

Sustainable development EP resolution adopted on 16th May 2002 (rapporteur Paul Lannoye

European Parliament resolution on the Commission communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled 'Towards a global partnership for sustainable development' (COM(2002) 82– C5-0173/2002 – 2002/2074(COS)) The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication (COM(2002) 82 – C5-0173/2002),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and European Parliament entitled 'Ten years after Rio: preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002' (COM(2001) 53 – C5-0342/2001),
- having regard to its previous resolutions on sustainable development and especially its resolution of 28 February 2002 1 on a sustainable development strategy for the Barcelona European Council,
- having regard to the Environment Council Conclusion of 8 March 2001 (6752/01) on the World Summit on Sustainable Development,
- having regard to the Commission's Working Paper entitled 'Environmental Integration in the External Policies of the General Affairs Council' of 7 March 2002 (SEC(2002) 271),

endorsed by the General Affairs Council on 12 March 2002,

- having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2001 2 on the consequences of using depleted uranium munitions,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 October 2001 3 on openness and democracy in international trade,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation and the opinion of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (A5-0142/2002),

A. whereas the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Summit) represents an unrepeatable opportunity for world leaders to set the sustainability agenda for the next 10 years with a programme of work which would build on the agreements generated at the Earth Summit in Rio, but whereas certain countries appear reluctant to commit themselves to this process and progress in setting an ambitious agenda is slow,

B. whereas half of the world's population lives on less than USD 2 per day and even if the UN Millennium Summit goal to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 is realised, there will still be 900 million people living in extreme poverty in the developing world (UNDP Human Development Report 2001),

C. whereas poverty and environmental degradation are often directly linked; whereas poverty and associated population growth increase pressure on natural resources and contribute to environmental degradation; whereas by the year 2015, the world's population is estimated to rise to 7.5 billion people, i.e. a 50% increase compared with 1990,

D. whereas the income gap between rich and poor is growing exponentially: in 1960, the world's richest 20% had an income 30 times higher than the 20% poorest, rising to 82 times higher in 1995 (UNDP Human Development Report 2000),

E. whereas the World Summit on Sustainable Development should call for a better understanding of the relations between the environment, poverty, trade and the security of people, in order to ensure better integration of environmental protection and policies for poverty eradication and economic development,

F. whereas the developing world still has 826 million undernourished people and each year 16 million people starve to death and whereas local agriculture and rural development must be actively promoted as instruments for substantial and sustainable growth and poverty reduction (UNEP, FAO and UNDP Reports),

G. whereas freedom from poverty and hunger are two of the most fundamental human rights and should therefore be the primary objectives of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

H. whereas nearly 1 billion people do not have access to clean water sources, 2.4 billion people live without access to basic sanitation and an estimated 3 million people die prematurely from water-related diseases every year, 34 million people live with HIV/AIDS, 2.2 million people die annually from indoor air pollution and in the next 15 years provision must be made for the 113 million children not receiving primary school education (World Bank and UNDP reports),

I. whereas improving access to public and environmental health care, clean water, basic sanitation and primary education are therefore self-evident prerequisites for the sustainable development agenda,

J. whereas the narrow perspective offered by contemporary education systems on the horizontal linkages in society, notably the consequences of today's production and consumption patterns on the natural systems and the atmosphere, is one of the major causes behind the environmental crisis,

K. whereas as economies have modernised, a combination of market and policy failures have been, and continue to be, the major causes behind the proliferation of unsustainable systems of production and consumption,

L. whereas the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Environmental Outlook for 2000 notes that 'the modern industrial economies of North America, Europe and parts of East Asia consume immense quantities of energy and raw materials, and produce high volumes of wastes and polluting emissions' and that 'the magnitude of this economic activity is causing environmental damage on a global scale and widespread pollution and disruption of ecosystems' and whereas the report concludes that 'the continued poverty of the majority of the planet's inhabitants and excessive consumption by the minority are the two major causes of environmental degradation. The present course is unsustainable and postponing action is no longer an option'; whereas it follows that sustainable development cannot primarily be about economic growth but must be about restructuring the global agenda so that economic and trade policies are established in accordance with social and environmental objectives,

