Agreement for Sustainable Development CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE Development - RIO+20

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND SIGNATORY INSTITUTIONS



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LETTER FORWARDED TO THE RIO+20 NATIONAL COMISSION

To the National Commission of the Rio+20 Conference

The document **Agreement for Sustainable Development for the Rio+20 Conference** is the result of civil society's willingness to participate in the Conference, and to produce a joint proposal, as a contribution, to the Brazilian Government, in the preparations and political / strategic positions, vis-à-vis the topics to be discussed for future actions, both nationally and internationally.

Seventy-six (76) institutions have signed this document; these are social, environmental, entrepreneurial and workers' organizations that understand the importance of this moment, in coordinating global efforts towards sustainability. The process of inter-institutional dialogue resulted in a collectively-designed roadmap, whose milestones refer to the different positions of the signatory institutions and the commitment to go beyond the Conference, building a social network that will continue to deepen the consensus and the division of responsibilities when executing decisions. For this reason, they express contributions in the expectation that Brazil will exercise its exemplary potential at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, basing its proposals on facts and concrete actions underway in the country, as well as motivating others to take a common, bold and purposeful stand in support of sustainable development, leading up to Rio+20.

In this sense, the multi-dimensional global crisis - the dominant backdrop of the conference - should not only be viewed as an opportunity to promote responsible boldness when implementing new solutions that are more creative and consistent with current times, but also as an opportunity to look towards a different future. To turn this perspective into reality, in terms of building sustainable societies, Brazil is urged to actively support the agreement to establish Sustainable Development Goals and define guidelines as outcomes of Rio+20. In the following years, the goals will be negotiated and the indicators will be identified so that, in 2015, they can be effectively signed by the countries, along with a general overview and renewal of the Millennium Goals and Targets, to become Goals and Targets for Sustainable Development.

Socio-environmental topics have singular importance in Brazil's agenda. In recent years, the country has developed an important repertoire of economic, social and environmental technologies, organized into a set of public policies used in the process of building a political and legal framework to strengthen the sustainable development of its people and natural resources.

Due to its condition as an emerging country, Brazil has taken on a significant role in international agreements. Some of the crucial factors resulting in this role are the country's economic growth, with income distribution, its social protection system and its effort to establish and achieve environmental goals. Brazil's increased presence in the multilateral stage also stems from a foreign policy framework that seeks to defend national interests, based on three main principles: the right to development, sovereignty and common but differentiated responsibilities. These principles and the country's international position notwithstanding, Brazil and other countries around the world need to urgently recognize and overcome the challenge posed by having to reconcile national interests with the need for joint effort to solve the global challenges faced by humanity - which, by their very nature, transcend national boundaries.

In such aspects, the country has shown the ability to have a dialogue with other countries and coordinate regional groups, discussion forums, and multilateral frameworks used for political agreement. The exercise of these capacities can be enhanced, especially among the countries of the south, allowing for different political coalitions, collaborations, partnerships in terms of sustainable technologies and practices to influence the course of Conference negotiations. However, attention should be paid to challenges specific to Brazil, vis-à-vis its capacity to implement environmental legislation and negotiate a balanced forest code that reconciles environmental care and deforestation containment with food production and employment generation, under the firm principle that prohibits reversals going against the course of sustainability. This history supports our expectations that Brazil will play a leadership role in Rio+20, providing a wide open space for social participation in the design and items of the Brazilian proposals, as well as in setting the agenda of the so-called "Special Days". More relevantly, we expect that the Brazilian government will accept and incorporate this contribution by Brazilian civil society.

SIGNATORY INSTITUTIONS¹ Brasília, october, 2011

1. A list of the institutions that have signed this document is available on page 33 of this document.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal to hold a new United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, hosted in Brazil, was first introduced by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2007, in the opening address of the 62nd UN General Assembly.

Between June 20 and 22, 2012, Rio de Janeiro will attract the global spotlight towards Brazil and the issues under discussion: the green economy in the context of poverty eradication and governance structure for sustainable development within the United Nations.

