



UNITED NATIONS NON-GOVERNMENTAL LIAISON SERVICE/NGLS

Sixth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

The sixth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-6) was held at UN headquarters in New York from 20 April-1 May 1998. Chaired by Cielito Habito, Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning in the Philippines, the commission examined the sectoral theme of strategic approaches to freshwater management; the economic theme of industry; and it reviewed implementation of the Programme of Action of the 1994 Barbados Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States. Cross-sectoral themes considered by the commission included technology transfer, capacity building, education and public awareness, and science for sustainable development.

The reports of two intersessional ad hoc working groups (ISWGs) on Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management, held 23-27 February, and Industry and Sustainable Development, held 2-6 March, formed the basis for negotiation on these issues at CSD-6. The Group of 77 and China (G-77), and India in particular, expressed concern that such meetings should not substitute for deliberations at official CSD sessions. However the chair, noting that the CSD-6 meeting had been shortened by two weeks, decided to allow the session to make comprehensive use of the ISWG reports in the interests of making the best use of limited time.

The commission carried out its work in plenary and in three drafting groups, which produced the ten decisions it approved. A high-level segment of the commission met during the final three days of the session, giving ministers as well as representatives from international and non-governmental organizations an opportunity to exchange views.

"The central message of Agenda 21 is that sustainable development requires action not just in the sphere of environmental policy, but also in the areas of policy dealing with economic sectors like agriculture, industry, energy, transport, tourism and so on."

—Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General,
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs,
Speech to CSD-6

An innovative aspect of the CSD-6 was the convening from 21-22 April of an Industry Segment. Representatives from governments, industry, trade unions, NGOs and other "major groups" identified in Agenda 21 met in four dialogue sessions to discuss, in a roundtable format that only the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) chamber could properly accommodate, the following topics: responsible entrepreneurship, corporate management tools, technology cooperation and assessment, and industry and freshwater. The chair's summary of the segment is included in the official CSD-6 report.

INDUSTRY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The commission's decision on industry and sustainable development, as well as the chair's summary, recognized the value of the interactive dialogue between government and civil society actors for sustainable development. In acknowledging the potential value of a review of voluntary initiatives and agreements, the commission invited representatives of industry, trade unions and NGOs to identify elements for future consideration. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were asked to examine and report on how voluntary initiatives and agreements might contribute to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. UNEP was also invited to report about its work on voluntary initiatives by the financial sector.

The commission recognized a mutually-reinforcing relationship between social and industrial development, noting that industrialization has the potential to promote social objectives such as employment creation and to counter discrimination against women. The decision affirmed, however, that industrialization increases environmental pressures, and it called upon governments in cooperation with non-state actors to undertake greater efforts to integrate economic, social and environmental goals into industrial policy. It called upon industry to increase efforts in responsible entrepreneurship and corporate management tools, and it recognized the importance of eco-efficiency, cost internalization and product policies for making consumption and production sustainable. The commission also affirmed the

need to create an enabling policy environment, stressing the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows as well as official development assistance (ODA) as a main source of external funding, particularly for least developed countries.

Industry Segment

Representatives of industry, NGOs and trade unions made presentations on the themes of responsible entrepreneurship, corporate management tools, technology cooperation and assessment, and industry and freshwater. These presentations were followed by questions and comments by representatives of member states and all major groups. Subjects that emerged frequently included the effectiveness of voluntary initiatives, eco-efficiency, technology transfer, foreign direct investment and official development assistance.

Participants recognized the important role of responsible entrepreneurship and voluntary initiatives in support of sustainable development, but they noted that more needs to be done to build on what has been achieved, including among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

NGOs emphasized that voluntary initiatives cannot be a substitute for good environmental, labour and health laws. Industry representatives emphasized that voluntary initiatives should be sector-, industry- and country-specific, and they resisted the idea of a codification of voluntary initiatives. Trade union representatives pointed out that voluntary initiatives could be transparent and participatory, and they cited as a positive example the Swedish certification system of sustainable forestry (negotiated by industry, trade unions and indigenous groups). The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) said that a joint understanding or definition of voluntary codes should serve as a prerequisite for further discussion.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE CSD

Bureau

The CSD-6 was chaired by Cielito Habito (Philippines). Vice-chairs were Miloslav Hettes (Slovakia), Michael Odevall (Sweden), Rogatien Biaou (Benin) and Marta Inés Galinda (Colombia), who also served as rapporteur.

Immediately following the close of CSD-6, the commission opened its seventh session and elected Simon Upton (New Zealand) as chair and Tibor Farago (Hungary) and George Talbot (Guyana) as vice-chairs. The election of two remaining vice-chairs was postponed.

