates the occurrence of such infectious disease as malaria and dengue fever. Environmental stress, caused by large populations and shortages of land and other natural resources, can contribute to civil violence." (para 22)

"Environmental degradation has enhanced the destructive potential of natural disasters and in some cases hastened their occurrence.

The dramatic increase in major disasters witnessed in the last 50 years provides worrying evidence of this trend...If climate change produces more acute flooding, heat waves, droughts and storms, this pace may accelerate." (para 53)

"International institutions and States have not organized themselves to address the problems of development in a coherent, integrated way, and instead continue to treat poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation as stand-alone threats... Bilateral donors correctly call for better United Nations coordination but show little enthusiasm for similar efforts on their own account." (para 55)

"Existing global economic and social governance structures are woefully inadequate for the challenges ahead. To tackle the challenges of sustainable development countries must negotiate across different sectors and issues, including foreign aid, technology, trade, financial stability and development policy. Such packages are difficult to negotiate and require high-level attention and leadership from those countries that have the largest economic impacts." (para 56)

"The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol after ratification by the Russian Federation is a positive development, even though the Protocol by itself is not sufficient to solve the challenge of limiting greenhouse gas emissions." (para 72)



Environment & Security

Let us therefore turn to what the report understands by the environmental aspects of this wider context of current-day Peace and Security concerns.

The links between abject and continuing poverty, disorder and environmental degradation are spelled out. So, too, are the effects of climate change on natural disasters and consequent human suffering. Paragraph 54 goes on to state that:

“Rarely are environmental concerns factored into security, development or humanitarian strategies. Nor is there coherence in environmental protection efforts at the global level. Most attempts to create governance structures to tackle the problems of global environmental degradation have not effectively addressed climate change, deforestation and desertification. Regional and global multilateral treaties on the environment are undermined by inadequate implementation and enforcement by the Member States.”

It will be interesting to see what Member States make of this. The report's views will at least give support to efforts to reform UNEP, but will proposals for the creation of a stronger United Nations Environmental Organisation now be viewed with more urgency and enthusiasm?

The increasing intensity of many environmental threats and the shared responsibility we face is underlined in paragraph 52:

“Current trends indicate persistent and possibly worsening food insecurity in many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Population growth in the developing world and increased per capita consumption in the industrialized world have led to greater demand for scarce resources. The loss of arable land, water scarcity, overfishing, deforestation and the alteration of ecosystems pose daunting challenges for sustainable development...”

Given this recognition of a weakened global environment, Paragraphs 71-72 go on to discuss global warming and

the Kyoto Protocol. They conclude with the words, *“We urge Member States to reflect on the gap between the promise of the Kyoto Protocol and its performance, re-engage on the problem of global warming and begin new negotiations to produce a new long-term strategy for reducing global warming beyond the period covered by the Protocol.”*

Many climate activists will be disappointed that the report does not go further here, but I have been led to understand that climate change was not given centre stage in the report partly because the UN Secretary-General knows that it is being taken forward elsewhere and did not want unnecessary overlap.

The Greatest Threat

Nevertheless, it is climate change which is ever more widely seen as the greatest of all threats to the whole future of our planet. If, it is argued, we do not get our act comprehensively together – at the international, regional, national and local levels – urgently and simultaneously, then the threats of terrorism, of organized crime, of poverty, of weapons of mass destruction and of war will become increasingly secondary.

In this context, the Report could – some say should – have stressed more fully that, if mass migration on unprecedented levels results from climate change, then this will itself be the biggest influencing factor on the maintenance of international peace and security. Given the combination of increased populations, weakened ecosystems, and the loss of increasing areas of habitable and cultivable land to sea-level rise and salinisation, the world will struggle to cope.

There is much more of value in the report that this brief article cannot include at present. What is most encouraging, however, is this broader approach to threats to peace and security which the UN is now taking. All of us must seek to ensure that there is no backsliding from it.

The Way Forward: Key Recommendations

1. All States must recommit themselves to the goals of eradicating poverty, achieving sustained economic growth and promoting sustainable development. (paragraph 59)

10. States should provide incentives for the further development of renewable energy sources and begin to phase out environmentally harmful subsidies, especially for fossil fuel use and development. (para 71)

70. Members of the General Assembly should use the opportunity provided by the Millennium Review Summit in 2005 to forge a new consensus on broader and more effective collective security. (para 240)

72. Following the recommendation of the report of the Panel on Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, the General Assembly should establish better mechanism to enable systematic engagement with civil society organizations. (para 243)

101. All Member States should rededicate themselves to the purposes and principles of the [UN] Charter and to applying them in a purposeful way, matching political will with the necessary resources. Only dedicated leadership within and between States will generate effective collective security for the twenty-first century and forge a future that is both sustainable and secure. (para 302)

Malcolm Harper is the Former Director of the UK United Nations Association and is a Board Member of Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future.

The Panel's report is available at: www.un.org/secureworld/

Stakeholder Forum will be publishing a book during 2005 on the theme of Environmental and Human Security—more details to follow soon.

Small Islands: Big Stakes – SIDS get down to business

Island nations – from the Caribbean, Mediterranean and South China Seas, and the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Ocean regions – will join with donor and other countries in Mauritius, from 10–14 January 2005, at the United Nations International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

For the forty-plus small island nations, the Mauritius meeting has big stakes, as they tackle serious threats and seek ways to boost and support their efforts to achieve sustainable development and to improve their inhabitants' lives.

Some of the challenges they face include that:

- climate change's adverse impacts are already striking islands;
- fragile ecosystems require urgent protection;
- islands need more market access and better terms of trade;
- renewable energy is vital to lessen dependency;
- tourism has to be made more sustainable;
- information technology can reduce isolation;
- island cultures remain an untapped asset;
- diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria must be fought;
- security challenges are a burden; and
- island vulnerabilities have to be overcome.

SIDS and CSD preparations: Upcoming UK Events

Stakeholder Forum will be hosting two events in London on January 6th 2005:

- **The Press Launch for UNEP's contribution to the SIDS International Meeting, and**
- **The second meeting of the UK Water Roundtable**

Further details on these events are presented on page 22.