The suggestion could not have been more appropriate, since twenty years ago, in 1992, Rio de Janeiro hosted the second United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio 92 - the largest gathering of heads of state that had ever taken place thus far. Planetary leaders made a promise to the 5.3 billion people inhabiting the world at that time; such a promise was embodied in the final document of the event, Agenda 21: a drastic reduction of poverty, economic growth and the reconciliation of prosperity and environmental preservation. Now that twenty years have passed since Rio 92, a large group of Brazilian civil society organizations and forums, in liaison with the Economic and Social Development Council (CDES), have collectively compiled this document, which they dared to call a "Agreemend for Sustainable Development" which is a contribution to the government's position, which President Rousseff will take to the Rio+20 Conference.

The current growth scenario has shown that there are still many structural and systemic challenges to the consolidation of sustainable development with social inclusion, as will be presented throughout this document. However, we remain optimistic about the possibility of development, of making progress in creating jobs and distributing income. To do so, proper planning, built upon a foundation of democratic and participation, is paramount.

This was the spirit we based ourselves on, to collectively build this document.

I. THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE EVELOPMENT - RIO+20: EXPECTED RESULTS

Rio+20 accumulates the legacy of decades of mobilizing the international community to engage in a discussion of environmental issues, including the Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972; the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 - also known as Rio+10.

The history of mobilization, national and international conferences, agreements and laws about the environment in the last 20 years, and the huge deficit in implementing these resolutions, indicate that the primary task of the Rio+20 Conference will be to ensure an irreversible **political commitment** to sustainable development:

» from the understanding that environmental, social and economic changes are intrinsically involved and interconnected in promoting sustainability, and based on the political, ethical, cultural and legal bases for sustainable development, and

» equity among individuals, especially equity among races, ethnicities, genders and generations and among regions, countries and regions *within* countries, and fundamental liberties for all, as elements that cut across all policies and actions to promote sustainable development.

The commitment should be translated into **national development agendas**, identifying strategies and roadmaps for sustainable development, leveraging partnerships at all levels.

The commitment will define **goals and indicators**, used to monitor and measure sustainable development processes.

Proposing a new, **participatory and multilateral governance** for sustainable development is part of the commitment and essential to its effectiveness.



Agreement for Sustainable Development

The commitment should involve all countries, under the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. And each country should involve, necessarily, **governments and society** - entrepreneurs, workers, social movements and organizations.

II. FROM RIO 92 TO TODAY: PROGRESS AND IMPASSES

The Rio+20 Conference will be held in a substantially different scenario, with positive and negative differences in relation to Rio 92.

On the one hand, the global commitment for to sustainable development is now seen in a different light, and there are important elements for a process towards sustainable development practices:

» the normative framework at Rio 92: the international consensus was translated into a political document, Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and it also resulted in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Since 1992, subsequent norms have been agreed upon and over one hundred countries have included the topic of the environment in their constitutions;

- » the partial implementation of the guidelines proposed by Agenda 21, with participatory processes in socioenvironmental planning, at the various spheres of government and society;
- » the inclusion of socio-environmental topics into the public agenda (governments, media and society), fostering the understanding of the need to shift to sustainable production and consumption, environmental resource preservation and bringing about a reduction in social inequalities between countries and populations;
- the growing connection between social, environmental and economic factors in globalization, promoting a comprehensive, integral and systemic vantage point;
- » enhanced civil society participation in development governance, through processes of coordination and cooperation between social and political players; institutional arrangements and the establishment of

participatory mechanisms for listening to the demands of the population and monitoring government actions;

- » the greater uptake of sustainable practices by the productive sector, both in the industry and in agriculture, with technological changes in processes and management;
- the emergence of social media, allowing extensive and quick dissemination of socioenvironmental issues of interest to society;
- » advances in science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, both in terms of production and in environmental monitoring systems. The creation and strengthening of marine and land-based protection, on a larger scale;
- » the impetus for achieving the Rio 92 goals, with funding from the Global Environment Fund;
- » the emergence of initiatives and examples of political coalition between governments,

pointing to commitments that are more consistent with the objectives of Rio+20, such as the recent declarations by the G20, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa); and

» the adoption of mechanisms to ensure transparency, social participation, respect for human rights and the fight against corruption - which gradually become drivers for social interaction.