M. whereas such environmentally damaging and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, where 20% of the world's population accounts for 86% of global consumption (UNDP Human Development Report 2000), cannot continue unchecked and new structural

mechanisms and global instruments are needed, including the application of social, development and environmental criteria in lending and financing decisions by Export Credit Agencies,

N. whereas framework agreements for Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Accountability are key elements in the search for sustainable solutions,

O. whereas the contribution of wars and armed conflicts to the degradation of human welfare and environmental wellbeing cannot be ignored,

P. whereas progress towards sustainability begins at home, as the Commission Communication recognises, and therefore fundamental reform of the deeply unsustainable Common Agriculture and Common Fisheries Policies cannot now be avoided if the EU is genuinely to be committed to a global partnership,

Q. whereas environmental governance remains fragmented at a global level and the coordination of multilateral environment agreements (MEAs), their administration and implementation, and mechanisms for ensuring compliance with their provisions must be substantially improved,

Introductory Observations

1. Welcomes the Commission's Communication but warns that unless there is swift progress in the pre-Johannesburg preparations towards agreement on an ambitious agenda, the Johannesburg Summit risks being an embarrassing failure; the consequences of not setting the world on a truly sustainable path are grave;

2. Expresses its dismay that the third preparatory committee meeting in New York failed to reach a consensus on producing viable proposals on the scope of the future work of the Commission on Sustainable Development or on strengthening the institutional framework, failed to produce any working text to go forward to the fourth ministerial preparatory committee and that proposals for extraneous partnership agreements are being promoted as replacements for, rather than as complements to, governmental commitments; calls on the Commission and the Council to press the Johannesburg Summit Secretariat to ensure that the fourth ministerial preparatory committee is better managed and structured so that the governments meeting in Johannesburg can deliver clear and positive global commitments;

3. In this context calls on the Commission and Council to work to ensure that such partnership agreements or initiatives ("Type II outcomes") are subject to formal criteria,

meet specific global or regional objectives, contain clearly verifiable and targeted outcomes and beneficiaries, and are environmentally and socially sustainable as well as being economically sound;

4. Also welcomes the commitment made by Member States in Barcelona seeking the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol before the Johannesburg Summit, and calls on all other signatory nations to ratify it before that Summit; welcomes the fact that various Council formations (in particular ECOFIN and the General Affairs Council) have presented their strategies for incorporating environmental issues; calls for as much as possible to be done within the EU institutions (with the full involvement of the European Parliament) in preparation for the launch of the Lisbon and Göteborg processes and the application of the Barcelona decisions; equally welcomes the Commission's recommendation to Council for EU ratification of the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol and urges speedy action to conclude this process before Johannesburg;

5. Wishes to see a re-balancing and restructuring of the international agenda to reflect the overwhelming priority which must be given to the alleviation of poverty and hunger, and to the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources;

6. Considers that such re-balancing and restructuring should be achieved under the auspices of the United Nations in the first instance and then be applied to the post-Doha WTO negotiations;

7. Takes note that the Draft Council Conclusions for the WSSD give "strong backing to the New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD) and draws attention to the fact that NEPAD has been severely criticised by African civil society organisations and policy institutions for its neo-liberal economic policy framework, "which repeats the structural adjustment policy packages of the preceding two decades and overlooks the disastrous effects of those policies"¹ ;

8. Deems it imperative that new impetus should be given to strengthening global environmental governance and corporate social responsibility and accountability;

9. Calls for a reconsideration of the organisation of both science and education in order to stimulate interdisciplinary research and bring about greater awareness of the interrelationship between human activities and the ecosystems;

10. Calls on the Commission to work for an agreement in Johannesburg on a thorough revision of the framework conditions of the market economy model, notably the fiscal instruments, subsidies, norms and standards, with the primary objective of promoting environmentally sustainable systems of production and consumption;

11. Strongly supports an international system of free and fair trade but insists that its framework must be in harmony with and support of sustainable development;