Members

The current members of the commission are: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

“There has to be a change in the nature of interactions among major players: a kind of maturing from a lobbying approach to a participatory approach. Business and industry, NGOs and labour must move mutually from lobbying government to participation with government. Also, they must be willing to engage government on sustainable development issues and to develop their own sense of responsibility for sustainable development.”

—CSD-6 chair Cielito Habito

Switzerland proposed that voluntary agreements could be negotiated under framework conditions and could involve quantifiable, mandatory targets including monitoring and sanctions if the targets are not met. UNEP noted the role of industry associations in benchmarking and publishing aggregate reports on their contributions to sustainable development.

Many participants stressed the need to improve the quality of reporting of voluntary initiatives. NGO representatives, with support from trade unions, proposed a review by all major groups of voluntary initiatives undertaken by industry.

Industry further defended voluntary initiatives in the dialogue on corporate management tools, when NGOs called for governments to establish a regulatory framework for industry and mandatory environment management systems. Industry representatives noted that progress would not have been possible using “command and control” methods. Trade unions challenged industry to stop condemning command and control regulations, to end exclusive dependence on risk assessment, and to deal realistically with pollution prevention.

The need to make investing in new technologies worthwhile for companies and governments was also emphasized by industry representatives, who suggested legal and fiscal structures that encourage technological investments, efficient market systems, patent and property rights protection, capacity building, and integration with locally-available technologies. Industry representatives suggested that an increased share of official development assistance be used to create conditions favourable for the flow of foreign direct investment to broaden the number of countries receiving the investments. Representatives of NGOs and trade unions recommended that sustainable development objectives be incorporated into international agreements, including those in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in any Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI).

FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT

Drafting Group I considered texts on freshwater in addition to the intersessional ad hoc working group report. The group took note of reports that emerged from the Expert Group Meeting on Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management, held in Harare (Zimbabwe) from 27-30 January; the International Forum on Global Water Politics—Transboundary Water Management, held in Petersberg (Germany) from 2-5 March; and the International Conference on Water and Sustainable Development, held from 19-21 March at UNESCO headquarters in Paris (France).

China, Venezuela and Zimbabwe made presentations during CSD-6 on their respective national experiences in freshwater management. They described demands, identified problems that contribute to the scarcity of water, and outlined efforts to undertake integrated and holistic management of water resources. The Netherlands and Russian Federation also presented their findings during the ISWG on the subject.

The commission, which reaffirmed that water resources are essential for satisfying basic human needs, urged governments to address gaps in the integrated management of water resource development. The decision encouraged riparian states to cooperate on matters relating to international watercourses. It also acknowledged the importance to integrated water management of elements such as availability of data for decision-making, capacity building and participation of all stakeholders, technology transfer and research cooperation, financial resources and mechanisms, and follow-up and assessment.

In the section on Information and Data for Decision-Making, the commission recommended that governments establish and maintain effective information and monitoring networks, and that they design programmes to increase public awareness on water-related issues. The programmes could include the need to conserve, protect and use water sustainably, and allow local communities to participate in monitoring indicators. These in turn would help serve as early warning systems on water-related problems such as flood or drought preparedness.

The commission's recommendations in the section on Institutions, Capacity Building and Participation included a call on governments to: establish or improve legislative and regulatory frameworks; devolve responsibilities to the lowest appropriate level for managing public water supply, sanitation services and irrigation systems; and establish an enabling environment for partnerships between public and private sectors and NGOs to improve local capacity to protect water resources through educational programmes, access to information and a strengthened role for women.

Recommendations in the section on Technology Transfer and Research Cooperation included: stimulate research and development cooperation; develop technologies for sustainable water management and use; promote sustainable agriculture; and reduce pollution. There was disagreement over the language used to refer to terms of technology transfer, with the G-77 and China calling for more favourable terms. Terms finally agreed on were those used in Agenda 21, the action programme adopted at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, and language from the 1997 General Assembly special session to review Agenda 21. South-South cooperation was encouraged, and governments were called upon to make best use of environmentally appropriate technology centres and to promote the use of local and traditional technology and knowledge.

The discussion on Financial Resources and Mechanisms followed well-established North/South lines: the G-77 and China called for new and additional financial resources to realize sustainable development aims while industrialized countries objected, preferring resources "from all sources." The G-77 and China also advocated language calling on donors to meet ODA targets. The agreed text stated that financial commitments of Agenda 21 urgently need to be fulfilled, but it did not mention targets *per se*. The text also highlighted the private sector as one of the growing

sources of investment in the water sector, and the importance of encouraging private sector participation within national policy frameworks on freshwater management. In the Industry Segment dialogue on freshwater, industry representatives emphasized the importance of proper pricing of water, stating that water service must be provided increasingly through public-private partnerships. To support this position, industry representatives presented a recent report of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the UN Environment Programme, which found that pricing water according to costs decreases user waste.