Nevertheless, they have become acute elements that indicate the systemic unsustainability of current patterns:

we have hit the seven billion people landmark, and about 1.6 billion of them live on less than 66 reais per month². Hunger and food insecurity, precarious work, diseases, wars, drug trafficking and other problems affect the daily lives of entire populations. There is growing inequality among countries and among peoples. The consumption pattern, information



^{2.} Source: United Nations Development Programme - UNDP.

and communication systems, science and technology, among others, are often inconsistent with sustainable development;

- » the devastation of forests, worsening water, soil and air pollution, the melting of polar ice, the increase in extreme weather conditions, the scarcity of arable land and drinking water - as well as the loss of biodiversity - are some of the increasingly clear symptoms of nature's objective limitations.
- » the economic and financial crisis that currently affects - and will continue to affect - economies in the coming years has left a trail of unemployment. Said unemployment already affects 200 million people worldwide, restricting access to social rights and creating uncertainty about the future, especially among young people and vulnerable social groups.

III. CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES

This context makes it clear that the Rio+20 Conference must be instilled with a sense of urgency, to overcome growing unsustainability, from an economic, social and environmental standpoint. It is fundamental to promote a paradigm shift in production and consumption models, towards sustainability and social justice.

This change will enhance the dynamism of the economies, given the effort required in terms of investments in infrastructure and sustainable technologies, and in social policies in such fields as health, education, culture, sanitation, housing.

The solution to the current economic crisis requires the implementation of a set of policies for building a sustainable virtuous cycle, economically, socially and environmentally.

The challenges are as follows:

» Regulation of the financial system, to avoid instability and support sustainable development. In this sense, one should prioritize long-term, solid and notspeculative investments. Additionally, strong bank supervision must be coupled with tighter liquidity control.

- » The promotion of changes in production and consumption patterns, investing in the transition to a green economy, capable of supporting economic growth coupled with social and environmental sustainability.
- » The broad definition of sustainable development requires returning the economy to its social function, which involves redistributing wealth, fighting unemployment, promoting fairness and guaranteeing universal and comprehensive social policies. In this sense, guaranteed social security for everyone is a powerful tool.
- » The promotion of food and nutritional security is necessary to ensure social inclusion and access to food - in proper quantity and of proper quality – for all



peoples. Poverty eradication is a crucial step in the sustainable development processes. The challenge for emerging, less-developed countries is to grow, economically speaking, while distributing income and promoting social inclusion, reducing inequalities without sacrificing environmental resources and biodiversity.

» The fight against unemployment, in a world in crisis and undergoing technological changes. Active policies for promoting employment and productive inclusion are fundamental to overcoming the financial crisis and achieving sustainable development.

» The strengthening of democracy, participation and social dialogue as indispensable factors for change, and for building a more sustainable, just and caring world.

Rio+20 should also liaise with the current major challenges of multilateral agendas: climate change, foreign trade and the instability of commodity prices.

IV. STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A ROADMAP FOR TRANSITION

The transition to sustainable development, in economic, social and environmental terms, requires the effort of each and every country; it should be agreed upon by governments and society, and be based on democracy and respect. It should take advantage of social, ethnic and cultural diversity and should be committed to ethics, transparency and peace.

Elements of this effort are: the transition to sustainable development, the generation of decent work opportunities in the cities and countryside; and the preservation, conservation and restoration of natural systems.

The commitment of all countries should be encouraged and strengthened by a series of partnerships at all levels, and by the participation and control of society; it must be supervised and monitored by indicators capable of systemically capturing economic, social and environmental impacts.

1. National sustainable development agendas

It is necessary to restore and enhance the capacity of countries, based on their cultural, social, economic and environmental specificities, to formulate national agendas to guide actions aimed at sustainable development. It is up to Rio+20 to trigger and organize the processes that generate and organize government plans to be implemented, monitored and evaluated, providing for shared responsibilities, and including participatory governance at various levels and by different players. As such, the directives are to:

» Strengthen the role of the state as a promoter of development, by means of integrated sustainability policies, managing economic policy tools - foreign exchange, interest rates, the public funding system - having strong public and private companies, planning capacity; a social protection system, involving education, health, housing, welfare; and an appropriate environmental regulatory framework.