12. Deplores the fact that today, GDP growth is still viewed as the single most important indicator of progress in society; calls therefore upon the Commission to work for an agreement in Johannesburg to complement present-day national accounting with indicators that reflect social and environmental aspects of development;

Fighting poverty and promoting social development

13. Gives a cautious welcome to the outcome of the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development but considers this not as a solution but as an incremental step in the desired direction and notes that the commitments made in Monterrey still fall substantially short of the funds required to meet the Millennium Goal of reducing world poverty by 50% by 2015; insists that the Council should, in preparation for the Johannesburg Summit, take a decision establishing a binding calendar for all Member States with a view to attaining, as soon as possible, an aid threshold equivalent to the EU average of 0.39%, rising to 0,7% GNP by 2010;

14. Stresses the importance of the role which the governments of the countries receiving development aid themselves have to play in efforts to reduce poverty;

¹ Declaration on Africa's Development Challenges, adopted at the Joint CODESRIA (Council for Development and Social Science Research in Africa) and TWN-Africa (TWN-Africa) Conference, in Accra, 23-26 April 2002 gathering African scholars and activists working in academic institutions, civil society organisations and policy institutions from 20 countries in Africa;

15. Calls on the Council to initiate an EU regulation to free up all aid from the EU and from Member States in order to create the necessary flexibility for the developing countries to favour the most environmentally and socially friendly development solutions; calls for that regulation to include features which will make it possible to introduce a set of result indicators enabling the effectiveness of aid management to be measured;

16. Regrets that the Draft Council Conclusions for Johannesburg show no willingness to go beyond the enhanced HIPC initiative, despite the recent World Bank/IMF study revealing the deficiency of this initiative and despite the EU agreement at Monterrey "to examine ways of debt relief other than those in practice at present for the Least Developed Countries";

17. Calls on the Member States to agree on an immediate moratorium on debt servicing for all those countries belonging to the group of heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) and/or less developed countries (LDCs) and to waive all remaining bilateral debts for those countries;

18. Welcomes the proposal in the Monterrey Consensus for an international debt workout mechanism as a first step in the direction of a much needed fair and transparent arbitration procedure for indebted countries and calls on the EU to come forward with a concrete initiative for the Johannesburg Summit;

19. Demands that the criteria for acceptable debt relief be redefined in order to give priority to meeting the financing requirement of national poverty eradication programmes and that only residual state revenue is then used for debt servicing and repaying loans;

20. Stresses the vital importance of micro-finance and credit for micro and small enterprises, in particular to give economic independence to women, who can then make a major contribution to food security and the provision of goods and services that are daily necessities;

21. Advocates joint EU representation on the board of directors of the international financial institutions and calls for enhanced transparency and accountability through parliamentary scrutiny of these bodies;

22. Supports the Commission's view that an effective poverty reduction strategy requires an integrated approach and that access to affordable nutritious food, locally produced where possible, and to adequate, safe and affordable supplies of drinking water and sanitation facilities is paramount;

23. Expresses concern over the fact that poverty eradication strategies in general have largely overlooked the vital role played by natural resources such as forests, soils, range lands,

fresh-water and marine resources in the daily life of the rural poor; hence calls for extensive programmes of afforestation, soil conservation, water development, etc., to strengthen the livelihoods of the poor, and consequently for Agenda 21 and the Social Summit Agenda to be combined so as to fully integrate work in the fields of poverty eradication and natural resource management;

24. Agrees that this approach should be extended to all global public goods including access to health services, the environment, education, financial stability, security and peace; calls therefore for an EU initiative for the Johannesburg Summit on refining and developing this concept;

25. Welcomes the Member States and European Community commitment in the preparation of the WSSD to sign, ratify and implement the UN Protocol on the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking of Firearms;

