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PRÉPARATIFS DE LA SESSION EXTRAORDINAIRE DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE
CONSACRÉE À UN EXAMEN ET UNE ÉVALUATION D'ENSEMBLE DE LA MISE
EN OEUVRE D'ACTION 21

Lettre datée du 18 février 1997, adressée au Secrétaire général
par les Représentants permanents du Brésil et de la Norvège
auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies

Nous avons l'honneur de vous faire tenir ci-joint une lettre que vous adressent M. Gustavo Krause Gonçalves Sobrinho, Ministre brésilien de l'environnement, des ressources en eau et de l'Amazone, et M. Thorbjørn Berntsen, Ministre norvégien de l'environnement, concernant un colloque sur les modes durables de production et de consommation, tenu à Brasilia, du 25 au 28 novembre 1996 (voir annexe).

Dans leur lettre, les deux ministres demandent que le document joint**, émanant du colloque, soit distribué à la prochaine session du Groupe de travail spécial intersessions de la Commission du développement durable et à la Commission elle-même à sa cinquième session.

L'Ambassadeur,

Représentant permanent du Brésil
auprès de l'Organisation des
Nations Unies

(Signé) Celso Luiz Nunes AMORIM

L'Ambassadeur,

Représentant permanent de la Norvège
auprès de l'Organisation des
Nations Unies

(Signé) Hans Jacob BIØRN LIAN

* À paraître sous la cote E/CN.17/1997/1.

** Les conclusions du Président du Colloque (voir appendice) ne sont diffusées que dans la langue où elles ont été soumises.

ANNEXE

Lettre datée du 20 décembre 1996, adressée au Secrétaire général de l'Organisation des Nations Unies par le Ministre brésilien de l'environnement, des ressources en eau et de l'Amazonie et par le Ministre norvégien de l'environnement.

Au moment où vont bientôt se tenir la session de la Commission du développement durable et la session extraordinaire de l'Assemblée générale, les Gouvernements brésilien et norvégien ont pris l'initiative d'organiser un colloque afin de déterminer les éléments essentiels d'une perspective commune Nord-Sud sur la question de l'évolution des modes de consommation et de production. Ce colloque a eu lieu à Brasilia du 25 au 28 novembre 1996. Y ont participé des représentants de plusieurs pays d'Amérique latine, d'Europe et d'Amérique du Nord et des représentants d'organisations internationales, d'organisations non gouvernementales, des milieux commerciaux, industriels et universitaires et de collectivités locales.

Nous avons l'honneur de vous faire connaître les résultats de cette réunion, qui apporte une contribution au débat international sur la question.

La réunion est parvenue aux conclusions suivantes :

Il est désormais clair que le chapitre 4 d'Action 21 (Modifications des modes de consommation et de production) est une question d'intérêt commun pour les pays industrialisés et en développement et qu'elle mérite donc un regain de coopération internationale.

L'échange de données d'expérience sur l'élaboration et l'application des politiques nationales ne pourrait que beaucoup contribuer à l'implantation de modes de consommation et de production écologiquement plus rationnels. La coopération bilatérale entre des pays comme la Norvège et le Brésil a beaucoup contribué à faire avancer le débat à ce sujet. On a également constaté et réaffirmé qu'il incombait tout particulièrement aux pays industrialisés de prendre l'initiative à cet égard. Mais les pays développés comme les pays en développement peuvent apprendre les uns des autres, en respectant mutuellement leur diversité culturelle.

Dans la perspective du développement durable, les discussions qui ont eu lieu à Brasilia montrent bien que le débat actuel devrait être élargi, aller au-delà des aspects technologiques et de la réorientation des politiques, pour inclure la dimension humaine, mieux comprendre les besoins et les valeurs qui doivent inspirer la recherche de modes de vie écologiquement rationnels.

En outre, il est plus clair que jamais qu'étant donné la poursuite de la dégradation mondiale de l'environnement et la persistance des besoins de développement des pays en développement, le système des Nations Unies, en particulier les organes qui s'occupent du développement durable, doit être renforcé.

