



# Taking ISSUE

The Sustainable Development Issues Network

Volume 4, Issue 2  
Tuesday April 20, 2004

A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)  
at the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

## New CSD to tackle old problems!

As delegates gather to deliberate on the way forward during the CSD-12, uppermost on their minds is overcoming the challenges that hamper the realization of this year's theme targets on water, sanitation and human settlements.

The developing world is still preoccupied with numerous crucial challenges of our time - poverty eradication, education, child mortality, health and environmental sustainability. The CSD-12 session is expected to provide a clear focus as it shifts from loaded policy statements to the real task of reviewing progress made since the Rio Earth Summit in the implementation of three thematic areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. The session will also identify constraints and obstacles in the provision of water, sanitation and human settlements.

### Africa behind

On Monday, it was reported that Africa lags behind the rest of the world in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals set out in September 2000. In his introductory remarks, the chair of CSD-12, who is also the Norwegian Minister of the Environment Mr, Borge Brende observed that in Africa,

women and girls must still walk an average of 6 kilometres daily to fetch water, which is often polluted, using up vital hours that could have been better spent on getting an education or in other income generating activities.

### Half on track

It is estimated that only half of the developing countries are on track towards meeting the global target of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015. Brende admits that this is indeed a daunting challenge but is optimistic that it can and must be achieved. He cites the South African case which has succeeded in providing over 9 million people with access to safe drinking water since 1994. Yet next year marks the deadline when the world must demonstrate the realization of the goal on integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans - is there any hope of catching up, particularly in Africa?



## In this Issue

1. New CSD to tackle old problems
2. NGOs ready for the new CSD
3. Water, war and peace
4. The Youth expects ...

## Meeting schedule

TUESDAY 20, APRIL 2004

- 9.00 - 10.00, NGO Organising Partners
  - 10.00 - 11.00, NGO Steering Committee
  - 11.00 - 12.00, Freshwater
  - 12.00 - 1.00, Human Settlements
  - 1.00 - 2.00, Indigenous Peoples
  - 2.00 - 3.00, Youth
  - 3.00 - 4.00, Latin America
  - 4.00 - 5.00, Education
  - 5.00 - 6.00, Women
  - 6.00 - 7.00, Trade Unions
  - 7.00 - 8.00, Caucus Coordination
- All meetings in Conference Room B

### This issue was produced by:

Jan Gustav Strandenaes  
Senior Editor

Kirsten Kossen  
Journalist/Writer

Samuel Waweru  
Journalist/Writer

Anthony Mwangi  
Graphic Design/Layout

Visit the SDIN morning strategy meetings for reports from working groups, information sharing and strategic discussions. SDIN Morning Meetings are open to all NGOs.

Meetings are held in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building.

*Articles reflect the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDIN Network*

*Taking Issue is published with financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and with logistical support of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)*



## One third on track

In regard to sanitation, Brende estimates that only one third of developing countries are on track towards meeting the global improved sanitation target of 2 billion by 2015. During the WSSD summit in Johannesburg, delegates recognized the interrelationship between water and sanitation and the need to address them together. It is estimated that more than half the hospital beds in the world today are occupied by people with water-related diseases arising from untreated waste water.

## Slums threaten

Sanitation poses a serious threat to informal settlements such as the rapidly growing slums often located on the outskirts of most of the developing world's cities. Slums often lack proper toilets and

drainage. They are home to 900 million people in the world and the figure is expected to rise to nearly 2 billion by 2030 if the problem is not addressed adequately today.

## Gloomy review

As delegates review progress, the question of financing of projects will need to be addressed. As it stands today, African countries can ill afford the heavy investments. Yet the research conducted by the Millenium Project, supporting the implementation of the Millenium Development Goals, clearly shows that investments in public health infrastructure, including in water, and sanitation- are prerequisites to economic development.

## Political will or not

With diminishing direct foreign investment and the debilitating

effects of the structural adjustment programmes, developing countries have learnt vital lessons. There is a need to mobilise local resources and promote ownership of projects by local people who stand to benefit. Two week deliberations at CSD-12 will focus on the sustainability of projects beyond the funding period.

Seasonal delegates expect this review to reveal dramatic shortcomings in accomplishing development targets. At the end of CSD-12 this old truth is probably yet again revealed. Will we then have to wait yet another year until CSD-13, to agree upon new policy for new implementation of problems that were analysed 30 years ago? Brende's opening today is probably realistic. What we now need is political will to go forward. - *swn*

## NGOs ready for the new CSD

Conference room B was filled to the brim with people eagerly trying to understand and grasp the modalities of the new CSD. More than 90 persons participated in the morning meeting Monday April 19<sup>th</sup> conducted by the NGO organizing partners. Getting a grip on the modalities of the new CSD was no easy matter, and the atmosphere was rife with questions and explanations on how to proceed.

Chaired by an African delegation, the meeting arrived at a number of consensus decisions on how to tackle problems that might easily have thrown the NGO world into endless discussions.

