



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
First Regular Meeting of 2009
January 14-16, 2009
Organization of American States
Washington D.C.

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REPORT OF THE MEETING

1. PREPARATIONS

At the Sixth Regular meeting of the SIRG for 2008, which was held in El Salvador, the Chair, Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, National Coordinator and Special Envoy for the Americas, of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, had indicated to member states that they would begin the first Regular SIRG of 2009 with the Third Pillar of the Declaration “Environmental Sustainability” and then continue, in the Working Group, the pending paragraphs from the Energy Security, and Human Prosperity Pillars.

On January 6, 2009, the most recent revision of the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, (Gric/ DC-V/doc.1/08 rev 4) was circulated to all National Coordinators, and Permanent Missions, as the working document for the First SIRG for 2009. A copy of the Compendium of Proposals Presented by Member States on the Environmental Sustainability Section of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain (GRIC/D.C.-V/doc.3/08 rev. 1./08) was also sent to the Member States on January 07, 2009.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair, Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, reiterated his gratitude to the Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) for assistance in convening the First Regular meeting of the SIRG for 2009. He then presented the agenda for the meeting (GRIC/01/doc.2/09 rev.2) for the consideration of the delegates. There having been no objections or amendments to the agenda, it was approved.

3. OPENING SESSION

The Chair opened the session by giving a brief outline of the work methodology for the Sixth SIRG. He reminded delegates that the first pillar, Human Prosperity, was addressed at the last 3 SIRG meetings and that at the Sixth SIRG the nine paragraphs on “Energy Security” were also addressed. He informed that out of the first 38 paragraphs of the Draft Declaration of Commitment that had been reviewed, 26 had been approved. The Chair also informed that the Working Group had met over the previous two days and had reviewed the paragraphs which were referred to it at the last meeting. He thanked the members of the Working Group for their work and indicated that he was confident that several paragraphs which were under review were close to being approved. The Chair

then acknowledged the presence of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Mr. Jose Miguel Insulza and offered him the floor.

a) Welcoming Remarks by the Secretary General of the OAS

The Secretary General extended a warm welcome and New Year greetings to the participants and expressed the hope for a successful Summit of the Americas. He also reassured participants that the OAS would continue to participate in what ever way it can to ensure the success of the Summit. Mr. Insulza stated that environmental sustainability, which would be discussed at the meeting, was of tremendous importance not only for the countries but also for the people of the hemisphere. He opined that the importance is manifested in the fact that during the 3 days of deliberation by the participants of the SIRG, nearly 200 million families would be struggling with less than \$2.00 a day for food health and other needs, 75 million people would be denied access to clean drinking water, and nearly 140 million people would lack access to adequate sanitation, electricity and telecommunication connections. The Secretary General also informed of the negative impact of green house gas emissions in the hemisphere, as well as the growing proportion of the hemisphere's ecological endowment which have now fallen under the "at risk" category. He enunciated the role of the OAS in attempting to make a contribution to the alleviation of these problems, and commended the countries of the hemisphere which have been working in conjunction with the Organization to reverse the deterioration of urban air quality resulting from rapid urbanization, increased vehicular transportation, and industrial production. The Secretary General concluded by urging the participants to adopt the role of stewards of the environment and outlined the efforts of the OAS Secretariat in this regard.

The complete text of the Secretary General's presentation can be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0109/remarks_insulza_en.doc

b) Remarks by Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodríguez

Ambassador Rodriguez, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, thanked the Secretary General for his remarks and also took the opportunity to express his gratitude to the OAS for the strong technical support the National Secretariat continued to receive during the negotiations.

The Chair reminded delegates that the Fifth Summit was less than one hundred days away and that it was necessary to increase the pace of the negotiations to ensure significant progress on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain. He outlined the accomplishments to date. He indicated that under the Preamble and the Human Prosperity pillar, 21 paragraphs were approved; five paragraphs were with the Working Group, nine paragraphs were on hold pending consultations among the countries, one paragraph had been reformulated by the National Secretariat, at the request of the Plenary, and two paragraphs were brought back to the Plenary at the last SIRG with brackets. The Chair also informed that under Energy Security, five paragraphs were approved; four paragraphs were with the working group, two paragraphs were reformulated by the National Secretariat and four paragraphs were pending consultations by Member States. He also informed that the focus of the meeting would be on the third Pillar of the Declaration "Environmental Sustainability" (paragraphs 39-47) and that pending paragraphs would be revisited. The Chair also indicated that the subject area

was of great importance to all and that paying lip service to it would not be sufficient. He also indicated that although words are an expression of commitment they must be followed by action which is urgently required. He also reminded participations about the costs of inaction. Ambassador Rodriguez concluded by stating that the Summit provided the opportunity for a collective approach to much needed action in the area of climate change and that the leaders in the Hemisphere should not allow such an opportunity to pass them by .