- » Promote the generation of decent work opportunities and ensure a fair transition, requiring social protection policies and active labor market policies to fill gaps in the transition to green jobs. Ensure professional education and impact assessments of projects and works aimed at the adaptation and mitigation of climate change in terms of job creation, thereby strengthening the institutional capacity of agencies involved in managing such policies.
- » Through financing, tax and credit systems and a favorable regulatory environment, foster the transition to a green economy, with a production structure requiring fewer nonrenewable resources, generating fewer negative externalities, striving for efficiency, reuse, recycling and reducing the use of raw materials.

- » Support the expansion of local markets and supply chains, entrepreneurship, associations, cooperatives, solidary economy and sustainable harvesting.
- » Promote regional and local development at sub-scales, by means of local spatial plans, appropriate solutions and integrated policies for social inclusion and sustainability. Promote mechanisms for consultations with local populations, for any construction or investment that will impact their territory.
- » Implement actions for the preservation, restoration and conservation of natural resources, to increase the environmental quality of ecosystems³ and the progressive reduction of
- » deforestation in national biomes. Earmark incentives and / or compensation to human activities related to restoring, recovering, maintaining and improving ecosystems that generate environmental services.

^{3.} Environmental quality is concerned with both maintaining the biodiversity of species and the number of individuals of each species, as well as with the reduction of stressors, such as pollution and other types of impact on ecosystems.

- » Implement policies and actions that promote the reduction of race, ethnicity and gender inequalities, and enable the full involvement of traditional communities (indigenous, slave-descendent and riverside communities, extraction workers, family farmers and fishermen) in the sustainable development process. Ensure the protection of native-Brazilian lands.
- » Implement tax justice, while respecting the principles of a progressive, simplified and non-cumulative tax system, focusing on correcting inequalities, stimulating production and productive investment, and remaining attentive to environmental issues as important vectors in building tax incentives.
- » Widely foster "sustainable procurement". Encourage the use of the same criteria for purchases by other institutions as well, such as large companies and organizations - this is aimed at encouraging more sustainable production and consumption patterns.
- » Encourage agricultural practices and technologies aimed at conserving natural

resources - agro-ecology - and prioritize the adoption of policies in favor of food and nutritional security, and the eradication of hunger and poverty.

» Foster coordination between governments and civil society, to ensure social cohesion and governance of sustainable development agendas, as well as the sharing of responsibilities and social control over the implementation of policies, programs and projects.

2. New production and consumption patterns

There is a clear pattern of interaction between production and consumption, and a given distribution of income and wealth. The current consumption and production pattern, based on an urban-industrial way of life, has become unsustainable, in that it affects the climate and the ecological balance of the planet. Our choices and lifestyles reflect the increase in income per capita and the high concentration of income and wealth in some countries - they are responsible for asymmetries between countries, regions and people.



As the population grows, this model becomes increasingly less feasible - it cannot be made universal and serves only 1/3 of the population - the richest of the planet. Inequality in energy consumption is an indicator of unsustainability and inequity used in this model. A new model of production, consumption and distribution requires redefining a participatory form of governance over this complex process and the redesign of the development agenda, based on equity and low ecological impact. As such, the directives are to:

- » Adopt freedom and equity as fundamental rights of all people, regions and generations, and as criteria for establishing a new, inclusive and sustainable production and consumption pattern.
- Involve producers and consumers, to ensure a commitment to changing production and consumption patterns, and provide strategies for transition to a green economy with social justice, strengthening the financial foundations of social protection and investment systems.

- » Enhance opportunities for the generation of decent work and green jobs, guided by the new production and consumption pattern.
- » Promote energy efficiency and increasing uptake of renewable energy sources in all sectors and human activities.
- Improve processes in carbon-intensive activities within services and the industrial and agricultural sectors, aimed at lower greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Adjust financial systems and encourage business managers to take on a model that ensures the conditions necessary for longterm investment and for sustained growth and job creation in the transition to a green economy with social justice.
- » Take measures to encourage social responsibility by establishing minimum transparency requirements in the of socially-responsible management of businesses and other activities that generate social and environmental impacts. Encourage positive voluntary practices that go beyond the minimum required by law.