26. Takes note of the mandate by the Ecofin Council to the Commission to seek out alternative sources for development financing and draws attention to the need for a more extensive debate (particularly at multilateral level) and for more thorough analysis regarding the suitability and the feasibility of the various existing proposals for alternative funding instruments, some of which have been analysed in Commission Communication (2002) 81 final; suggests in this context that initiatives such as a global tax on fossil fuels (which would have the dual objectives of reducing carbon emissions and raising necessary funds for development) be considered as the possible basis for an EU initiative on this subject to be presented at the Johannesburg Summit; calls on the Commission in the context of the requested analysis to consider the merits of instituting within the EU a "Give As You Earn (GAYE)" scheme by which each Member State would make provision in their income tax systems for taxpayers to make voluntary, tax deductible,

contributions for charitable causes, a minimum amount of which (e.g. EUR 10 per taxpayer) would be paid into a special fund devoted exclusively to relieve poverty in the world's poorest countries (the so-called "Sachs tax");

27. Emphasises that, in developing countries, women bear a substantial share of the responsibility for meeting the basic needs of their families and the local economy and society, and calls for greater efforts to ensure the legal equality of women, equal access for women to basic education and training, the protection of reproductive health,

protection against personal (often domestic) violence, guaranteeing sexual self-determination and equal participation in all decision-making processes, for which the Platform for Action established by the World Conference on Women in 1995 sets out the generally recognised criteria;

Harnessing globalisation: trade for sustainable development

28. Considers that EU policies, notably in the fields of trade liberalisation, agriculture,

fisheries, environment and public health, should be re-examined in the light of their impacts on poverty and sustainable development and their interrelationship; believes that where such policies undermine poverty reduction and sustainability, the latter should take precedence and trade rules should be reformed accordingly, in particular, pressures on developing countries to open up their markets to EU food imports should be ended, if such liberalisation has a negative impact on small producers and food security;

29. Considers that trade rules and their implementation should support rather than contradict the effective implementation of environmental, social, gender equality, educational and health objectives and that trade should actively promote ecologically sustainable production of and trade in goods and services by providing positive incentives, technical assistance and capacity building in developing countries; draws particular attention, in this connection, to the forthcoming negotiations between the EU and the ACP States on trade issues under the Cotonou Agreement; insists that the EU reaffirm the authority and autonomy of multilateral environmental agreements and clarify that the objectives,

principles and provisions of MEAs must not be subordinated to WTO rules;

30. Stresses - the need for countries to continue their efforts to achieve a transparent, stable and predictable investment climate,

- the need to sustain sufficient and stable private financial flows to developing countries with economies in transition,

- the importance of liberating capital flows in an orderly process consistent with development objectives;

31. Welcomes the decision adopted in Gothenburg and reinforced at the Barcelona European Council that Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIAs) must be undertaken for all major policy initiatives and notes that this will require an analysis of the impact on sustainable development of all trade negotiations at multilateral, regional and bilateral levels; wishes to see transparent and participatory SIAs become a mandatory precondition for all EU trade agreements and programmes so that the possible social, environmental, and economic consequences are clearly calculated and regulated;

32. Repeats its demand for the Commission to produce an evaluation of those WTO mechanisms which are not compatible with poverty reduction and sustainable development and which discourage local employment, and to make concrete reform proposals within the context of the ongoing WTO negotiations; in particular expresses its concern that the pressure on developing countries to liberalise their public service industries within the ongoing GATS negotiations will have a detrimental effect on their domestic infrastructure;

33. Considers that in the build-up to the Johannesburg Summit a debate should be promoted around the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions in order to promote a new model of economic growth for LDCs that is based on securing sustainable livelihoods, including through investment in health and education which provides for food security and protection against unrestricted external competition;

34. Calls on the industrialised countries to explore new and innovative ways to promote technology cooperation and technology transfer with developing countries, particularly LDCs, to bridge the digital divide and to facilitate 'technological leapfrogging' in areas such as energy, transportation, waste and water management, trade, agriculture and sanitary standards; such service sectors should be the subject of universal access and public scrutiny; calls also on the industrialised countries, through the intelligent use of ICT - including greater application of non-grid technology such as solar energy - to provide economic, environmental, scientific, social and democratic added value, cheap access being required to allow for extensive take-up even in remote areas;

