



GREENPEACE



May 31st, Bali

Dear Secretary-General Kofi Annan,

We are writing to you from Bali with regard to the on-going preparation for the Johannesburg Earth Summit.

Next week will be the last chance to achieve what you have called for in your 14 May speech on Johannesburg. We welcomed your call for “five specific areas where concrete results are both essential and achievable” focused on the key issues of Water and sanitation, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity - “five areas in which progress is possible with the resources and technologies at our disposal today”.

But things are not going well. Political promises are crumbling into dust.

No-one amongst governments seems to have taken any notice of your request that at the Earth Summit “We must rehabilitate our one and only planet”.

Governments continue to put corporate globalisation before the interests of people and the planet. Your vision that “together, we can and must write a new and hopeful chapter in natural – and human – history” is being flatly ignored. Governments have failed to respond to the global call to establish social and environmental limits to economic globalisation.

Nitin Desai, the Summit Secretary General said that WSSD “is expected to provide the impetus for specific action that will comprise a major departure from business as usual” and that “We have to think big and go to scale”.

And Dr Emil Salim, the Chairman of the Summit's Preparatory Committee said that “If we continue as we have done in the past, we will sink”.

Mr Annan, the Earth Summit is sinking.

Government representatives here in Bali are doing worse than business as usual: unless there is an immediate U-turn in the direction taken by the negotiations, Johannesburg will destroy the legacy of Rio.

What was meant to be the “Rio Plus10 conference” is quickly becoming the “Rio Minus Ten” conference.

Like you, we are keen to see Johannesburg making concrete progress towards the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. But the lack of concrete targets and time-frames in the text proposed for Johannesburg represents a major set-back for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration goals.

We are extremely concerned about the position of the George W. Bush administration throughout these negotiations, which has been to systematically delete any reference to targets, timetables and funding in the Chairman's Paper. It is our sense that there is far too little political pressure being brought to bear on this process to make it even a minor success. This is why the "lowest common denominator" is so weak.

The proposed "Plan of Action", watered down even further this week in Bali, is a "Plan of Inaction", a recipe for social and environmental disaster.

Unless governments agree to adopt next week an action plan with the following four key elements:

- targets and timeframes,
- Means of implementation and financial resources,
- Institutional requirements, and
- Monitoring, reporting, enforcement and compliance,

for the five key areas that you have wisely identified in your speech of 14 May 2002, we would like you to consider whether it is worth holding the summit at all.

It is critical that you immediately convey this sense of urgency to the Heads of State and Government of the members of the United Nations, as well as with the hosts of the Bali and Johannesburg conferences.

In coalition with other NGOs, we have worked constructively through the preparatory process for more than two years. Annexed to this letter you will find some examples of our action-oriented proposals which will help fulfil the mandate as set out in the UN General Assembly Resolution establishing this process.

The Earth, and the Earth Summit, must be salvaged, not sunk.

We look forward to your prompt action.

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Annex:

Health

To ensure affordable access to health care and medicine for developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries, the WSSD must call upon the WTO to fundamentally review the WTO agreement on trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPS). It is also essential that the WSSD address the effects of toxic and hazardous materials, including the links to polluted water and poor sanitation. We call for the immediate ratification and full and effective implementation of the four critical chemicals conventions, including the Basel Convention, the Stockholm POPs Convention, the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent, and the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention on Ocean Dumping.

Water

The Millennium Development Goal to improve provision of access to clean water for millions more people is an excellent starting point but must be matched by a similar target for the provision of sanitation. In turn it is essential that the provider and receiver of this water – the environment – is fully respected and receive equal priority with provision of water for people. Without this, and water management based on Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM), then any programmes will be unsustainable. We urge you to ensure that efficient mechanisms are put in place to ensure water resources are managed on this basis for all rivers globally and that sufficient funds are made available to ensure that the Millennium Goal is met. It is clear that ODA is insufficient to meet these needs and the role of subsidies must be addressed. Environmentally and socially harmful subsidies should be eliminated and funding be redirected toward environmentally and socially viable activities, such as development of IRBM plans. The polluter/user pays principle should be implemented in a fair and equitable way including corporate liability for damage to water.

Energy

2 Billion people worldwide still lack access to energy services and rely on dangerous and unsustainable fuels. It is essential that we provide these people with access to affordable, clean, sustainable energy within 10 years as part of implementing the Millennium Declaration, while enhancing the goals of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Accordingly, Johannesburg must adopt a target for increased use of renewable energy world-wide with a definite timeframe that will make renewables accessible to the world. We urge you to support the adoption and implementation of a global target of 10% of world energy coming from new renewables by 2010. An essential prerequisite is the identification and phase out of the \$250-300 billion in subsidies received each year by the fossil fuel and nuclear sectors.

Note: "New Renewable source" are modern biomass, small hydropower, geothermal energy, wind energy, solar energy and marine energy. "Modern biomass" excludes traditional uses of biomass as fuelwood and includes electricity generation and heat production, as well as transportation fuels, from agricultural and forest residues and solid waste.

Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture can play a pivotal role in poverty alleviation and rural development. However, there is a real danger that Type 2 outcomes will be used by governments such as the U.S. to force genetically engineered (GE) crops on farmers under the guise of sustainable agriculture. GE agriculture is too expensive for small farmers and will force them out of business. This is in addition to the widespread concern regarding their environmental and food safety. The issue of food sovereignty is important because it respects the traditional knowledge of farmers and allows local control of food production and consumption systems. This is not addressed in the Chair's text as it currently stands. The patenting of life forms is a serious threat to food security and sustainable livelihoods, particularly small farmers in developing countries. A new international instrument is required to prohibit patents on life in order to protect the rights of local and indigenous communities.

Biodiversity

Currently, there is no special recognition given to ancient/primary forests even though they are home to approximately 50% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity and the need for urgent action for such forests has been recognised in the CBD. There should be no further fragmentation of ancient forests and a network of protected areas of high biodiversity should be created within the landscape continuum. There is also a need for programmes to restore forest, marine and other biodiversity and landscapes/seascapes to rebuild assets for people and nature. This should be achieved through national action as well as through joint work programmes involving the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification. Designate land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as a GEF focal area in relation to the Desertification Convention, and allocate resources accordingly. In addition, governments should support the implementation of independent, third party certification schemes for ecologically sustainable forest products.

Globalisation

Johannesburg must reaffirm the autonomy and authority of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and ensure that they are never subordinated to WTO rules. Governments must also establish a global framework for corporate accountability and liability in order to protect the rights of communities and establish high standards of corporate behaviour on a global basis.