

**FINAL STATEMENT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS, TRADE UNIONS,  
YOUTH, WOMEN AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES REPRESENTATIVES AT  
THE CLOSURE OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF  
UNEP**

**NAIROBI, 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2005**

The environmental NGOs, Trade Union, Youth, Women and Indigenous Peoples representatives present in Nairobi this week, thanks to the excellent support from UNEP Secretariat would like to share with delegations the following:

**International Environmental Governance & UNEP:**

1. We look forward to the strengthening of UNEP and the provision in future of significant additional, stable and predictable resources to allow UNEP to perform its mandate adequately;
2. We also welcome the support expressed by Governing Council to the immediate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan on Capacity Building and Technology support;
3. We reaffirm that Multilateral Environmental Agreements should have primary competence to determine, apply environmental objectives and related trade measures, and to monitor compliance;

**Gender:**

4. We thank the Swedish delegation for advancing the issue of Gender Equality and Environment this week;
5. We welcome the Decision on Gender Equality and Environment, particularly the commitment to promote equal participation of women in environmental decision-making at all levels, the mainstreaming of gender in environmental policies and programmes, and the assessment of effects on women of environmental policies;
6. We support the call for adequate provision of resources for the prompt implementation of this Decision;

**Tsunami:**

7. We agree that the Tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean should be viewed as an opportunity to mobilise resources for sustainable re-building and management, including drawing lessons on the vulnerability that certain developments in that region in the last few decades have entailed (phasing out of destructive and unsustainable industrial aquaculture activities, protection and restoration of mangrove ecosystems, integrated coastal zone management, land-used planning with the ecosystem approach);
8. Throughout the Tsunami-devastated areas, the development and use of clean, renewable and sustainable energy should be given utmost priority;
9. One key lesson from the Tsunami disaster is that economic development must not increase the vulnerability of ecosystems, peoples and communities, especially with regard to climate change and extreme weather patterns in developing countries which are analogous to “man-made, preventable Tsunamis”.

**Climate:**

10. We welcome the adoption of Paragraph 6(a) (b) and (c) of UNEP GC Decision on Keeping the World Environmental Situation under Review (GC23/CW/L2/Add 1). As requested in Paragraph 6(c) we shall continue to address the serious challenges of global climate change, and look forward to co-operating with UNEP to this end;
11. Whilst we joined the celebrations that marked the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol last week, we continue to be concerned that the US Administration is not acting in accordance with their legal obligations under Article 2 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, despite the recognition this week in Brussels by President Bush that human-enhanced climate change does take place;
12. We call upon Governments to consider the legal implications of the US's violation of their UNFCCC obligations; we look forward to discussing this issue at next year's Special Session of UNEP Governing Council in Dubai;

**Mercury:**

13. We would like to thank those governments who have secured the adoption of the Mercury Programme on mercury which constitutes an important first step in eradicating mercury poisoning of people and the environment;
14. We believe however that the adoption of a legally-binding instrument to tackle mercury poisoning, reflected in the Mercury Programme as an option, is inevitable. We call upon Governments to work to this end, in particular to secure capacity building for all and a just transition in phasing-in clean alternatives;

**Water, Sanitation and Human Settlements:**

15. We look forward to pursuing effective measures on Water, Sanitation and Human Settlements at this year's 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and at the MDG+5 Summit in September;
16. Access to safe and affordable water and adequate sanitation is a key test case for the international community, because a failure to achieve the MDG water related objectives would be an obstacle to the realisation of all other MDGs, including the targets for human health;
17. Access to water is a basic human right that Governments, individually and collectively, have the duty to secure and protect.

**MDG+5 Summit:**

18. We reiterate that Environment for Development should be the corner-stone of this year's Millennium + 5 review and summit; as was pointed out in the UN SG's High level Panel Report on Threats, Opportunities and Change, our collective security will never be reached unless we achieve an equitable and fair development that takes full account of environmental sustainability.
19. We urge Governments to include representatives from Civil Society on their delegation at the MDG + 5 Summit in New York, and related meetings.