The Mauritius International Meeting will examine progress in implementing the Programme of Action approved at the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados in 1994. In addition to climate change and tourism, the Programme includes the following priority areas: natural disasters, wastes, marine resources, freshwater, land resources, energy, biodiversity, transport and science / technology. Small island and donor nations had agreed to tackle islands' challenges in partnership.

Given this background, it will be interesting to see what results from this first of many international meetings for sustainable development in 2005. Will SIDS be able to set a trend of positive outcomes and additional resources? Or will donor States hold back in fear of setting a positive precedent? We will have to wait and see?

Future editions of Network 2005 will be following the events in Mauritius with interest. We will also be here as a forum for comment and analysis – get in touch if you have a viewpoint you would like to share.

www.un.org/smallislands2005

CSD-13: Major Groups in Cooperation

Major Groups active at CSD have been working together to produce a combined submission to the inter-governmental preparatory meeting for CSD-13. This paper will include the recommendations for priority actions identified by the different Major Groups.

Given last year's historic shared final statement at CSD-12, this combined submission is a further exciting development and a demonstration of the partnership approach in action! The final document is due to be issued alongside the Secretary General's papers early in the New Year.

If, however, you can't bear to wait that long, then you can find the CSD-13 background papers from the Local Government, Business & Industry and NGO Major Groups in the accompanying Network 2005 CSD-13 Supplement.





Climate Change: Good vibrations in Buenos Aires / Looking ahead to CSD-14

As Network 2005 went to press, email inboxes around the world were filling up with policy positions and adverts for side events at the Tenth Conference of the Parties (COP-10) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), being held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 6-17 December.

The high level of excitement seems to be in part due to the recent Russian ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the consequent soon-to-occur entry into force of the Protocol itself. Activists hope that 2005 will be the year that things really start to kick into action.

There does remain of course the significant challenge of convincing climate intransigents such as the USA and Australia of the value of getting involved – and even Tony Blair will need help on this if he is to make his desired climate change breakthrough in 2005.

Still, he can draw strength from the fact that the topics for the next CSD implementation cycle in 2006/7 (CSDs-14&15) are: Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air Pollution / Atmosphere; and...you've guessed it...Climate Change. Hopes are already high in the intergovernmental community that this forthcoming cycle of the CSD will yield some positive outcomes.

This may still seem like being a long way off at present, but Network understands that Member State questionnaires on these topics are to be released in January by the CSD Secretariat. If things run to plan, you can expect the questionnaires to include an informational request for stakeholder input, and to have a return date for the beginning of June 2005– better start planning ahead now!

MDG+5 Review: Millennium Project Reports soon to be released

Stakeholder involvement in next September's High-Level review of progress on the MDGs is still to be sorted out [see in this edition our interview with Malini Mehra, and help to provide feedback through the stakeholder questionnaire], but the policy inputs to the Main Event are starting to be cranked out by the UN machine.

First to come will be the report of the UN Millennium Project, led by Prof. Jeffery Sachs of Columbia University. The Millennium Project's research focuses on identifying the operational priorities, organizational means of implementation, and financing structures necessary to achieve the MDGs.

The Project's final recommendations are due to be launched in January; but will the report lead the way in promoting

an integrated sustainable development approach? Network had heard some grumbles that earlier drafts hadn't got to grips with energy issues, so it will be interesting to note the place of renewable energy technologies in the final version.

Still, the completion of such a mammoth task is to be congratulated, and Jeffery Sachs' consistent calls for greater resources from donor countries (including in person at this year's CSD-12) has been a very welcome input to the ongoing debate.

Network will be reporting back with some in-depth analysis on the report's recommendations in future months.

www.unmillenniumproject.org

Introducing Stakeholder Forum's 2005 Sustainable Development Events Planner

2005 is a key year for the promotion of sustainable development at the international level. Many ongoing processes will hold major events, and these provide opportunities for the interchange of ideas and the promotion of that ever-so-difficult 'joined-up' thinking.

At present, however, there is no integrated picture available – instead there are many little pieces of the jigsaw scattered around the world. So Stakeholder Forum is aiming to help stakeholders gain a better view of the integrated whole – and we will be pushing hard to try to get the different agendas and processes joined up.

Over the course of the coming year we will be continuing to update you each month on what should be happening

and when. We will also be doing our best to keep you informed as to how you can get involved, and will be producing in-depth monthly calendars and process guides. For starters, our CSD-13 timetable will be included next month.

Our events planner on the following pages is very simple – months read across the top, different types of event are down the side. We have even included information on what the UK Government will be doing as it leads the G8 and EU, plusæ the campaign plans of UK-based NGOs.

If you think we have missed something out, or would like to assist us with insights and analysis on particular events and processes, do contact the editor at