A number of speakers including representatives of Egypt, India, South Africa and Syria as well as NGOs, women's groups and indigenous peoples' organizations, vigorously opposed a solely economic focus on water. They noted that water is also a social good, and that the water needs of the poor and most vulnerable need to be addressed at all costs. South Africa stated that full economic pricing of water should be applied only after basic human needs and the needs of emerging businesses are met. NGOs further advocated application of the ecosystem approach at the catchment level, the cleaner production approach and the polluter pays principle. South Africa supported the polluter pays principle, but said it should be qualified by concerns for developing small and medium-sized enterprises.

Regarding follow-up and assessment of freshwater management, the commission emphasized the importance of voluntary reports on national strategies and programmes, and it recommended more comprehensive use of such information. In addition, Norway asked the Secretariat to ensure that such data is gender-differentiated.

The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Water Resources was asked to enhance its transparency and coordination with the UN, accelerate implementation by identifying programme gaps, consider ways to increase efficiency in programme delivery, and

UNEP REPORT ON VOLUNTARY INDUSTRY CODES OF CONDUCT

A new technical report on Voluntary Industry Codes of Conduct for the Environment, issued by the Industry and Environment Centre of UNEP, provides guidance to industry associations, governments and others on how to develop and use voluntary codes. The report demonstrates what can be achieved by giving concrete examples from leading voluntary codes, and it identifies how voluntary codes can be used as a tool to contribute to sustainable development. Five critical aspects are outlined for making the codes effective in improving industry's environmental performance: getting members' commitment in implementing a code; key ingredients of a code; support and implementation; monitoring implementation and results; and communicating progress to those outside the industry. The report also stresses the need for government regulations as a necessary adjunct to voluntary agreements.

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"The movement toward economic globalization and deregulation, trends which are strongly supported by most corporations, undermine public channels to ensure the accountability of corporations. Industry argues that globalization and deregulation will facilitate more efficient economic activity with the benefits trickling down to an improved standard of living for people. We are unconvinced by the trickle-down theory."

—World Council of Churches,
statement to the CSD-6 high-level segment

explore further cooperation arrangements. UNEP was asked to provide inputs through provision of technical and scientific advice on environmental aspects of the sustainable development of freshwater resources. Also recognized was the need for periodic assessments of a "global picture" of the state of freshwater.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Despite an attempt on the part of the chair to break down rigidities and turn the high-level segment into a dialogue, ministers for the most part stuck to their prepared speeches. However Mr. Habito did convene informal meetings with ministers each morning, which he reported on, and a number of ministers participated in bilateral and informal briefings involving representatives from major groups. Many governments described specific efforts within their countries to increase public awareness of sustainable development issues. Nine governments and the European Union (EU) and European Community announced that they had signed the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (see *E&D File*, January 1998).

Regarding freshwater, the G-77 and China strongly cautioned against giving control of water resources to private entities, noting that there is no guarantee that water systems in private hands will ensure equity concerns are given their proper weight. The G-77 and China supported the establishment of a financial mechanism to promote freshwater management efforts in developing countries. Many developing countries, particularly small island developing states, spoke of the problems they face regarding water scarcity and outlined their national actions and laws to address these problems. The EU highlighted the need to develop local and national programmes and to mobilize international support. It recommended that freshwater policy be based on social, economic and environmental values; involve women; and that participatory management systems be established. Norway called for well-coordinated technical assistance from multilateral and bilateral donors. Approaches to management problems of transboundary watercourses were also a subject of discussion, with Turkey advocating bilateral and regional approaches over global ones. Others proposed more attention be focused on problems arising from water sources shared by more than one country.

A number of ministers praised the Industry Segment as a useful innovation at the CSD. Chair Habito noted that as the dominant user of the earth's natural resources, industry could either be the main contributor to sustainable development or its chief obstacle. The G-77 and China reiterated its call for financial incentives for transfer of environmentally

sound technologies (ESTs), emphasizing the important role of industry in alleviating poverty and stimulating sustainable consumption and production. For the most part, developing countries cautioned that eco-efficiency models and core labour standards should not give rise to discriminatory trade measures. India cautioned that intellectual property rights (IPRs) should not become a barrier to technology transfer. South Africa proposed examining linkages between the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and between intellectual property rights and ESTs transfer. The Ukraine advocated that an ESTs database be established under the auspices of the United Nations. Switzerland stated that introducing environmental, social and worker's rights into international agreements does not invite protectionism. Germany requested that UNEP examine the establishment of minimum international environmental standards. The United States said the conditions necessary for corporate pursuit of sustainable development should be articulated. A number of countries proposed launching a multi-stakeholder review of the effectiveness of voluntary initiatives.