Nous pouvons vous assurer que les Gouvernements norvégien et brésilien continueront de soutenir l'action des Nations Unies à cet égard et d'y contribuer.

Certaines des conclusions de la réunion permettent de dégager plusieurs options tant pour la forme que pour le contenu de l'action future et des débats qui auront lieu à la session extraordinaire de l'Assemblée générale. C'est pour cette raison que nous vous prions de bien vouloir communiquer le document joint aux participants à la réunion du Groupe de travail intersessions ainsi qu'à la cinquième session de la Commission du développement durable.

Dans l'intervalle, nous espérons prendre connaissance des prochaines délibérations de la Commission du développement durable et de la session extraordinaire de l'Assemblée générale de 1997, et nous sommes convaincus que les résultats de la réunion de Brasilia y apporteront une utile contribution.

Le Ministre brésilien
de l'environnement, des ressources
en eau et de l'Amazone

(Signé) Gustavo Krause Gonçalves SOBRINHO

Le Ministre norvégien
de l'environnement

(Signé) Thorbjørn BERNTSEN

APPENDIX

A shared vision - conclusions from the Chairperson of
the Brasilia Workshop on Sustainable Production and
Consumption Patterns and Policies, held from 25 to
28 November 1996

1. The Brasilia Workshop was organized by the Ministry of Environment, Water Resources and the Amazon-Brazil in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment-Norway. It was chaired by Ms. Aspasia Camargo, Deputy Minister at the Brazilian Environment Ministry, and co-chaired by Mr. Oddmund Graham, Ambassador for the Environment at the Norwegian Environment Ministry. As well as participants from Brazil and Norway, the meeting brought together representatives of Governments from other Latin American countries, including Chile, Cuba, and Paraguay, as well as international institutions such as the Commission on Sustainable Development and the OECD, and representatives of major groups, including the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Earth Council. The Brasilia Workshop built on the Agenda 21, chapter 4 - Changing Consumption and Production Patterns and a series of meetings since UNCED. We reached a number of conclusions which could provide input for the review of Agenda 21 in 1997.
2. For the last two centuries, we have been living with the trinity of liberty, equality and fraternity. As we move into the twenty-first century, we need to take as our inspiration the four values of liberty, equality, fraternity and sustainability.
3. We recognize that current production and consumption patterns are causing serious environmental degradation and social marginalization. Most of the world's people are unable to meet their needs and improve their quality of life. If we integrate them into the market economy only using existing mechanisms then we would suffer unbearable environmental stress. Providing the goods and services required to reduce poverty will require lifestyle change among the affluent in North and South.
4. We found that there is a universal interest in a common agenda among all countries to pursue sustainability. The industrialized countries have a special responsibility and are embarking on change and this can have an important demonstration effect for the developing world. But new ways of meeting needs while respecting nature have a special place in developing countries where the urgency to increase consumption is greatest. Action for sustainable production and consumption is not a one-way street, and both North and South can learn from each other.
5. The deep-seated nature of many of the issues requires new forms of international cooperation between Governments and other stakeholders on questions of resource pricing, technology, trade, environmental regulation and management systems. We must make sure that the drive for environmental sustainability does not become an instrument of increasing North-South inequalities. Protectionist measures should not be used in the name of the environment. Rather attention should be focused on opening up opportunities for

developing countries. Furthermore, policies and regulations to change consumption in the industrialized world should be accompanied by dialogue with developing countries and support to ease the transition process.

6. Globalization needs to be underpinned by an ethic of sustainability, based on human rights and the values of freedom, democracy and social equity. It is impossible and makes no sense to change consumption patterns simply through technological change or policy plans. New cultural reference points for success are needed to replace the notion that increasing material consumption equates with progress. Concern for future generations needs to be incorporated into today's decisions.