clittlecott@stakeholderforum.org



Stakeholder Forum's 2005 Sustainable Development Events Planner

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
HEADLINE POLITICAL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EVENTS	World Economic Forum (Davos, Switzerland) World Social Forum (Porto Alegre, Brazil) World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, Japan)	Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (India)	Second international forum on partnerships for sustainable development (Marrakech, Morocco)	10-16th: Global Action on Trade Justice	Third Summit of Council of Europe (Warsaw, Poland) 16th: World Debt Day	
UN 5-YEAR REVIEW OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS	Millennium Project Reports Released		UNSG's Papers and aims for MDG+5 Review DESA NGO ½- day Forum on Millennium Summit	Launch of Social Watch report on the MDGs		2-Day UNGA hearings with civil society organizations on progress of 2000 UN Millennium Declaration (as proposed by UNSG)
UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Release of Major Group's Compilation Report, plus final versions of UNSG's Papers	CSD Intercessional	Chair's summary text of Intercessional Meeting to be issued	CSD-13		CSD-14 country questionnaire returns due in
OTHER UN EVENTS	Meeting to review Barbados programme of action for SIDS (Port Louis, Mauritius)	UNEP Governing Council Beijing Women's Summit +10 Review Copenhagen Social Development Summit +10 Review	UN SG's Response to Report by High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges & Change 5th Ministerial conference on environment and development	HABITAT Governing Council	Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues	60th Anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter
UK-LED ACTIVITIES	UK assumes Chair of G8 1st: UK NGOs launch 'Make Poverty History' campaign on the themes of Trade, Debt and Aid 18th: MPH campaign action on International Debt	1-3rd: G8+ Scientific Conference on Climate Change, Hadley Centre for Climate Research and Prediction, Exeter, UK. G7 Finance Ministers Meeting, Washington DC	10-11th: G8 Employment Ministers Meeting, London, UK 15-16th: G20 International Energy / Environment Ministers Roundtable, London, UK 17-18th: G8 Environment / Development Ministers Meeting, Derbyshire, UK	Africa Commission Report released: recommendations to go to G8 G7 Finance Ministers Meeting, Washington DC	Possible UK General Election 11-12th: Workshop on Innovation, Research & Energy, Oxford, UK	10-11th: G8 Finance Ministers, Lancaster House, London 16-17th: G8 Justice and Interior Ministers, Sheffield, UK 23-24th: G8 Foreign Ministers, Lancaster House, London



	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
HEADLINE POLITICAL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EVENTS	1st: International White Band Day – Call to Action against Global Poverty		Annual Meetings of the IMF and World Bank, Washington DC, USA Second International White Band Day		Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, Malta Summit of the Americas, Buenos Aires	6th WTO Ministerial meeting, Hong Kong
UN 5-YEAR REVIEW OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS			UN GA High-Level Plenary: to include 5-Year Review of MDGs, New York			
UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Preparations for CSD-14 get under way...					
OTHER UN EVENTS					Likely first Meeting of the Parties to Kyoto Protocol	
UK-LED ACTIVITIES	UK begins Presidency of EU 2nd: MPH mobilization before G8 Summit 6-8th: G8 Summit, Gleneagles, Scotland			G7 Finance Ministers Meeting, Washington DC		UK ends Presidency of EU and Chairmanship of G8





Not an impossible goal?

We need to tackle the twin challenges of poverty and environmental sustainability if our millennium development hopes are to remain a reality. Sophie Harding believes some joined-up thinking is needed.

2005 is being heralded as the year for progress against poverty. From a G8 summit in Scotland, to the 20th anniversary of Live Aid, there are an abundance of opportunities to bring about change. But if we are to achieve long-term answers to the poverty pandemic, we must confront the environmental challenges too.

The financial dimensions of development may be more obvious, but Poverty isn't only about economics. Many aspects of livelihoods – like health, food, water and energy – are all dependent on a sustainable environment too.

That's why the environment is essential to any discussions of economic development: because the impact of an unsafe environment falls disproportionately on the poorest countries.

Poverty is also about vulnerability. "We lost in 72 hours what took us more than 50 years to build", said the President of Honduras, after Hurricane Mitch struck Central America in 1998 – leaving 10,000 dead and 3 million dependent on aid donations. Poor people aren't just more vulnerable to environmental disasters, so too disasters "keep the poor in poverty by consistently wiping out what resources they have" (World Bank 2000).

In many poor countries, environmental disasters are literally waiting to happen. By 2025, it is estimated that more than half of all people living in developing countries will be highly vulnerable to floods and storms. Climate change has been linked to sea-level rise and an increase in extreme weather events, like floods and droughts. This poses huge humanitarian challenges for the international community, because climate change could undo decades of development work.

It's not just extreme weather events that forecast danger for development. The other impacts of a changing climate may be more subtle but they are no less serious.

Water is one example. The world is already facing a serious water crisis: more than 1.2 billion people currently lack access to safe water, and 2.4 billion people lack basic sanitation. And demand for water is increasing at a time when experts predict that global warming will lead to decreased water availability in many of the water-scarce regions, as well as contaminated water supplies in flood-prone areas. It is estimated that up to two-thirds of the world's population will be living with water shortages by 2025.

Agriculture, which accounts for 70 per cent of employment and 35 per cent of GNP in sub-Saharan Africa, will also suffer. Droughts have already provoked food crises across southern Africa, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and crop-yields are predicted to fall by 20 per cent with global warming, prompting many more food security scares.

In September 2005, there will be a special summit to review progress of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), five years on. The MDGs, agreed by all 191 of the UN member states, are aimed at reducing poverty in all its forms – yet none of them mention the effects of climate change, including disasters, which threaten to undermine the attainment of them all.

As donors increasingly focus their interventions in order to meet the MDGs, it is crucial that they account for the increasing threats that climate change and environmental disasters will pose.

To truly make poverty history, we need development strategies that address the financial crises poor countries face – but also go hand-in-hand with efforts to ensure environmental sustainability. And that surely is not an impossible goal.

Sophie Harding



Three Climate Changes

Climate change could undo decades of development gains if international action isn't taken soon.

The UK Prime Minister Tony Blair has made clear his concerns about the climate and his intention to make it his focus at the 2005 G8 summit. Tearfund has come up with three specific climate change proposals, to give him ideas for action.

Tearfund's three 'climate changes' for the Prime Minister to push forward during 2005 are to:

- persuade the G8 to agree plans for a global, long-term solution to climate change that is effective and equitable
- commit the UK government to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into its overseas development programming by a specific date, and to persuade the EU to do the same
- launch a plan of action for Africa to enable countries to develop in a way that is resilient to current and increasing climate-related risks

For more information on the Tearfund 'Three Climate Changes' campaign, visit: www.tearfund.org/whoseearth? or call 0845 355 8355 from within the UK.

Do you have a New Year's wish for Tony Blair? What would you like him to tackle while he heads up the G8 and EU?

