

High-Level Dialogue

A Call to Global Leadership for Sustainable Development

10 November 2011, 10:30am-1:00pm
UN Delegates' Dining Room, UNHQ, New York

Overview and reflections

As the international community prepares for the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, negotiators understand the urgency to respond to the millions of people worldwide who need sustainable development to get out of poverty, and to every country's need to identify concrete actions toward a green transition to sustainable consumption and production that can ensure socially equitable and environmentally viable economic development. In this context, the main challenge for Member States is not to renegotiate the principles of sustainable development, but rather to find the political will to integrate the economic, social and environmental pillars already agreed to in an institutional framework that puts human well-being at the center of concern, and that reinforces principles of intergenerational equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.

The challenge is great: developed countries must shrink environmental footprints as fast and as far as possible while sustaining human development achievements. Developing countries must continue to raise their people's living standards while containing increases in their footprints, recognizing that poverty eradication remains a priority. The success of Rio+20 thus rests upon the participation of all stakeholders. The Major Groups—business and industry, children and youth, farmers, indigenous people, local authorities, NGOs, the scientific and technological community, women and workers and trade unions—have an important role to play, and thus innovative ways must be found to involve them further in the preparations and in the conference itself. In the intergovernmental negotiating process, there are sensitive issues that need to be addressed to make Rio+20 a success. This high level dialogue will bring to the table the perspectives of former heads of state and government on the issues at stake in the Rio+20 process, opening a frank dialogue with the international community and key stakeholders, and opening a discussion on what sort of road map to a green economy allows sufficient flexibility for countries to apply their own options while maintaining the overview necessary to safeguard the resources of the planet.

Facilitator

Katherine Sierra, Senior Fellow in the Global Economy and Development Program, Brookings Institution; former Vice President for Sustainable Development at the World Bank

Update on the Rio+20 process and other UN processes related to sustainable development

Nikhil Seth, Director, Division of Sustainable Development, UN-DESA

Janos Pasztor, Executive Secretary, UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP)

Veerle Vanderveerd, Director, United Nations Development Programme Environment & Energy Group

Leaders Perspectives on issues at stake

"Global Perspective on Rio+20"

Jennifer Mary Shipley, Prime Minister of New Zealand (1997-1999), Member of the Club de Madrid

"From Rio '92 to Rio+20 – Reinforcing the Social Pillar to Foster Sustainable Development and Shared Societies"

Wim Kok, Prime Minister of the Netherlands (1994-2002); President, Club de Madrid

"Green Economy Based on Sustainable Energy – an opportunity for small developing countries"

Luisa Diogo, Prime Minister of Mozambique (2004-2010), Member of the Club de Madrid

"Green Economy – the new paradigm for development in Latin America"

Ricardo Lagos, President of Chile (2000-2006), Member of the Club de Madrid

Open Dialogue with Secretariat, National Government Representatives and key stakeholders