Ministers from developing countries also spoke about the decline in ODA, noting that its decrease is eroding the only source of development finance for developing countries and propelling their drift into deeper poverty and marginalization. Denmark called the slogan "trade not aid" false and dangerous, emphasizing that aid is still essential in an increasingly globalized economy. The Deputy Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted that there must be an attempt to monitor the extent to which foreign direct investment from OECD countries supports or deters sustainable development.

OTHER OUTCOMES

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

The commission, which recognized SIDS as a special case with respect to environment and development due to their ecological fragility and vulnerability, called upon governments to help ensure effective coordination of efforts by donor and recipient countries. UNEP and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) were asked to accord priority to the continuation of work on a vulnerability index, which would measure constraints arising from a state's small size and environmental fragility. The problems SIDS face were also highlighted, including climate change and the attendant rise in sea level, the management of wastes, freshwater resources and technological assistance.

The commission called on the international community to commit adequate financial and technical resources to SIDS to build effective response measures. It urged the international community, particularly Annex I Parties (industrialized countries) to the Framework Convention on Climate Change to become Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The commission encouraged SIDS to develop an effective integrated approach to freshwater management, and it called on the international community to continue to provide support for regional and national efforts to promote water resource assessment and monitoring procedures, as well as management and policy frameworks including the transfer of technologies.

The importance of the 1999 General Assembly special session to review the SIDS Programme of Action was also emphasized, and the international donor community was urged to engage actively with SIDS to achieve realistic outcomes and provide concrete assistance. The commission further reiterated concerns of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) about declining levels of external resources for SIDS for human resource development, and it urged the international community to provide assistance at a level necessary to implement the Programme of Action.

Consumer Protection Guidelines for Sustainable Consumption

Drafting Group II considered language for a draft decision by the Economic and Social Council on new UN Consumer Protection Guidelines for Sustainable Consumption. Commission recommendations to ECOSOC on this subject would invite governments to undertake national consultations with appropriate stakeholder groups on guidelines for sustainable consumption, and submit their views on the proposed guidelines to the Secretariat, to be made available to all states.

National Experiences

In a decision on information provided by governments and exchange of national experiences, the commission encouraged governments to continue providing voluntary national communications or reports on implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level, with the broad involvement of all sectors of society. The decision also took note of results of the pilot phase relating to indicators of sustainable development, and the importance of identifying data gaps using information already provided by governments.

Cross-Sectoral Issues

The commission recognized that the transfer of environmentally-sustainable technologies, capacity building, education and public awareness and science for sustainable development are critical to achieve national enabling environments for sustainable development, including social development and environmental protection. It also reaffirmed the importance of poverty eradication and sustainable consumption and production patterns, as well as efforts to achieve the target to reduce by one-half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015.

The commission called for fulfilment of UNCED commitments and urged governments, the private sector and developed country institutions to identify barriers and provide opportunities for technological cooperation with developing countries.

Discussion on the transfer of ESTs also covered the problem of transferring privately-held technologies. One suggestion that emerged was to create technology centres to facilitate such transfers. Governments were invited to develop voluntary guidelines on technology partnerships. With regard to intellectual property rights, the European Union and United States agreed to drop references to IPRs protection in exchange for the G-77 and China dropping its call for governments to consider sustainable development goals when reviewing the TRIPs Agreement.

Funding agencies were called upon to support national capacity-building activities and allocate more resources to training and information sharing. Participants defined a

more concrete way of promoting education for sustainable development, awareness raising and capacity building. According to the chair, there was a general recognition that the role of civil society in this regard needs to be strengthened.

Multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and governments, as well as specific funding mechanisms, were called upon to enhance their support to strengthen higher education and scientific research capacities related to sustainable development in developing countries. The scientific community was asked to work to overcome communication gaps between scientists, policymakers and the general public.

NGO ACTIVITIES

In addition to their preparations for substantive contributions to the intergovernmental process, high-level segment and industry dialogue, NGOs organized and participated in a number of events that ran concurrently with the CSD-6. These included NGO-government dialogues such as one conducted by African governments with African NGOs, and presentations and workshops presented by various NGO task forces, caucuses or individual NGOs. These events focused on, among other issues: sustainable societies; social dimensions of the MAI; women and industry; the freshwater crisis; impact of the Asian currency crisis on sustainable development; perspectives on corporate responsibility; and responsible youth for a sustainable future.