Write to us here at Network 2005 and we will feature your suggestions in our January edition.

clittlecott@stakeholderforum.org



Poor Communities Are Already Feeling The Impact Of Rising Temperatures
Photo: Jim Loring/tearfund





The Network Interview: Malini Mehra



Ms. Malini Mehra is the founder and director of the Centre for Social Markets, an independent non-profit organization, with offices in India and the United Kingdom, dedicated to making markets work for the 'triple bottom line'- people, planet and profit. She was a member of the UN Expert Group on Corporate Social Responsibility and contributed to the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalisation.

She recently served as a member of the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons on Civil Society and UN Relationships, which was chaired by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, former President of Brazil. The panel was convened "to review past and current practices and recommend improvements for the future in order to make the interaction between civil society and the United Nations more meaningful".

The panel presented its report to the UN in June 2004, and it was recently the subject of discussion in the UN General Assembly. 2005 will be the key year for promoting and taking forward the panel's recommendations. Here, Malini Mehra talks to Network about the challenges ahead for those promoting the panel's recommendations, and also highlights the immediate priorities that require action.

Network: Could you let us know more about your personal history of involvement with the UN leading up to your role on the eminent person's panel?

Malini Mehra: I first became aware of the UN as a teenager, as many people do, through reading about the problems of the world, and the role of the UN in trying to tackle them. Added to that was the fact that I am Indian, and the UN and India's role in the Non-Aligned Movement was of much political comment and interest at the time.

I have always been interested in international affairs and became involved with the Model United Nations at college. My next connection was largely through the women's movement and the UN's series of world conference on the status of women in the 1980s. I found that, whatever issue you are working on, the UN invariably has a role to play. For example, I worked with a shelter helping women suffering from domestic abuse, and could see that there was a link from that work to the UN in terms of international action and norm-setting on violence against women.

The same is true in other sectors: if you are working on children's rights then there's UNICEF for you; if you are working on environmental issues you know of UNEP and the various different treaties etc. I think this is a great tribute to the UN system – that it has been able to recognise and make a meaningful contribution to many of the issues that concern people and bring them together for action.

Much of my life has been as an activist in the feminist, environmental and human rights movements. The 1990s

were an exceptional period for us to be working on these issues with the different world conferences and summits. I was involved in the Beijing Women's summit in 1995, UNGASS (Rio+5) in 1997, and also the climate change process leading up to Kyoto and beyond.

In retrospect, given the general conservatism of governments, I think we went a lot further than we normally acknowledge. Now of course the political climate has changed, the reaction is setting in and we have to fight like heck to hang onto the gains made then.

So I've been involved as an activist, with various different social movements, and I've also been involved in the UN as someone who has contributed through more formal channels such as the UNDP's Human Development Report as a writer and advisor.

I am entirely devoted to the principle of the UN – I think that if the UN were to be closed down tomorrow, we would have to reopen it the day after. But we are not in the 1940s any more. I think that people should see the UN and the fact that it came about as a mark of its time – following two totally devastating world wars, when people realised that you have to have a forum for international peace-making and development.

Now though, I think that if our children's generation are to benefit from that valuable legacy, then we have to make sure that the UN continues to be relevant in our times - and that will be through change and renewal.



Network: The panel's report discusses precisely this issue of a changed world context – that the UN now finds itself in changed circumstances, and that this necessitates enhanced interaction with stakeholders. Perhaps you could explain a bit more about how you understand this general context?

MM: Sure, the fact is, that we live in an interdependent world, and I think that that description is far more important than that of a 'globalised' world.

We live in an interdependent world, not just through trade and commerce, or global environmental change, or health pandemics and such, but also through our personal links and connections. For example, I am an Indian who now lives half of her life in the UK. Over the years I've lived in many different countries – and there are millions of people like me who straddle countries and cultures. People who are connected through culture, through blood, and through values, with people in other parts of the world.

This last point is important. As a world we are increasingly interdependent at the level of values. And we need intergovernmental bodies that reflect this fundamental reality of the 21st Century and are in a position to respond when needed.

The other point when one talks about interdependence, is that it isn't just at United Nations level, which seems so far away for most people, but it's also about what happens at say the European level if you happen to live in the UK; it's about the ASEAN level for people who live in SE Asia; and the SAARC level for people who live in India and Pakistan. This is our immediate interdependent neighbourhood and the regional level is people's first point of reference when we talk about the international interdependence of countries.

We need people to be much more aware about interdependency and the role of international and regional institutions in finding solutions to problems that nations can't handle on their own. And as part of that literacy we need a much better informed public debate that empowers us to respond to problems constructively together.

The UN and Civil Society: an uncertain Future?

"As a member of the panel, and as someone who is interested in the report not just gathering dust on the shelf, it is important that we make sure that people are focussing on the key messages."

Network: Moving on to the work of the panel itself now, how did it go about its own consultation process?

MM: We started by identifying the different constituencies that we needed to consult and address, and then used many different ways of interacting with them – some came to meet with us, but we also went to meet others on their own territory.

For example, we attended the annual conference of ICLEI in Greece to meet with Local Government, so that we could have a proper dialogue with them about their engagement with the UN, in what ways it was failing, in what ways it could succeed and what needed to be changed.

It was eye-opening for a lot of us on the panel who hadn't traditionally had contact with other constituencies outside of our comfort zone – outside of the kith and kin with whom we habitually work and interact. So when we got together as a panel for meetings, there was a lot of excited discussion about the different views, needs and opinions being expressed. The bottom line was how we could bring in these multifarious groups to renew and strengthen the multilateral system. This was our fundamental objective.

And that's why it was important to us as panel members to have this consultation with a diverse array of stakeholders, including the parliamentarians, the local authorities, the trades unions, and the private sector, as well as the traditional interlocutors of the UN who are the non-governmental organisations – the mass-based ones as well as the small expert ones.

Incidentally, this approach was precedent-setting. It was the first time that a panel to the Secretary-General has had such an engaged and open consultative process. We felt it was only fitting and proper given the subject that we were addressing that we adopt such an approach.

The resultant set of 30 recommendations in the panel's report are an attempt to answer the key question we asked ourselves – how can you get more people involved and strengthen the system?