35. Calls on the Commission to initiate a programme specifically targeted at eradicating rural poverty at the same time as promoting renewable energy use in developing countries, by funding technology for converting biomass either directly into electricity, or into methanol and/or hydrogen, for use in fuel cells;

36. Considers that new technologies should also be assessed for their impact on sustainable development;

Sustainable Management and Conservation of Natural Resources

37. Considers that the conservation of natural resources, the regulation of access to them and equitable use represents a permanent challenge to the global community; fully endorses the Commission's proposal to launch initiatives at the Johannesburg Summit for sustainable water resource management, forestry law enforcement and governance, the development of renewable energy sources and sustainable and environmentally friendly modes of transport but regrets that there are as yet no specific detailed proposals on the table;

38. Calls, in addition, for the Johannesburg Summit to develop specific initiatives, building on work undertaken since Rio, in areas such as: oceans and seas (including coral reefs),

coastal zones, mountains, tropical forests and forests of other types in developing countries, land use, desertification, biodiversity, waste, chemicals, air pollution, biosafety, minerals and metals;

39. Welcomes the entry into force in December 2001 of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, which was called for in Agenda 21; urges those Member States that have so far failed to complete their ratification procedures to do so before the Johannesburg summit, and further calls on the Council to support the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition demand for a moratorium on all toothfish fishing in the Southern Ocean, which is currently decimating the main fishery (Patagonian toothfish) as well as impacting upon birdlife;

40. Calls on the EU to support developing-country governments' demands for any amendments to TRIPS Agreement Article 27.3(b) to safeguard relevant provisions under the Convention on Biodiversity and the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. TRIPS amendments should support, rather than negate, efforts to ensure that living organisms and their parts should not be patented, that the right of traditional farmers to use, exchange and save seeds is protected, and that indigenous and local farming community innovations are likewise protected;

41. Considers that problems with Flags of Convenience need urgent attention and should be addressed at international level, and urges the European Union to define in concrete terms the link between the Flag State and its vessels, as well as the obligations of Flag States, as a necessary step in the fight against uncontrolled fishing;

42. Recognises the need for developed countries to reduce significantly their use of resources and generation of waste and calls for a programme and timetable to achieve this aim; also recognises that newly industrialising countries which face the same problems need technological support and that governments of both North and South have a responsibility for public education in this field;

43. Considers that reaching global agreement on such initiatives in Johannesburg will be one of the litmus tests of a successful outcome;

44. Agrees with the Commission that effective implementation and management of MEAs, including the Kyoto Protocol, is a key policy priority for Johannesburg;

45. Calls on the Commission and Council to take an initiative in favour of the stabilisation of export earnings in developing countries, in particular in sectors which have important effects on the environment, such as cash crop production or forestry products;

46. Notes the careful reference to the continued 'adaptation' of EU policies on the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy to reflect the objectives of sustainable development; wishes to see an acceleration of this process to produce tangible moves towards a radical restructuring which favours rural and regional development; this should include a new partnership on third-country fisheries access agreements that takes full account of the social and environmental interests in the region, and respects the right of developing countries to exploit and benefit fully from their own natural resources;

47. Regrets in this context that the Commission has once again postponed the presentation of its reform proposals for the Common Fisheries Policy;

48. Recognises the need for mechanisms to evaluate the external impact of the EU's policies, and stresses that these should be included within the list of structural indicators being developed for evaluation of sustainable development as part of the Spring Summit and Lisbon Process review;

49. Welcomes in principle the EU's commitment to replenishing the Global Environment Facility (GEF) by at least 50% this year but insists that the integration of additional tasks such as the Persistent Organic Pollutant (POP) Convention, land degradation,

deforestation and possibly desertification can only be accepted on condition that substantial supplementary resources are made available;

50. Demands in addition that the scope of application of the GEF should reflect an adequate balance between the needs of developing and developed countries to avoid the bias towards issues motivated by the industrialised countries;

Changing Production and Consumption patterns

51. Welcomes the growing emphasis on the need to change our unsustainable production and consumption patterns; considers that this too requires an integrated approach at EU and global level;