- » Update marketing / advertising / media strategies to new production and consumption patterns, especially with regards to urban mobility and accessibility, housing, household appliances and energy, thus contributing to building a sustainable way of life.
- » Develop international accounting standards and indicators that consider the imperatives of sustainable development and the objective mechanisms for disseminating the economic and financial implications of sustainable development actions.

3. Sustainable cities and rural areas

Make progress on building a sustainable development model in cities and in the rural areas, focusing on improving quality of life. As such, the directives are to:

» Implement programs for urban and rural mobility, ensuring investments in public transportation, accessibility and nonmotorized traffic.

- » Adopt sustainable construction and energy efficiency principles and methods. To promote universal sanitation services, involving water supply, sewage disposal, handling and disposal of solid waste and drainage systems.
- » Deploy an agricultural / livestock production model that contributes to the reduction of inequalities, sustainable use of environmental resources and regional development, by ensuring decent work, access to sustainable technologies, from production all the way to marketing and credit provision.
- » Ensure access, by the population of urban and rural areas, to public services, such as education, health, housing, sanitation, infrastructure, culture and recreation, as well as income transfers and actions to combat poverty.
- » Give priority to eradicating hunger and promoting food and nutritional security and sovereignty, to ensure social inclusion and access to food, in proper quantity and

quality, by social groups currently in food-insecure situations.

» Strengthen the role of cities and local governments in the construction of sustainable development as a space for innovation and building culture and technology, combined with democratic participation of the population.

4. The role played by education, science, technology and innovation

Education is a priority - it is a structural cog of development, a vector to unleash creative and innovative potential. It is also an enabler of the cultural construction of a new standard of living in society and a new way of interacting with the environment. As such, the directives are to:

» Ensure access to quality, universal education, making knowledge democratic and based on such values as equity and sustainability.

- » Promote the values and aspirations of society, from a standpoint that brings the human, spiritual and cultural dimensions to the center of the debate, as a basis for behavioral changes.
- » Expand and reorganize investment in research, development and innovation, prioritizing research on the dematerialization of production processes⁴, low-carbon technologies, closed production and consumption cycles, solutions that generate employment and income, systems for the social use of resources, goods and services.
- » Encourage training and professional qualification for the new production and consumption pattern and promote technology transfers among countries, regions and communities.
- Support local projects, to stimulate the formatting of - and access to - sustainable social technologies, considering cultural

^{4.} Dematerialization of production and processes means getting more goods and services using a smaller amount of matter, and also taking into account the energy that went into such production. This increase in resource productivity can be achieved by optimizing the use of products and increasing their durability and shelf lives, the intensive use of the Internet, moving from paper documents to electronic documents, among others.

differences and valuing the knowledge of traditional communities, as well as alternative production and marketing methods.

» Encourage the use of social networks in the process of changing culture and values, in the transition to new a production and consumption pattern, and an inclusive green economy.

5. Social participation and social control

Increased participation of social actors is fundamental to ensuring the quality and viability of sustainable development processes. Social movements, business sectors, labor organizations, academics, women and youth have a growing impact on the definition and implementation of decisions made at the national level, with a resonance in international relations. As such, the directives areto:

- » Create mechanisms for transparency and access to information, societal participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, implementing Principle 10 of the of Rio 92 Declaration⁵.
- » Promote civil society participation in the development governance, through the strengthening of civil society organizations, social networks and associations of various kinds, and the establishment and strengthening of participatory and listening mechanisms, such as councils, public hearings, roundtables, ombudspeople, among others, on all national and multilateral levels.

6. Partnerships for Sustainable Development

These are common challenges, and countries should tackle them together, as global partners. As such, Rio+20 should foster a debate on new forms

^{5.} **Principle to of the of Rio 92 Declaration:** The best way to handle environmental issues is to ensure participation, at the appropriate level, of all concerned citizens. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information held by authorities relating to the environment, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, as well as the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information available to all. Access shall be effectively granted to judicial and administrative proceedings, including compensations and damage reparations.



of cooperation and the development of strategic partnerships for sustainability. This network should be based on cooperation among countries, multilateral agencies, corporations, communities and social organizations, sharing innovation and transformation solutions. As such, the directives areto:

- » Define a new global relationship, capable of stimulating scientific and technical cooperation based on the geopolitics of biomes, coordinating efforts and encouraging the exchange of experiences, expertise and skills among regions with geographical, geopolitical and developmental similarities.
- » Agree on sustainable development targets and indicators, to be adopted as tools for the management of public policies and concrete actions enacted by partner countries, at all levels, and as parameters for monitoring and control by society.