Of course there are many other constituencies that people could argue we didn't reach out to – for example the scientific community or the media community in a distinct fashion. I think that because this is an iterative process, one can argue that maybe that's for the next time round – let's see what can be achieved with this set of recommendations, and then come back again for review.



This is an issue that is going to be of crucial importance over the coming years, so we need to keep acting on it and involving all relevant constituencies in an ever-widening process.

Network: One of the key points made in the report is that it is now time to update the UN and make it more effective, and that this can only be done through involving other stakeholders apart from governments themselves. This seems to be common sense to all those who have been involved in UN processes, so what can stakeholders do to really push this message home?

The first point is that the UN has been under reform for a number of years, and this Secretary General was appointed because he was seen as a reformist. One of the very positive things we have seen with his leadership at the UN (and which we may not see with his successor, so people should keep that in mind), is that he has had a very, all-embracing, pro-civil society agenda. He has welcomed the fact that the UN needs to engage with constituencies outside of the member states even as it retains its fundamental character as an intergovernmental organisation.

In terms of what people can do, they can contribute in a number of ways, but the key thing is that they mustn't just stick to people from their own constituency or those that they feel comfortable working with. We all need to challenge ourselves.

Look at the trades unions for example. They can't deliver on workers rights by only working with employees, they need to work (as many do already) with the broader private sector of which they are part, with faith-based organisations, with women's organisations – with a whole range of other constituencies - and you can use that same analogy for any stakeholder group.

People are already working in partnerships and alliances for change – it seems so basic and so obvious. But in many cases we have been hamstrung by thinking that we can only work within and for our particular community. That's a mistake. If we are really going to see solutions to some of the major problems – whether that be conflict or poverty or HIV / AIDS – it's going to be with everyone working together in the same direction.

“The key messages of the report are about the fact that for the UN to remain meaningful and to be more effective, then it's got to become much more outward looking, and embrace a number of different constituencies in an effort to reinforce support for multilateralism.”

Network: Some stakeholder groups have expressed concern about the panel's inclusion of parliamentarians and the business community within its recommendations – could you explain to us a bit about the panel's thinking on this?

MM: I think that in terms of parliamentarians and the private sector, it was evident to us that these are two very critical constituencies. At present, most parliamentarians are simply unaware of the UN's work, its debates, and the relevance of major international conferences for national legislatures. They don't know, and many don't take an interest. But they need to if we are to have a much more effective system of international governance where one actually sees the translation of international principles into domestic policy and practice.

As everyone knows, we've got a huge implementation gap. One of the reasons is that when there is a domestic translation of international principles, it is not always coherently legislated or enforced. If you have parliamentarians who are informed and who care about making good local laws, then the thinking is that they will also make sure that that legislation is then translated into deeds and doesn't just remain on paper.

There is a similar principle for the private sector. People have this idea that the private sector is just queuing up to be engaged with the UN system. This is far from the truth.

Those companies which have, for example, signed up to the UN Global Compact represent a miniscule minority of international business seen in broader perspective. They are companies that already see the relevance of the United Nations for the work that they do, in terms of the products and services that they supply, their wider market ambitions, but also in terms of the broader humanitarian or social agenda they espouse.



But it is not good enough to only woo a handful of companies that are already part of the converted. I think the fact that the vast majority of the companies who have already signed up for the Global Compact are Western European or Asian, not North American companies, speaks volumes for the fact that broadly speaking there is positive cultural reception to the UN system in these parts of the world. One does not see this in the same way in the United States. The reality is that if we are really going to see all of the things that we care about – whether that's the environment, human rights, or the social development agenda advance – then the private sector has to be involved.

Many people don't see the ways in which many companies, large and small, make a very important daily contribution to employment generation and growth domestically. They are not always the source of bad news or 'evil doers'. There is a lot of good news and we want to make sure that more companies understand the role of the UN in governing our world. We want them to be involved in that and contribute to it by playing a vital and positive role.

We want all of the constituencies to play a positive role together, and none of them should be written off *a priori* as having nothing to do with the UN because the UN belongs to all of us.

Network: The panel's report makes some recommendations regarding the UN Accreditation process. Can this issue be dealt with separately, or does it have to be dealt with as a package of measures from the reports recommendations?

MM: In terms of the recommendations of the report – they can be pick and mixed of course. It would be ideal if they could be dealt with in an integrated way but that might be too much to ask at this point.

In terms of accreditation, we need a step by step process. First of all we need to deal with the immediate reality that for next year we have to make sure that accreditation of civil society is on the agenda of the General Assembly. Steps need to be taken now to ensure that civil society has a meaningful role to play in the summit for next year.

Outside of that, there is a broader discussion about the whole system of accreditation at the UN. I don't think that one should expect that people will easily embrace the whole package, but we do have to deal with things as and when they emerge.

What is a step forward is that we have broached a taboo area here, and the taboo is: firstly, outing the fact that accreditation is currently extremely political and that it is a politicised process at the UN. Secondly, now that we have outed this issue we have identified that this is an area that must be changed, because many people are unhappy with it internally, not just outside stakeholders.

For example, a number of member states are unhappy with the accreditation process because they know that when a country opts to be part of the committee on NGOs, then that is a country that very often has an agenda of exclusion of civil society. So there is awareness that we need a much more neutral space, where the best available information is provided, and where there are rigorous transparent criteria for assessing whether an outside organisation can benefit the UN system through a certain level of official engagement. We also need an adequate appeals process so that perceived injustices can be transparently dealt with.

Right now we don't such a system. In our report, we've highlighted this as one of the failings of the UN in its attempts to command the greatest confidence from external stakeholders. Now it is the member states that need to pick up and run with this issue if progress is to be made. And given that it is a political issue, we hope that there will be a political response to it next year.

"With the release of the next High-Level panel report on Peace and Security [now released], I believe the knives are out for the United Nations, certainly by a number of countries, and I think that people, particularly in the activist community, shouldn't assume that the UN is as solid and unshakeable as people think it is, because it is in fact a very uncertain time for the UN."

