

Rio Conference on Environment and Development-1992

環境と開発に関する1992年リオデジャネイロの会議

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1. PREAMBLE

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)-popularly known as the "Earth Summit" was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from July 3-14, 1992. More than 30,000 delegates from all over the world and over 100 Heads of State and Government participated in the conference. It was a historic moment in the annals of human civilization.

The primary goal of the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro-1992 was to lay the "foundation for a global partnership between developing and more industrialized countries, based on mutual needs and common interests-to ensure the future of the planet. We need to find a viable and equitable balance between the environment and development" as stated by Dr. Maurice Strong, Secretary General of the Conference (UNCED 1992).

A highlight of the conference was the observance of the World Environment Day (WED) on 05 June 1992, the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the United Nations conference on human environment held in Stockholm, Sweden from 5-16 June, 1972. A total number of 113 nations participated in this conference. It was decided in this conference to create UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) as an International Agency, with headquarters at Nairobi, Kenya. Public awareness created in this conference has attained an action plan stage in 1992-Rio de Janeiro conference. This UNCED-1992 is an outcome of 2-1/2 years negotiations between various nations, international agencies, NGO's and all concerned with environment and development.

2. AGENDA

The major agenda for discussion in the UNCED was:

- * Global Warming/Climate Change: A treaty intended to curb emissions of greenhouse gases-

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principally carbon dioxide-but without specific targets and timetables.

- * Agenda-21: A plan for the industrial nations to help the poor countries develop their economies without ruining their environments- or the planet's. Estimated cost: \$125 billion a year.

- * Bio-diversity: A treaty to slow the loss of endangered species. One approach: give countries royalties for products (such as drugs) that are developed from indigenous plants and animals.

There were parallel sessions of gov't. and non-Gov't. organizations at Rio de Janeiro highlighting various aspects and issues concerning environment and development. The UN General assembly resolution No. 44/228 adopted in December, 1989 has set out the guidelines for Brazil UNCED-1992 and defined the principal issues to be addressed by the conference as being those "of major concern in maintaining the quality of the Earth's environment and especially in achieving environmentally sound and sustainable development in all countries". These issues and sub-sets of them are:

- * Protection of the atmosphere by combating:
 - climate change.
 - the depletion of the ozone layer.
 - transboundary air pollution.
- * Protection and management of land resources by combating:
 - deforestation.
 - desertification and land degradation.
- * Conservation of Biological diversity.
- * Environmentally sound management of biotechnology.
- * Protection of the oceans and coastal Areas:
 - rational use of marine living resources.
- * Protection of the supply and quality of fresh water resources.
- * Environmentally sound management of wastes:

- toxic chemicals.
- hazardous wastes.

- * Environmental education.
- * Improvement of the living and working environment of the poor.
- * Protection of human health conditions and improvement of the quality of life.

In addition, a number of Cross-Sectoral issues were identified and addressed by UNCED, each in relation to the specific environment themes listed above:

- * Financial resources.
- * Technology transfer.
- * Legal aspects.
- * Institutions.
- * Economic instruments.
- * Supporting measures (information/data).

3. CONVENTIONS

After threadbare discussions and negotiations the two major conventions were signed as follows:

- * Global Warming/Climate change-Signed by 157 nations.
- * Bio-diversity-Signed by 156 nations (USA did not sign because of non-agreement of certain provisions of the convention).

In addition "Rio Declaration"—an environmental code of principles have been worked out. Negotiations of Agenda-21, an 500 page-40 chapters-120 work programs to be taken by 2000 A.D to eradicate poverty and to

protect the atmosphere, forests, deserts, soils, oceans and fresh waters, have been made. It was agreed in principle to set up a Sustainable Development Commission to monitor the implementation of Agenda-21.

The major provisions of the Global warming/Climate change convention are as follows:

- * The level of greenhouse gases at the atmosphere to be fixed to avoid harmful effects to ensure sustainable developments.
- * Environmental policy of each nation must ensure sovereign right of exploration of natural resources on environmentally sound and sustainable basis.
- * Developing countries should be allowed emission of greenhouse gases for sustainable socio-economic development upto certain time limit.
- * Industrialized nations should provide environmentally sound technologies to developing countries.
- * A Global fund be available for climatic change studies but no time frame has been made.