7. New development indicators

The amount of material resources, as measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP),

masks the use of global resources and ignores other dimensions necessary for human wellbeing. Sustainable development needs a new type of oversight and measurement. As such, the directives are to:

- » Advance in the agreement and definition of indicators to measure development, integrating economic performance, social welfare and environmental quality.
- » Adopt an accounting standard for measuring development, considering, in addition to GDP, social impacts, the cost of environmental services and assets used in the production of goods and services, and also considering the level of national income and access, by the population, to public services, such as environmental sanitation (solid waste management, water management, vector control) health, education, mobility, culture.
- » Advance in the study and use of metrics, based on the best available scientific knowledge, capable of measuring the environmental impact of individuals, companies and countries, considering the

natural limitations of the resources used to produce and absorb the waste of what they consume; and combine the production and consumption dimensions in a flexible manner, reflecting regional differences and variations in lifestyles and production technologies.

V. GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The main challenge is to seek out solutions to problems of consistency and coordination that affect the functioning of UN organizations and bodies related to sustainable development, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), the Council of Social Development (CDSoc), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), agencies such as UNDP and others, and the Secretariats of the various environmental conventions. To achieve proper global governance of sustainable development strategies, we need to:

» Agree on a multilateral institutional architecture, capable of coordinating and providing synergy to national agendas; coordinate and monitor global commitments; and coordinate funding for sustainable development.

- » Advance studies to implement a new global funding architecture, exploring the expansion of innovative financial mechanisms for sustainable and inclusive development, capable of distributing costs progressively and allowing for the sustainable development of all countries⁶.
- » Promote dialogue with and the participation of - civil society as an essential part of the structures and practices of multilateral and national governance. An active dialogue between governments and society allows us to look for alternatives and make the critical choices most appropriate to dealing with new challenges and opportunities, and to build a future based on the principles of sustainability, equity, freedom and social justice.

⁶ In this sense, one needs to revisit the principles listed in the Monterrey Declaration and support the Declaration of the member countries of the Task Force on International Financial Transactions for Development - France, Belgium, Britain, Spain, Chile, Japan and Senegal. The declaration was presented to the UN on Oct. 21, 2010.



The leadership of Brazil and emerging countries

In addition to the guidelines presented for the Brazilian government's contribution to the Secretariat of the Rio+20 Conference, there are analyses and recommendations to the National Commission about what this Agreement understands as being the role that Brazil and the group of emerging countries should play at Rio+20.

Internationally, Brazil stands out as a solidary partner - not only a bearer of economic strength and natural and cultural wealth, but also a country riddled with practical suggestions for dealing with major economic, social, environmental and political challenges. Despite the huge challenges ahead, it becomes increasingly evident that emerging countries will be protagonists in the 2012 deliberations in Rio de Janeiro, in favor of a model of civilization that reconciles democracy, economic prosperity, fewer regional disparities, social justice among nations and environmental health.

Brazil

The Brazilian trajectory in the past few years, jointly built by the government and civil society, has demonstrated the ability to generate positive effects on employment and income; food and nutritional security; family farming and environmental issues, through a set of coordinated actions and policies:

- » The prioritization of policies and actions is translated into positive results, as shown by some of the country's social indicators. In recent years, poverty in Brazil has fallen to close to 50%, and over 28 million people have crossed the poverty line upwards.
- » The promotion of development with social inclusion, through policies that make up a social safety net⁷, policies promoting the minimum wage, expansion of the Bolsa Família Program, promotion of food and nutritional security, and support to the expansion of family farming have reduced the population's insecurity with respect to employment and income, health and education.

⁷ The Brazilian social protection network covers the following areas of state activity: policies on employment and income, education, health, welfare, culture, human rights (the search for social, racial and gender equality, upholding the rights of children and adolescents, youth, the elderly, women, sexual identity, justice and citizenship), public safety, housing and sanitation, agricultural development, social services and income transfers.