Network: The panel's report didn't just address civil society involvement at the New York / Global Conference level, but also discussed civil society input to the UN at the country level, particularly in regards to implementation and policy discussions. Would you like to add anything more about that?

MM: Oh yes. If I were to flag any one area that deserves absolute immediate attention in regards to the report's recommendations, then it would have to be the focus on the country level – and not just those that have a UNDP office, which is pretty much in developing countries, but also in so-called Northern countries.



In my view, it is absolutely disgraceful that we've done away with the United Nations Information Centres in countries such as the UK. How on earth are people expected to be well-informed about the work of the UN, unless there is actually a mechanism for informing them, and for linking national policy making with the international system? It's disgraceful that we've scrapped that and prevented generations of people in Northern countries from having an understanding of the role and the relevance of the United Nations.

I believe that is one of the reasons why we have such an imbalanced international debate about the role of the UN. There is a widespread perception that the UN only exists for the global poor, and that it is the Northern countries that have to foot the bill all the time. This is patently untrue. We all benefit from the UN's work in areas such as humanitarian issues, peace-building, conflict resolution, human development, environmental standards and norm-setting - everything from food standards to international treaties on climate change. But the general person on the street doesn't know this because they don't receive that information through the news they hear or the papers they read.

At the country-level we need far better dissemination of information about the UN. We need far better engagement with civil society and other actors; and that's why the recommendations at the country level are arguably the most necessary. We said that where there is, for example, a UNDP office or a UNICEF office, then there should be a civil society specialist, because these institutions don't necessarily know how to work with other stakeholders. Everyone becomes imprisoned within their own way of working and they do need someone to guide them as to the ways in which they can engage with other constituencies.

"The recommendations that we have made are in keeping with the state of affairs - the fact that multi-lateralism is losing a great deal of high-level political support; that people have become complacent about the United Nations needing reform; and also complacent about needing to work with different constituencies."

Network: The Secretary General responded to the panel's report in June 2004, and since then there have been a series of other responses by stakeholders and a debate in the General Assembly. How has the debate been viewed generally? – has it been positive, or would you have liked to have seen a greater response coming forward to help build momentum?

MM: The answer is yes, we have been disappointed that sufficient momentum hasn't already been gained since June since the Secretary General responded to the report, but that's in the nature of things – you always want things to have been done yesterday.

There has been a mixed debate, but overall I think one can conclude that the debate has been positive at the New York level. But this isn't a debate that should only be held in New York – every capital needs to have this discussion, and lead on that discussion with stakeholders at the national level. That hasn't happened as yet and it should – here too in the UK.

I can think of very few countries where governments have actually gone out and declared that they believe that this to be a report which is of great relevance to future of the United Nations, and that they would like to have a discussion with the stakeholders in their country so that that they can come to an informed decision about how the report should be taken forward

If we see that kind of debate in Congress or the Indian Houses of Parliament, then that would be a positive step to show that these countries are taking the report seriously. But if their missions in New York are the only ones commenting on it then I don't think that's good enough. That would be a very feeble and inadequate response to a report of this nature.

Network: The Dutch response on behalf of the European Union in the General Assembly debate on the report suggested that the High-Level plenary next year would be a good time to decide on some of these steps. Is that likely, or do you think that timescale is too short?



MM: Everything depends on what happens in the next two weeks – if it is not tabled for next year in the next two weeks, then the moment will be gone, and it will be very hard to recapture it in next year’s debates. So that is why we need a few steps now to set things in motion.

We can then take much larger steps next year when governments have had a chance to review the implications of some of the recommendations and when they have discussed it with their stakeholders at the national level. Because so much of what we have said has relevance to the country level, it would be inappropriate for governments to take a position one way or the other now, when they haven’t had the discussion at the national level with their parliaments and other stakeholders

Network: What now is the process going forward? There was talk of a coalition of countries coming together to support the report’s recommendations – is this still the case?

MM: Yes there is. There’s Brazil, which is in the driving seat. They are leading on this and they’ve accepted a non-paper. They are working with a number of friendly countries, who are well pre-disposed towards the recommendations of the report - these countries include the UK.

There hasn’t been a decision as yet on taking the non-paper forward, but there will be within the next two weeks, so people should enquire with their country’s mission in New York if they are interested in knowing what the contents of the discussion are.

Regarding how things go forward, the next few weeks are critical because there has to be an official take-up on this by this General Assembly. That is particularly the case on things such as the modalities for the involvement of NGOs for the summit next year.

I think that Stakeholder Forum and this magazine can play a very important role in broadcasting the key message, which is that we need member states to be generally positive about the report and its primary recommendations. They can disagree with some of the key recommendations – that’s part of the point of having a report which has some provocative recommendations – but the process needs to be carried forward in the broader interest of the UN.

So, even if the General Assembly can’t agree on some of the key recommendations coming out of the report, that

they should at least say this must be placed on the agenda for next year. That could in fact be a good thing because member states may be feeling more generous about civil society access issues because it’s just such a spectacular year for international summitry.

Right now, stakeholders need to get in touch with their country delegations at the UN and pressure them to keep this on the agenda, to get the process in motion for next year, and especially so that action is taken on one of the great absences – which is the fact that there hasn’t been a discussion of civil society access to the September 2005 MDG+5 event – that really has to be addressed in the next two weeks.

Network: So time really is pressing then?

MM: We need to underline the importance of this issue – if we want to see any of the recommendations of the panel’s report actually come to light, then we need a lot more, well-organised, mobilisation now. This could be through a network of letter-writing campaigns, through people contacting their MP, contacting their member state’s mission in New York etc.

That’s why Social Watch’s letter-writing campaign is really to be welcomed, because we need people to be aware of the panel’s report, its relevance for them and their relationship to the UN system. We need people to find ways of supporting the general principles and to find ways of engaging in the debate. For example by contacting their own member states about it and urging them to step on the gas.