7. The role of advertising and the media is critical here, and the international community should apply the resources of the media to induce behaviour changes to avoid waste, inefficient resource use and conspicuous consumption. Positive messages of how individuals can live in a sustainable manner are required in place of advertising encouraging ever-rising consumption or stories of environmental disasters. Development models based on overly individual and material consumption should give way to a market economy encouraging lifestyles where spiritual, cultural and community aspirations have a greater role.

8. The Brasilia Workshop focused on the key resources for consumption related to basic human needs, and the main resources for production and the economy in general, namely energy, forests, land and water. At all levels, action to achieve sustainable management of natural resources, and thereby sustainable production and consumption, is needed. We need to respect environmental and resource limits and recognize that fair use of resources will increase human well-being and reduce social conflicts. To achieve this, participation and democratic accountability is crucial.

9. The Workshop discussed a range of positive examples and ideas of success. A broader strategy is now needed for Governments, business and civil society, so that they can carry out their critical tasks and build new partnerships based on trust.

For Governments, the challenge is to change the rules of the game to stimulate social and technological innovation.

- The greening of Government means integrating sustainable development into the heart of government decision-making. It is particularly important to ensure that macroeconomic policies for liberalization and deregulation promote environmental improvement.
- Environmental tax reform can remove distorted prices, stimulate development, encourage employment and reduce pollution and resource use. Environmentally damaging subsidies should be removed in a socially responsible way. Questions of international competition mean that more should be done to coordinate efforts to internalize environmental costs into market prices.

- Governments are also major consumers and can help shape markets through better understanding of their use of goods and services and incorporating environmental criteria into procurement policies.

For business, the goal is to find new ways of satisfying customer requirements with the lowest resource use and environmental costs, and thereby guarantee competitive advantage which will increase as market conditions change to better reflect environmental costs.

- Cleaner production and eco-efficiency offer promising strategies for continued economic development at reduced environmental costs. But eco-efficiency needs to be accompanied by targets and cannot be an alternative to reforming unsustainable lifestyles.

For NGOs, the focus is to:

- develop and present documentation based on the solidarity values found among NGOs worldwide.
- suggest political action at all levels.
- campaign to raise awareness on sustainable "consumer values" and provide tools for changing lifestyles.
- educate citizens in their rights to participation in decision-making on sustainable production and consumption issues.

Finally, citizens need to exercise their consumer rights and responsibilities.

10. Finance, technology and information are powerful levers for achieving change.

- Time is running out for industrialized countries to meet the commitments made at Rio to increase development assistance. But even if these commitments were achieved, additional action would be required to reorient policy frameworks and financial markets to drive sustainable production and consumption. The imagination and skills of the financial sectors need to be mobilized in the cause of sustainable development.
- Banking, insurance and other financial institutions have an essential role in promoting sustainable development since they influence the entire framework in which investment and business activity take place.
- Innovative financial mechanisms should also be explored, such as charges on fuel for international air transport and charges on speculation in international financial flows, to reinforce global funds.
- The organizational dimension is critical to the successful spread of cleaner technologies: "software" is at least as important as

"hardware". Investment should be focused on building the human skills and knowledge which will provide the basis for the generation and adaptation of technology.

- Innovation is important to stimulate more sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, but needs to be balanced with measures to overcome the tendency towards obsolescence in both products and production technology, which has especially high costs for developing countries. Policy and research efforts should focus on improving product durability and the ability to upgrade technologies.
- Information strategies should focus on raising general "environmental literacy" in government, business and the public at large, and then targeting information at the point of decision.

11. In conclusion, the Brasilia Workshop found that:

- there is a commonality of interests between North and South for achieving sustainable development. Sustainability has humanity at its centre, respecting the world's cultural diversity.
- the scale of the challenge means that institutional reforms are required at the United Nations to strengthen the work on sustainable development and to build UNEP into a robust and effective global environmental organization.
- bilateral initiatives for sustainable development, such as the Brasilia Workshop, offer practical ways of bridging different perspectives of North and South.

12. Political emphasis should be given to this shared vision for sustainable production and consumption in national Government, in regional forums and at international meetings such as Rio plus 5, the fifth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the special session of the General Assembly.