- » Brazilian agriculture is a world reference in technologically-advanced tropical agriculture, with high productivity levels.
- » The environmental legal framework has evolved significantly. The country is consolidating a set of laws and regulations that establish policy guidelines and actions for the government on this issue. One example is Law 12.187/2009, which establishes the National Policy on Climate Change.
- » The Brazilian electrical grid is largely made up of renewable energy sources - about 40%, between biomass and hydroelectricity. The country also encourages the use of biofuels, through the National Program for the Production and Use of Biodiesel, as well as policies to encourage the use of ethanol. Brazil has the greatest fleet of cars running on biofuels in the world. The result is the world's cleanest power grid.
- » The national industrial centers have shown significant progress toward sustainability, with emphasis on management and

technological innovations incorporated into the production process; self-regulation and certification innovations; action in representative instances for public policy making; and the development of actions for the continuous improvement in quality of life and the professional / health safety of workers

» Brazil's increased presence in the multilateral stage also stems from a foreign policy framework that seeks to defend national interests, based on the following principles: the right to development, sovereignty and common but differentiated responsibilities. The country has shown the ability to have a dialogue with other countries and coordinate regional groups, discussion forums, and multilateral frameworks used for political consultation.

Major challenges must still be faced, to consolidate changes and advance sustainable development processes:

 Continued progress on reducing the high level of social inequalities;



- » Ensure that the exploration of the pre-salt oil layer - and use of the resulting oil and funds - will be based on the promotion of sustainable development. Ensure social and environmental balance to large investments and infrastructure works in progress.
- » Regulate the Climate Change Law (Law 12.187/2009) and set forth measures to ensure the execution of the National Plan on Climate Change. It is essential to negotiate a balanced forest code - one that reconciles the objectives of environmental monitoring and the containment of deforestation with food production and employment generation, in a way that is convergent with the sustainability principles and objectives.
- » Integrate financial and economic management policies with environmental and social guidelines. Promote integration between different areas of government, so as to effectively set sustainable development as a guiding principle for the actions and policies.

Emerging countries

Initiatives of emerging countries show significant progress towards sustainable development:

The BRICS leaders meeting in Sanya, the » statements made by BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China), IBSA and UNASUR (Union of South-American Nations) all acknowledge that "accelerating sustainable development in developing countries is a major global challenge, but the realization of sustainable development should be an important vehicle for promoting economic development". They reiterated that "the Kyoto Protocol is a landmark of the climate change regime" and stressed that the purpose of this Protocol is to achieve reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. They also stressed the importance of achieving results that are comprehensive, balanced, fair and ambitious, in the context of sustainable development and in accordance, first and foremost, with the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

- The meeting between BRICS Economic and » Social Councils⁸ emphasized the need to reform global governance, to ensure that commitments made towards the promotion of sustainable development are, indeed, fulfilled. It stressed the importance of prioritizing the creation of national development strategies, the notion of sustainable technology transfers and academic and scientific exchanges among group member countries. It also warned of the importance of seeking out energy efficiency in a world currently engaged in a process of modernization; it also supported the development and use of renewable energy sources as ways to face up to climate change.
- » Cooperation by biomes should be added to the strategy of placing emphasis on relations with developing countries; it also allows the for tripartite cooperation, wherein countries in different stages of development exchange technologies and knowledge. Examples of such initiatives: the Second International Conference: Climate, Sustainability and Development in Semi-

Arid Regions (ICID + 18), which brought representatives of over 80 countries to Fortaleza, and cooperation among the countries of the South-American Amazon rainforest, embodied mainly in the Amazon CooperationTreaty.

» The Brazilian Economic and Social Development Bank (BNDES) has signed agreements and memoranda of understanding, with various African countries and institutions similar to BRICS. Such agreements may be the funding embryo for technical cooperation among countries, in projects of mutual interest and in the field of sustainable development.

All declarations and initiatives show that there is a commitment, among developing countries, to advance in seeking multilateral solutions to global problems, particularly those related to sustainable development. The challenge lies in making progress in the agreements and turning them into concrete actions.

^{8.} Which took place in September, 2011, in Moscow.

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