My key message is that we do need to make a campaign out of it and not let things drift under the radar. I’ll say again, the next two weeks are absolutely critical, because unless we act, so much of what we’ve taken for granted over the last 10 years – the ever-greater opening of the UN - could be in jeopardy without people realising it. It’s time to get sending emails and get on the phones – **we need action now.**

“Money and resources aren’t the real issues – political effectiveness and credibility are, and we believe that the UN will be more effective if it works with a wide range of constituencies.”



Millennium Development Summit 2005:

Stakeholders raise concerns about participation

In November 2004, the UN Secretary General released a report outlining the proposed modalities for stakeholder participation at the Millennium Development Summit to be held in September 2005.

These proposals are of great interest to stakeholders worldwide, and not just because the summit will be a major opportunity to push forward global action on the Millennium Development Goals. This High Level Event is also important because it will be the first to be organized by the UN following the publication of the recent 'Cardoso Report' on UN – Civil Society relations. [See interview with panel member Malini Mehra on page 12 for more details].

Given that the 'Cardoso Report' recommends increased and improved UN interaction with stakeholders, it is therefore very disappointing to find that the suggested modalities appear to take us backwards not forwards.

In response to the UN Secretary General's suggestions, Roberto Bissio from Social Watch recently wrote a letter in response on behalf of a number of NGOs, which said:

"We are extremely worried that in your recent report on "modalities, format and organization of the high-level plenary meeting of the 60th session of the General Assembly" the opportunities for civil society participation (paragraphs 20 to 22) are restricted to one intervention at the General Assembly and a consultation meeting months before that. The preparatory process for the Summit is being described as "open, inclusive and transparent", (paragraph 23). We do not feel that openness and transparency can be achieved through a process that largely excludes citizen organizations.

The lack of appropriate civil society participation in the Millennium Summit four years ago is one of the reasons, and probably the major one, why it took so long for public opinion to even learn about the MDGs. The lack of political will has often been cited to explain the slow pace of action towards the goals agreed by the Heads of State and Government. And political will goes hand in hand with active civil society engagement and participation. It cannot possibly happen if the same modalities that failed to achieve it in 2000 are repeated in 2005, and if the very same organizations that are supporting the UN work, that have substantive agendas largely coincident with the UN agenda, and that are mobilizing public support for the

same goals, find the doors of the UN shut when they are trying to contribute to its work."

Stakeholder Forum shares the concerns raised by Roberto in his letter, and we are working hard to promote the inclusion of greater stakeholder participation at this major event.

The suggestions made in the Secretary General's report will soon be considered by governments at the UN General Assembly (probably before the Christmas vacation), so **it is extremely important that stakeholder views are made known to them right now.**

We would therefore like to ask organizations to **fill in the following questionnaire** and return it to us as soon as possible by email or fax (details below). This will help us to ensure that stakeholder views are collected together and brought to governments' attention.

In order for stakeholder voices to be heard next year, concerted action is required now, so we would also ask you to **share your concerns with your own government at the highest level** – this would really help the push to promote an improved stakeholder contribution in 2005.

The Millennium Development Summit in 2005 offers a great opportunity for governments, intergovernmental organizations and stakeholders to come together and to become an engine for delivering the MDGs – but this will only happen if governments open the space for such a partnership to happen. We must all do our part now to help them do so!

Felix Dodds
Executive Director
Stakeholder Forum

fdodds@stakeholderforum.org

Fax: +44 207 928 6488

SEE STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE OVERLEAF...





SECTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT:	TEXT OF REPORT (PLUS STAKEHOLDER FORUM COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS)	AGREE	DISAGREE	COMMENT
Section II: Modalities, format and organization of the high level plenary meeting				
A Duration and Timing				
11.	The meeting should be a three day high level plenary			
B Structure and format				
14.	A Combination of plenary and interactive sessions			
14.	During these days there should be four Round Tables			
16.	One option: Each Round Table should cover the whole of the agenda of the Summit			
16.	Second option: Specific Themes for each Round Table (SF: if you favour this option please suggest themes in Comment section)			
C. Participation				
20.	For the Millennium Summit, the assembly decided to invite a co-chair of the Millennium Forum, the civil society event held in May 2000, and the President of the Conference of Presiding Officers of National parliaments to address the plenary of the Summit (SF: What did people think of this?)			
21.	The broader participation of civil society is unfortunately not possible (SF: It has been possible at other Summits or meetings with Heads of States eg Rio+5)			
SF:	SF: suggestion: All Major Groups be given a slot in the plenary (similar to Rio+5 and WSSD)			
SF:	SF: suggestion all Major Groups be given a number of passes to enter and participate in the Round Tables and Plenary where appropriate			
21.	The Assembly, therefore, may want to consider organising hearings with civil society organizations prior to the high level plenary meeting in June 2005 (SF: Could this be as well as better access?)			
22.	Two day informal, interactive hearing with non-governmental organizations			





D. Preparatory process				
23.	First the process must be open, inclusive and transparent (SF: No mention of stakeholders ability to become involved – any views?)			
23.	Second it must bring together various contributions and produce a single integrated package of decisions to be presented at the high level plenary meeting.			
23	Third, but not least, given the importance and scope of the agenda, the preparatory process must be led with a view to achieving consensus and results. (SF: What results would stakeholders want to see?)			
SF:	SF: If we organize an all-day Roundtable meeting on the SG’s March report for Stakeholder Forum IAB members at the CSD on the Saturday 24th of April, would you or a representative of your organization want to attend?			
24.	The President of the GA in consultation with Member States may wish to designate a dedicated, small steering group of countries consisting of representatives from all regions. (SF: What if any role would you like SF play to monitor and input views to this group on modalities?)			
E. High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development				
26.	I see great value in holding the Financing for Development Dialogue prior to the Summit so that it can provide an input into the preparatory process.			
27.	...should take place at the ministerial level, with participation of ministers for various portfolios, including finance, trade and development and should deliver a concrete set of recommendations to the preparatory process for the summit			
28.	Several options regarding timing. First April 2005 (either before 16-17 or after) (SF: please note this will impact on CSD-13)			
29.	Second option in late June or early July 2005, immediately prior to the high level segment of the substantive session of 2005 Eco Soc to be held in Geneva (the SG favours this)			
30.	Third option would be 12 and 13th September (problem to get Ministers because they will be coming back to the US for the 24 and 25th for Bretton Woods meetings)			

You can fax or email your comments to Stakeholder Forum on:

fdodds@stakeholderforum.org

Fax: +44 207 928 6488





Reorganisation News

Stakeholder Forum, in its various guises, has been around for many years. In the build-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, it became evident that the structure and governance of Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future was no longer appropriate for the demands on it; it fitted less and less with the role and activity of the UK United Nations Association (UNA) which had been providing both secretariat support and financial backing.