NGOs also attended government and UN agency presentations on topics such as: freshwater management; a global run-off data centre; science and sustainable development; water; renewable energy; the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSNET) programme; the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP); mountains of the world; innovative practices in sustainable development education; impacts of globalization and financing for development; public-private partnership programmes; cleaner production and pollution prevention; micro- and macro-economics and sustainable development; and the Kyoto Protocol process.

A seminar on the challenge of managing water for cities in Africa was convened on 30 April by the UN Centre for Human Settlements, UNCHS (Habitat). The seminar was

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

Representatives of government, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations from 83 countries attended the International Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness, convened by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the government of Greece from 8-12 December 1997 in Thessaloniki. Among other things, the Declaration of Thessaloniki recommends that education be an integral part of local Agenda 21 initiatives, schools be encouraged and supported to adjust their curricula to meet the needs for a sustainable future, and implementation of chapter 36 of Agenda 21 on Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training should be a priority. These recommendations were for the most part incorporated into the CSD-6 decision on cross-sectoral issues.

co-chaired by Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Director-General, and Kader Asmal, Minister for Water Affairs and Forestry in South Africa. They hosted a panel of ministers from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The seminar addressed the task of operationalizing the Cape Town Declaration, endorsed by 20 African ministers who met in South Africa in December 1997. The seminar also focused on the role of the CSD and other relevant intergovernmental bodies in facilitating the process.

At a working luncheon held at United Nations headquarters on 29 April, more than 60 environment ministers, UN officials, NGO leaders and senior business executives of major corporations (including British Petroleum, Monsanto and Westvaco) discussed critical environmental protection issues. The event was co-hosted by UNEP, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). Participants also focused on how UN agencies, businesses and NGOs can cooperate to create sustainable development partnerships to solve environmental problems.

For the second year in a row, the International Peoples' Tribunal on Human Rights and the Environment heard testimony, primarily from indigenous peoples, on a variety of environmental catastrophes and their attendant human rights violations in Canada, Costa Rica, India, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom and the United States. Statements and appeals relating to current cases, as well as those presented last year, were also heard. The tribunal is a response to the perceived lack of government commitment to protect human rights and the environment "compounded by the effects of transnational corporations and accelerating globalization," according to NGO human rights and peace caucuses, and other NGOs participating at the Commission on Sustainable Development. The tribunal seeks to provide a forum for peoples from around the world to mobilize solidarity in support of their demands for accountability, justice and sustainable development.

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The advanced, unedited version of the report on CSD-6 is available on the web site above. If you do not have access to Internet, or would like a copy of the report in one of the official UN languages other than English, contact NGLS in New York.

Contact: International Peoples' Tribunal, Room 246, 475 Riverside Drive, New York NY 10115, United States, telephone +1-212/870 2391, fax +1-212/870 2392, e-mail <womp@igc.apc.org>.

During the session the Commission on Sustainable Development NGO Steering Committee, a self-coordinating body representing a number of NGOs and major groups identified in Agenda 21, held its annual meeting and elections for its Northern and Southern co-chairs, its Management Committee, and thematic and regional NGO caucuses.

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SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CSD

The seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-7), which will take place in April 1999, will conduct a comprehensive review of the Programme of Action for the sustainable development of small island developing states. CSD-7 will serve as the preparatory meeting for a GA special session on the subject in 1999. The sectoral theme of CSD-7 will be oceans and seas; the cross-sectoral theme will be consumption and production patterns; and the economic sector focus will be tourism. The 1999 intersessional ad hoc working groups will consider oceans and seas, the sustainable development of SIDS, and consumption and production patterns. In a decision on future work of the ISWGs, it was agreed that there is a need for greater transparency and CSD member involvement in the preparatory process.

RELATED MEETINGS

- n UN Framework Convention on Climate Change subsidiary bodies, which met from 2-12 June 1998 in Germany (see *Go Between* 69), will hold subsequent meetings to coincide with the Fourth Conference of Parties in Buenos Aires (Argentina) from 2-13 November 1998.
- n The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests will hold its first substantive meeting from 24 August-4 September 1998 in Geneva. Pending ECOSOC approval, the third session will be held in Geneva from 3-14 May 1999.
- n The Tenth Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol (see *E&D File Treaty Series*, no. 9) will be held from 17-27 November 1998 in Cairo (Egypt).
- n The Second Conference of Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification will be held from 30 November-11 December 1998 in Dakar (Senegal).

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