The complete text of Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez's statement can be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/2009/SIRG_020909/remarks_lar_en.doc

4. FIRST PLENARY SESSION

a) Overview of the methodology of the SIRG

In opening the First Plenary Session, the Chair reiterated the methodology proposed by the National Secretariat for the deliberations. He informed that the methodology would remain the same as in previous meetings and that the Director of the Summits Secretariat would introduce each paragraph. He informed that the Section on Environmental Sustainability, paragraphs 35-49, as it appeared in document Gric/ DC-V/doc.1/08 rev 4 would be the basis for the negotiations at the meeting. The text of these paragraphs had been modified by the National Secretariat on the basis of the comments received in writing from member states.

The Chair, as in previous meetings, reiterated that where extensive changes or new texts were being proposed, the Member States would orally present them to the meeting, and submit their text to the Summit Secretariat for translation and distribution. The Chair stated that on completion of the discussion on a paragraph, it would be read in its entirety, for final approval. He also indicated that members of the Joint Summit Working Group would be called upon for any clarification required, during the negotiations.

Ambassador Rodriguez reiterated that if final approval could not be obtained he would propose that the National Secretariat provide a modified text for consideration or that a working group be formed to address the matter. He indicated that this would be the methodology for all subsequent SIRG meetings.

The Chair opened the floor for the presentations of the three institutions invited to speak on Environmental Sustainability.

PRESENTATIONS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The World Bank

The Chair gave the floor to Mr. Pablo Fajnzylber , of the World Bank, who informed the delegates that the melting of Andean glaciers, the bleaching and dying of Caribbean corals, the increased risk of natural disasters and the increased mortality and morbidity from tropical diseases were consequences of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean . He also indicated that

there were risks of severe impacts in the near future, and indicated as examples, that the Amazon rainforest could shrink by 20%-80% for 2-3 degrees centigrade warming, some areas may collapse in agricultural productivity, and the small islands in the Caribbean could suffer from losses which could reach 7% to 18% of GDP by 2080. The Representative also indicated that although the Latin America and the Caribbean region's energy emissions are well below the world's average both in per capita terms and as a fraction of the region's GDP, if nothing is done to be part of the solution to ensure global effectiveness and efficiency, the Hemisphere's energy-related emissions after 2015 would grow faster than the world average. The World Bank Representative also informed participants that the Latin America and the Caribbean could be an important part of the solution if it keeps its energy matrix clean, avoids deforestation and pursues low carbon growth.

The complete text of the presentation can be found on http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0109/WB_0109_En.ppt

PRESENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM (UNEP)

The Chair introduced Mr. Munyaradzi Chenje, from the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) who briefed the participants on the role of UNEP as the principal body within the United Nations system which sets the environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainability development, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. The UNEP Representative indicated that there is evidence of unprecedented environmental change at global and regional levels which represent a serious challenge for human well being and sustainable development. Mr. Chenje emphasized the importance of the linkages between the global food, energy and financial crises as well as climate change. He indicated that UNEP was looking at working with governments on how best to promote the linkages since the identification of these linkages offers opportunities for more effective responses at national, regional and global levels. The Representative also stated that there was a critical need for scientific research and data for the strengthening of environmental knowledge, education and awareness. He concluded by informing that UNEP had submitted a number of proposals on how best to use stimulus packages and was aggressively promoting the issue of linkages.

A complete text of UNEP's Representative presentation could be found on http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0109/UNEP_0109_En.ppt

PRESENTATION OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY CLIMATE CHANGE CENTRE (CCCC)

The Chair introduced Dr Ulric Trotz, Science Adviser from the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCC) who informed participants that there was unequivocal evidence that the earth's temperature was rising and rainfall trends were not as predictable as they used to be. He attributed this to anthropogenic activities or increased green house gases. Dr Trotz stated that as a result of climate change the Caribbean is experiencing less available water, agriculture is adversely affected, incidence of extreme events have increased, hurricanes are more intense, and sea levels have risen. He opined that these have direct consequences for economic activities, property and infrastructure, human welfare, livelihoods as well as the realization of sustainable development goals.

Dr. Trotz indicated that the 2008 Atlantic Hurricane season demonstrated the increased frequency of the extreme events. He contended that the 2008 hurricane season was the most costly on record with up to \$45 billion in damage. He further informed that 2008 was the only year on record in which a major hurricane existed in every month from July through November in the North Atlantic and which was particularly devastating for Haiti where over 800 people were killed. The CCCCC Representative recommended that in order to mitigate the impact of climate change, countries in the region will have to support efforts for adaptation, create monitoring and observation systems, implement the Bali Action Plan, transfer environmentally sound technologies, as well as provide new resources to support adaptation.

Dr. Trotz concluded by urging member states to take advantage of innovative financing mechanisms and the provision of favorable terms for technology transfer to decrease the carbon footprint in the region's sector, by investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy. He also strongly recommended that a hemispheric emissions trading regime similar to that in the European Union be established to create market incentives for mitigation.

