

Final text of outcome document adopted

Rio de Janeiro, 20 June (Meena Raman)- The final draft of the outcome document for the Rio+20 Conference entitled the "Future We Want" was agreed to by all member states and adopted at referendum at a plenary session convened on Tuesday, June 19.

When Brazilian Foreign Minister, Antonio Patriota convened the final plenary of the "pre-conference informal consultations" he asked parties if they could adopt the text ad referendum, which will then formally be adopted at the Conference Summit by world leaders to be held 20-22 June.

There were no objections to the adoption of the document. It was half expected that the European Union, which had expressed unhappiness during the informal consultations held from 16 to 18 June, might object to its adoption but this was not to be the case.

Patriota, following the adoption of the text said that it was not the ideal text but represents possible equilibrium on the basis of responses from parties to have a good outcome.

The final outcome document reflected some of the main key demands of the developing countries, which included the reaffirmation of the Rio Principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), reaffirmation of commitments to implement Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), an intergovernmental process to develop the sustainable development goals (SDGs), another intergovernmental process under the UN General Assembly to facilitate the mobilisation of resources in achieving sustainable development objectives, the development of a facilitation mechanism for technology transfer of environmental sound technologies and the exploration of modalities in the relevant fora for enhanced access to these technologies by developing countries.

Following the adoption of the outcome document, Patriota invited comments from parties.

Many stressed the delicate balance arrived at to reach the final outcome possible, while reflecting their concerns. While they recognised that the document was not perfect, many stressed the importance of adopting the document at the Summit without re-negotiation.

There was overwhelming praise for Brazil in the conduct of the process, which was viewed as transparent and open, with one delegation saying that Brazil had provided a lesson in multilateralism in allowing parties to arrive at a consensus.

Algeria, as Chair of the G77 and China, said that the outcome document was the optimum possible given the negotiations for over a year and had arrived at the balance needed. It recommended the document for adoption at the Summit level, without prejudicing the right of countries to reflect their concerns.

Canada said that looking at the document as a whole, Brazil had shown strong leadership in trying to balance the views of parties and it was happy with the overall result.

The **United States** appreciated the hard work in attempting to secure a balanced outcome. It was pleased with certain aspects of the document and disappointed with others. It was dismayed that reproductive rights was not recognised and there were no priority themes decided for the SDGs. It was concerned with the discussion over the United Nations Environment Programme and could not agree to its name change to United Nations Environment Organisation (UNEO). It did not want this issue to be opened up in the few days of the Summit. If this was done, it would open up the delicate balance arrived at, saying that many countries swallowed things they did not want to swallow.

Denmark for the European Union said that the document could have been better in many ways for an agreement which was ambitious with concrete action oriented actions. It supported the African Union concern over the UNEO (see below). It however accepted the outcome document in its entirety.

Japan said that while it had difficulties with the document, in the spirit of compromise, it could agree to the document and did not want it reopened.

Norway said the document had positive elements on gender equality and was also dismayed over the lack of agreement on sexual and reproductive rights. It wanted the UNEO in years to come.

China said that while the outcome document was balanced, it was not ideal. Its concerns on trade measures and technology transfer had only been partly reflected.

Bolivia was happy with the recognition given to the rights of Mother Earth, the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the rights of indigenous peoples. It was happy that there was recognition for the different models of development to achieve sustainable development so that countries need not be prisoners of one mono-cultural model called the green economy. One of main problems was the lack of clear commitment by developed countries to provide finance and technology transfer and this was a step backwards. It stressed that private investments cannot be regarded as international cooperation. There was no clear mention of addressing intellectual property rights.

Nauru, for the Alliance of Small Island States said that the outcome document could not provide for all situations but it was a positive step to guide further work and the real work is to implement the commitments.

Cuba said the text was a compromised one but was a good result given the difficult negotiations. It was happy that the Rio Principles were reaffirmed, including CBDR, the rights of Mother Earth, reaffirmation of the right to development and the right to food. It said that significant result was reached with the strengthening of the institutional framework on sustainable development (IFSD) with the decision to establish a universal intergovernmental high level political forum. It was not happy with the section on the means of

implementation and supported Bolivia that this was a step backwards.

Venezuela said that Brazil had shown leadership in multilateralism with transparent and open negotiations. It said the document had a delicate balance and laid the foundation for further collective work. The section on the green economy was a concept that was originally intended to be imposed on all parties, has now been re-appropriated by all. It had concerns over the issue of energy and oceans. It was concerned over the lack of political will among developed countries for strong commitments on finance and technology transfer.

Egypt, speaking for the **Arab Group** said that it would have liked to see more ambition on all parts of the document but given the state of international consensus, it considered the text, which had been adopted not be re-opened. It was happy to see the reaffirmation of the Rio Principles, in particular equity and CBDR, which are fundamental building blocks of sustainable development in all areas, in particular in climate change. The financial and technology mechanisms agreed too had the potential to deliver the implementation of sustainable development. The green economy was not a replacement of sustainable development. The outcome document was not the end of the road but was the basis to build further steps for the future.

Argentina found the text balanced and wanted that balance to be preserved.

Nigeria said the document reflected what the global community could arrive at, at this moment in time. There is need to build on it step by step. It said that developed countries were facing financial problems with developing countries also impacted deeply. The mobilisation of resources is about the future.

Saudi Arabia congratulated Brazil and said that it had demonstrated that in Rio, the foundation for sustainable development was laid and is preserved and is built upon in the future.

Congo, speaking for the **African Union**, referred to the strengthening and upgrading of UNEP and wanted a decision to name it as the United Nations Organisation for the Environment (UNEO).

Kenya echoed the sentiments of Congo and also wanted a decision on a changing of the name of UNEP in Rio.

UN Secretary-General of the Conference, Sha Zukang said the negotiations were tough but

succeeded in coming to an outcome document, which has been agreed to for formal adoption.

He highlighted some salient points of from the text where parties have: agreed to establish SDGs and a process to do so; agreed on a path-breaking approach on the green economy as an important tool for sustainable development - for the first time there is consensus language on the green economy; establish a high level forum to follow up on the Rio +20 process; agreed to strengthen UNEP with a heavy mandate; enhance the engagement of the private sector; process to go beyond the GDP which is a first time in history to measure

prosperity and well-being; established mechanisms to focus on finance and technology; reaffirmed all past principles from Rio 92 and Agenda 21 including CBDR and human rights; reaffirmed the political commitment to sustainable development and the future we want; adopted a 10 year framework on sustainable consumption and production; made significant advances in sectoral and cross sectoral areas such as energy and oceans etc.; enhanced gender mainstreaming; role of civil society and the role of science in the service of sustainable development.