Following the Johannesburg summit, discussions were begun with UNA about setting up an independent body, working with UNA when appropriate, but standing on its own, with its own management and financial structure. These discussions have now borne fruit and a new organisation, called Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future and maintaining the same web site address as before, has been registered as a company limited by guarantee. As of the latter part of this year, 2004, it formally severed all financial links with UNA and became self-governing.

At the moment, it has a small board of voluntary directors, who in part reflect the world in which Stakeholder Forum operates, but whose main role is to get the organisation up and running; set up a sound financial base and reporting system; and develop both a membership structure

and a governance process that better reflects stakeholder engagement and representation. Discussions are underway as to whether the organisation will move to become a fully-fledged charity but, as yet, efforts are concentrating on maintaining an appropriate work flow; developing a sound business plan; and developing robust procedures for governance and finance.

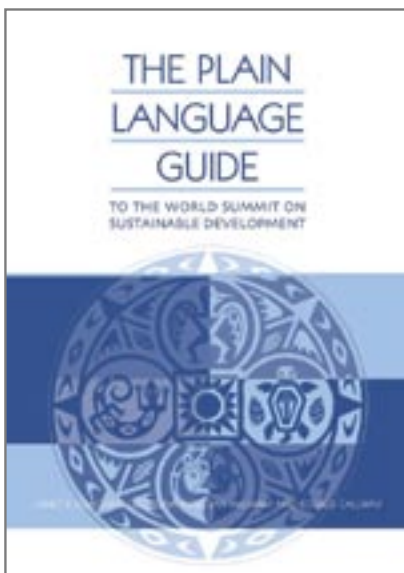
We have been lucky to ensure some continuity both at Board and at staffing level but things are still very much in the melting pot as to how the organisation will appear at the end of its first year and then beyond.

If you feel that you would wish to become involved, either in funding or supporting in some way the work of the new organisation, do please get in touch via Mehjabeen Price, our Deputy Director based in the UK. Her e-mail is

mprice@stakeholderforum.org

As (voluntary) Company Secretary of the new organisation, on behalf of the new Board, I would like to state that there is a huge debt of thanks to UNA for its initial development of the organisation and its longstanding support.

David Fitzpatrick
Company Secretary
December 2004



THE PLAIN LANGUAGE GUIDE TO THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Janet Strachan, Georgina Ayre, Jan McHarry and Rosalie Callway

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Press Launch: UNEP Contributions to SIDS review meeting

Location: The International Maritime Organization (IMO), 4 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7SR

Date: 6th January 2005

Time: 11am – 12pm

Scheduled to launch the report are:

- Klaus Toepfer, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP, and
- Ambassador Koonjul of Mauritius – Chair of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS).

The United Nations Environment Programme will be launching their publications: Global Environment Outlook and Global International Waters Assessment in respect to Small Island Developing States. These reports will constitute UNEP's global input to the Summit of Small Island Developing States to be held in Mauritius from 10th – 15th January 2005, where governments will meet to carry out a 10-year review on delivering sustainable development in SIDS

The launch is being organized by Stakeholder Forum on behalf of, and as the UK national committee for, UNEP. The audience at the launch event will also include members of the press and Ambassadors from the small island states involved.

Due to security arrangements at IMO, confirmation of attendance should be received by end of business on 4th Jan.

Second meeting of the UK Water Roundtable

Location: The International Maritime Organization (IMO), 4 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7SR

Date: 6th January 2005

Time: 1.30pm – 4.15pm (1pm Registration)

The first water roundtable meeting held on 15th September in London produced an excellent report, which was submitted to the UN Secretary General. The report was the first, and so far the only, national stakeholders' submission to the ongoing Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) process.

This second meeting of the roundtable will review the Secretary General's papers due to be presented to the UN CSD Intersessional meeting in February. The Advance, Unedited version of the Secretary General's Report is now available, and we believe the final report will come out before Christmas. We will also be able to discuss the 'Priorities for Action' papers submitted by different Major Groups, in the accompanying CSD-13 supplement.

Our aim will be to put together a UK response to the SG's report. The outcomes from our meeting on the 6th will lead to further discussion at our third round table on 15th of February 2005. Our final report will then be submitted to the UK Government, the European Commission, the UNEP Governing Council in Nairobi and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

During the initial time for coffee and participant registration, we will also be launching our new book, The Plain Language Guide to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which has been produced jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Due to security arrangements at IMO, confirmation of attendance should be received by end of business on 4th Jan.

CSD-14 Around the Corner – 'Energy & Climate' Roundtable planned

With CSDs-14&15 in 2005-06 focusing attention on the issues of Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air Pollution / Atmosphere; and Climate Change, Stakeholder Forum will also soon be starting a roundtable on the theme of 'Energy and Climate' to provide early stakeholder input into the policy review process. The first meeting of this roundtable will be in February, and will be following on from the very successful evening debate event "Is Nuclear Power the Answer to Climate Change?" held on the 17th of November 2004.


For further information about any of these events, please contact SF Deputy Director Mehjabeen Price on

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If you would you like to make any comments or suggestions, or would like to contribute an article or case study for future editions of Network, please contact the editor on clittlecott@stakeholderforum.org

The editor will also be pleased to hear your thoughts and insights into any of the ongoing international policy processes, discussions and arrangements.

Stakeholder Forum is currently seeking sponsorship to help support the continued production of this multi-stakeholder e-magazine. For further details on sponsorship opportunities, please contact the editor