The complete text of this presentation can be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0109/CCCCC_0109_En.ppt

COMMENTS BY MEMBER STATES

The Chair thanked the presenters for their contribution to the Summit process and then offered the floor to delegates for their comments. The countries who took the floor thanked the Chair and the presenters and indicated that it would have been very useful if a report on the entire hemisphere was presented instead of limiting it to Latin America. The countries also sought to find out whether the financial crisis would affect adaptation measures. In responding to the question the Representative of the CCCCC informed that the recent global economic crisis was not taken into consideration in the adaptation program. He further informed that Latin America, Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean and the British territories were conducting a study on the costing of adaptation and mitigation as well as inaction. He explained that the longer action was delayed the more expensive the responses become. The UNEP Representative also informed that the issue had been raised at the United Nations and the UN Secretary General has advocated that part of the United States stimulus package be used to address adaptation.

a) Negotiations on the draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain paragraphs 39-47 (Environmental Sustainability)

Ambassador Rodriguez informed Participants that the working document for the meeting was GRIC/DC-V/DOC.1/08 Rev 4 and that he would begin with paragraph 39 which he requested the Director of the Summit Secretariat to present. The negotiations of paragraphs 39-47 began.

5. SECOND PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain paragraphs 39-47

The delegations continued their deliberations on paragraphs 39-47.

In closing the second Plenary Session, the Chair indicated that the negotiations would continue the next day. He gave the floor to the Deputy National Coordinator, Ms Beverly Khan, for a status report on the paragraphs which were sent to the Working Group. Ms Khan in taking the floor indicated that 7 paragraphs were considered by the Group. These were 20, 21bis, 28, 33bis, 30ter and 34, 38 bis. She also informed that paragraphs 28, 33bis were sent back to the Plenary, the outcome of 21bis depended on the results of the negotiations of paragraphs 14 and 15 and that paragraphs 30ter, 38 and 38bis were amalgamated in new paragraph E. The Deputy National Coordinator also stated that the Working Group would begin working with the following paragraphs: 20, 40 + the two paragraphs introduced by Barbados, E, 34. The Chair then urged member states to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group which he indicated were essential. The Venezuelan representative proposed that the Working Group start an hour earlier than the Plenary so that her delegation would have the opportunity to participate in both Sessions. The Chair indicated that the two sessions would take place simultaneously and that the Plenary session would begin as scheduled. In concluding the Chair summarized the work of the SIRG as follows: paragraphs 39, 40, 44 and the new paragraph from Barbados will be dealt with in the Working Group, paragraph 40bis is pending a response from Brazil and Argentina, paragraphs 41, 42, 43, and 44bis will be redrafted by the National Secretariat.

6. THIRD PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain paragraphs 39-47
(Environmental Sustainability)

The delegations continued their deliberations on paragraphs 39-47.

7. FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain paragraphs 39-47
(Environmental Sustainability)

The delegations continued their deliberations on paragraphs 39-47.

8. FIFTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain paragraphs 39-47
(Environmental Sustainability)

The delegations continued their deliberations on paragraphs 39-47.

9. SIXTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, Paragraphs 30-38.

The delegations continued their deliberations on paragraphs pending from the Energy Security section.

10. CLOSING SESSION

The Chair thanked the participants and encouraged them to continue working in the spirit of cooperation. He then invited the Deputy National Coordinator; Ms. Beverly Khan to summarize the work of the SIRG to date. Ms Khan indicated that in total 29 paragraphs were approved (3 being approved over the three days of the first SIRG of 2009). She also informed that 8 paragraphs were still with the Working Group,(paragraphs 20, 21bis, 40, 44, 46, 7, B and the paragraph introduced by Barbados). Also pending consultations were paragraphs 14, 15, 16, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40bis, and 47. Ms Khan stated that 7 paragraphs were considered by the Working Group and will be returning to the Plenary. These were 3, 5, 8, 11, 24, 25, and 28. Five paragraphs (22, 41, 42, 43, 44bis) were given to the National Secretariat for redrafting. The Deputy National Coordinator concluded by informing that 6 paragraphs proposed by member states will be circulated so that the countries could consult on them before they are presented for discussion.

The Chair further indicated that the next SIRG (the Second for 2009) which was originally scheduled for Jan 26, 2009 in Washington had been postponed to February 9-13, 2009, and that the documents for that meeting would be distributed on January 26, 2009. He also informed that the Working Group would be meeting simultaneously with the Plenary. Ambassador Rodriguez also informed that the Third SIRG for 2009 would be convened on February 23-27, 2009.

The National Coordinator for Trinidad and Tobago informed member states of the convening of a meeting for advance teams on January 30, 2009, in Port of Spain, where they would be briefed on the logistics of the Summit. He also informed that two other meetings on security and Summit logistics were also scheduled for February 4-5, 2009 and February 9-10, 2009 respectively. One delegation indicated that since protocol and security offices normally work very well together it would be more convenient for the discussions on logistics to be conducted at one meeting instead of three. The Chair stated that he was amenable to adjusting the dates and noted the comment. He also indicated that an information bulletin had been circulated in December and an updated version would be distributed to member states on January 27, 2009.

With respect to comments on the timely receipt of working documents for the SIRG the Chair indicated that he was not in a position to get the documents to the member states as early as they would like for the next SIRG because of the two day holiday, January 19 and 20, 2009, in the United States. He stated that he was informed that the translators do not work on holidays. The Mexican delegate stated that if there was a problem with translations his country has a number of translators who would be able to help. The Chair took note of this offer. The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking representatives for their participation.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.45 p.m.