World Summit for Sustainable Development
International Eminent Persons Meeting on

Inter-linkages
Strategies for bridging problems and solutions
to work towards sustainable development

Working Group ONE
Summary Conclusions
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I. Reconciling the competing paradigms of globalization and sustainable development

- Focus on interlinkages in policy-making on development and environmental issues.
- Choose a cautious approach to liberalization (i.e. optimal liberalization)
- Integrate sustainable development in local democracy (local citizens, local government etc.)
- Emphasize efforts to countervail business consequences, which have set certain value systems on individuals and open channels for cultural values.
- Make existing institutions more environmentally and poverty oriented rather than dealing with environment and poverty in separate institutions.

II. Globalization Responses

Seven possible options were identified to deal with globalization:
- Facilitate it unconditionally, embrace it;
- Stop it;
- Retard it (e.g. Be reemphasizing frontiers or by conditioning liberalization);
- Take it for granted but deal with the consequences (social, environmental);
- Facilitate it only if certain specific conditions are made;
- Deploy countervailing global institutions to override the realm of economy (e.g. social, cultural, environmental, human rights institutions);
- Change the face of liberalization by integrating all aspects (economic and other but within one realm)

III. Institutional Arrangements for Addressing the Issues of Globalization

- An incremental approach is best;
- Reform existing institutions from within but with specific directions to the goals of balancing environment, poverty, development etc.
- Focus from within this framework and within existing institutions on interlinkages
- Focus on size, composition, and mandate:
  - Size should be small (20-25 countries)
  - Composition should be representative reflecting the global distribution of people (i.e. 2/3 from developing countries)---possibly on the basis on rotation.
  - Mandate must be conscious of trade offs (efficiency vs. equity)

Possible Institutional Options: (4)
1. Overall Security Council that deals with issues of economy, development, environment, security.
2. Steering group or committee that guides discussions that transcends existing institutions.
3. Global Summit that meets on a regular basis that has high political status to deal with cross-cutting issues such as trade, environment, development etc.
4. Reforming and upgrading CSD.
(Overall there was more consensus for the number 3 and 4 within the group)
IV. Addressing Poverty at WSSD

The group concentrated on lessons that had been learned since the Rio Summit in 1992. These could be broadly focused on the following areas: lessons learned implied in the policies reviews discussions at CSD; lessons learned by existing institutions such as UNEP, UNDP, IBRD; lessons still to be defined with the help of policy analysis (e.g. UNU).

The group identified several lessons itself:
1. Focus on both the environmental consequences, of poverty and or the consequences of environmental degradation for the poor;
2. Give priority to improvements of the ecosystems and the resources (e.g. water) on which the poor depend.
3. Endorse the ownership of essential support systems by the poor themselves.
4. Give priority to pre growth rather than trickle down approach
5. Empowerment of the poor is a pre-condition for sustainable solutions
6. Aid as well as domestic resources should be enriched for poverty eradication as directly as possible.
7. Fight over-consumption, unsustainable consumption patterns and life-styles

V. Possible Issues for WSSD’s Agenda

The group was conscious of the fact that the agenda for WSSD should be focused not try to be exhaustive however, the following issues were stressed during the deliberations:
- Global commons and global public goods
- International Migration
- Urbanization
- Population
- Technology (there is both a need for technology transfer, and its implications, and for technology impact assessment. This should include an identification of trends as well as the appropriateness or inappropriate character in specific situations).

VI. Conclusion

In the shadow of several conferences where the North-South divide was irreconcilable (RIO+5, Durban etc) it may be become even more important to increase the dialogue whereby decisions-makers (ministers, senior officials etc) can meet informally and can build trust and make exchanges without necessarily having to take decisions. The UNU could be a forum for this kind of initiative and dialogue that needs to take place.