52. Underlines that one of the most important changes that will have to take place is an efficiency revolution in the way we use energy and materials; therefore calls upon the Commission to work for an agreement in Johannesburg on undertaking a thorough review of the incentives structure of the economy so as to promote at least a factor 4 increase in resource efficiency by 2025;

53. Understands that a major campaign will be required to raise public awareness at consumer and media levels of the need for such changes;

54. Notes that as well as such educational initiatives, new technological and legal frameworks will be necessary; in this context urges the Commission to promote new rules in the WTO to allow discrimination based on process and production methods, if the environmental damage caused by production is transboundary, and the measures are not arbitrary and are proportionate to the environmental damage caused;

55. Expects the Commission before Johannesburg to develop stronger proposals on global public goods including financing and the development of economic instruments and incentives for reducing or internalising external costs; cites the lack of an aviation fuel tax as an example of the need for action;

56. Considers that further measures for substantial increases in energy and resource efficiency are indispensable; calls on the EU to take the lead in considering the possibility of setting a target of 25% of all energy supplies to be from renewable sources by 2020, taking into account the serious obstacles to the achievement of the target stated in the Green Paper on security of energy supply, namely 12% of total energy consumption to come from renewable energy sources by 2010; calls in this context for the establishment of a target for the reduction of the energy intensity of the EU economy of 2.5 % annually;

57. Calls on the international community at the Johannesburg Summit to make available the finance and the infrastructure necessary to bring basic sustainable energy services to two billion people within ten years and to agree on an international energy-efficient standard initiative;

58. Further calls on the EU to advocate the establishment of institutional, regulatory and subsidy frameworks that promote renewable energy and access to energy in the international financial institutions and export credit agencies;

59. Notes with appreciation the proposed action by the Commission to implement common approaches to 'Environment and Export Credits', and stresses that such action ought to lead to common binding environmental and social guidelines for Export Credit Agencies and the European Investment Bank, including common measures to increase the transparency of their decision-making processes; hence expects the Council to make the EIB's planned capital increase dependent on the adoption of such guidelines;

Better Governance at all levels

60. Believes that good governance, including respect for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, transparency and combating corruption, forms part of the necessary foundation for sustainable development in all countries; international decision-making bodies, notably the G7/8, the Bretton Woods international financial institutions, the EIB and regional development banks, the WTO and its dispute settlement system, should lead by example and adopt inclusive, transparent and accountable decision-making processes;

61. Supports the Commission's call for improved international environmental governance to be a key factor in the Johannesburg process, building on the existing UN structures, notably UNEP, and calls for enhanced coordination and resource management between the various MEA Secretariats as well as more effective implementation of and compliance with MEAs; in this connection, reminds the Council and the Commission of the need for greater coordination of the external activities of the Member States and the Commission, particularly in multilateral bodies, and calls for all opportunities for a common environmental external policy to be explored;

62. Regrets that the Commission Communication devotes little attention to the necessary contributions of local and regional authorities to sustainable development, despite Agenda 21's defining of local government as one of the key partners in this regard; insists that co-ordinated efforts at local and regional level will be a vital element in implementing the outcomes of Johannesburg;

63. Agrees with the need to enhance global capacity to enforce International Labour Organisation (ILO) core labour standards and wishes to encourage the ILO to play a more active role in social governance and social policy;

64. Calls for a legal framework of corporate economic, social and environmental accountability for EU private corporations to be established by 2004, requiring private investors to comply with core labour and environmental standards defined in national legislation and international law and including measures on right to know, human rights, liability and full disclosure regarding financial transactions with national governments; as a first step, calls for a directive on mandatory reporting on social and environmental performance in all countries in which they operate; at global level calls on the Johannesburg Summit to strengthen existing guidelines for multinational enterprises, leading to adoption of a legally binding instrument supportive of corporate economic, social and environmental accountability, which includes measures on stakeholder right to know, independent verification, human rights, liability and full disclosure regarding financial transactions with national governments; all MEAs should include provisions relating to natural resource use and investment controls;

65. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, Commission, the governments and parliaments of Member States and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.