The major provisions of Bio-diversity convention are:

- * Every nation should have a national policy/law to protect Bio-diversity, habitat and ecosystem.
- * Transfer of appropriate technology on preferential and concessional terms which should have intellectual property rights.
- * Additional funds should be given to developing countries by industrialized countries.
- * All nations should create "Reserved and Protective Area for Bio-diversity Preservation" including ru-



JAPAN PEOPLE'S CENTER AT FLAMENGO PARK (THE 92 GLOBAL FORUM)
SESSION IN PROGRESS: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE
PROFESSOR M.A.H. PRAMANIK'S PRESENTATION

ral and primitive heritage of national interest.

4. NGO FORUM

Japan People's Center at Flamengo Park-focal point of the 92—Global Forum NGO activities-organized a number of seminars, discussions-meetings, etc. on various themes and subjects. The worth mentioning topics were 'Sustainable Agriculture' and 'Rivers and Developments' These created public awareness and much enthusiasm among the participants.

The 92—Global Forum organized a signature campaign—"I pledge to make the earth a secure and hospitable home for present and future generations". It was a great success. The 92—Global Forum also gave much weightage to the problems of poverty, environment and development.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The parallel sessions of the Govt. and non-Govt. activities created a great interest among the participants.

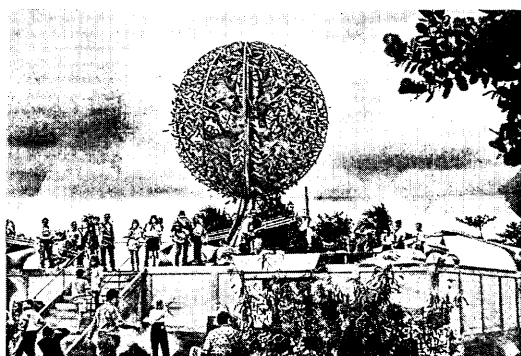
There was a jubilant mood of festivity among the local people and the delegates from abroad. The twenty years road from 1972—Stockholm to 1992—Rio de Janeiro has passed through a number of obstacles and hurdles as explained by Dr. Maurice Strong, Secretary General of UNCED-92, who was also the chief organizer of the 1972—Stockholm conference. This road has to terminate in a balance and equitable society where developed and developing countries could co-exist together in harmony, caring and sharing the only earth within the framework of global partnership for improvement in the quality of life of the peoples and sustainable living for all. This UNCED-1992 has definitely made some positive contribution in the creation of global consciousness, public awareness and action-plan oriented approach in the overall problems of Environment and Development.



FLAMENGO PARK—FOCAL POINT OF NGO ACTIVITIES (THE 92 GLOBAL FORUM)



FAN FAIR AT RIO DE JANEIRO



TREE OF LIFE AT FLAMENGO PARK



THE 92 GLOBAL FORUM—SESSION IN PROGRESS AT THE BAHAI INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER.

PRESS RELEASEOCEANS TREATY UNDERWATER SIGNING

June 11, 1992

10 a.m.

The oceans treaty of the Global Forum is being signed underwater, with the support of the ship "Gaia", by two ten year old children as well as three NGO's from the drafting committee to emphasize not only the importance of the ocean but in addition to highlight the extreme importance that the oceans will be to the children of the



OCEANS TREATY UNDERWATER SIGNING CEREMONY
AT RIO DE JANEIRO COAST

world and to the yet unborn, in the future.

We the present adults of the planet will probably find sufficient uncontaminated food in the sea to serve our purposes, but will leave a poisonous legacy for succeeding generations

By taking this treaty to the ocean for signing we hope to attract attention of the world's people and the world's leaders to the desperate plight of aquatic animals and plants and speak for them as they cannot speak for themselves.

We call on all members of the press to help us, in anyway possible, to spread this important message throughout the world.

(Manuscript received, July 29, 1992)

References

- 1 Agenda-21—Rio Declaration Forest Principles-UNDP. April 1992.
- 2 Saving our Planet-Challenges and Hopes-Mustafa K. Tolba. UNEP-1992.
- 3 ICSU Report-1990.
- 4 Newsweek-1st June, 1992.
- 5 Time-1st June, 1992.
- 6 Earth Summit Bulletins-June, 1992.
- 7 Newsweek Special Issue-The Environment-Responsible Development in the 21st Century, 8th June, 1992.