## Friendly consensus

The major groups have been asked to present a three-minute statement basically addressing general issues related to CSD 12. More than 30 persons had worked on a draft statement over the weekend and the document was presented to the NGO audience

on Monday morning and will be refined on their Tuesday morning meeting. The statement will be delivered on Wednesday together with three other major groups; the indigenous peoples, women and trade unions. Writing a 5-minute statement for the interactive session on Tuesday may have been a more challenging task for the morning meeting to tackle. The job was rightfully given the issue-based caucuses to complete. They are expected to come back with a written statement and present this on Tuesday morning. At the close of the hour long meeting, NGO people were identified that would represent the NGO audience in the plenary.

Conducted in a friendly and efficient atmosphere, the decisions at the meeting were all taken by consensus decisions. This bodes well for the NGO community at CSD which earlier years has been plagued by unnerving controversies. ...*jgs*

# Water, War and Peace

**'Environmental health and stability is not restored with the cessation of conflict, since environmental damages initiated during war continue well into the post-conflict era'**

Military production and consumption are serious impediments to sustainable development. They cause armed conflict and war, they consume resources that could otherwise be spent on activities promoting sustainable development and are a major contributor to pollution. The United Nations and other forums, such as the Rio Conference and the Johannesburg Summit, have emphasized the threat of military production and consumption to world peace and sustainable development. The connection between military production and consumption and sustainable development has been mentioned repeatedly at the highest level of decision-making in the multilateral system.

## OLD STUFF

These opinions are expressed in a statement by the Norwegian Peace Alliance in which they refer to the report from the World Commission on Environment and development in 1987: *'Governments and international agencies should assess the cost-effectiveness in terms of achieving security, of money spent on armaments compared with money spent on reducing poverty or resorting a ravaged environment.'* Another quote found in their document is from the Norwegian Deputy minister of international development cooperation, Mr. Olav Kjørven: *'The financial requirements to meet the Millennium development goals can be covered by only a fraction of military expenditure.'*

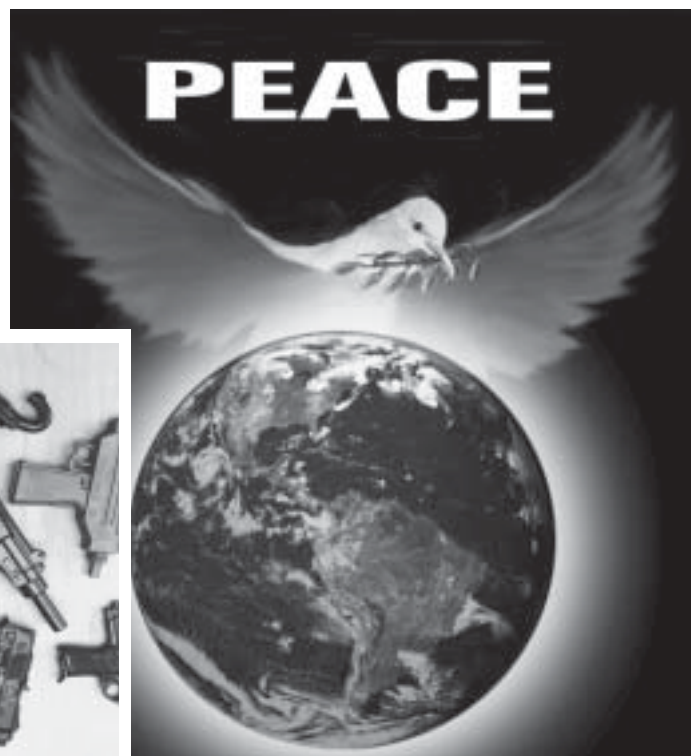
## WAR POLLUTES

In spite of this, the issue of war as an impediment to sustainable development has not been addressed in any of the review documents to be put before CSD 12.

As the central follow up mechanisms to Rio and Johannesburg, the CSD needs to tackle the negative consequences of military production and consumption on sustainable development as well as on the MDG's.

As those issues have not been given space on this year's CSD agenda, they will be discussed at a side event organised by the Norwegian Peace Alliance, taking place at April 20, 2004 from 1:15 – 2:45 PM at the Boss Room 8<sup>th</sup> floor in the Church Center for the United Nations (across 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from the UN). UNIFEM, the Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) also support this event.

*Kirsten Kossen reporting on the issue handled by  
THE NORWEGIAN PEACE ALLIANCE.*



## THE YOUTH EXPECTS ...

Youth, the generation of hope, unbounded reality which results in creativity and innovativeness appreciates the introductory statements made this morning expressing the urgency to really identify obstacles and lessons learned. These statements reinforced the following expectations we have from governments at CSD 12:



### 1. National allocation of resources!

Due to the colonization period, the majority of the countries known as third world do not own the means of resources therefore they have a dependency relationship with the Western countries.

### 2. Good governance: Political and institutional reform!

In today's world, being a powerful country means having a corrupt government. We believe that through successful arrangement, we can be efficient and effective in sustainability and put and end to disfunctionality.

### 3. Achievement of financial development in developing countries!

This will not happen if you keep exploiting poor people.

### 4. Girls development!

An investment in the resources needed to develop the girl child. These include proper freshwater systems within short reach of the living environment, sanitation facilities in all schools and public buildings and basic education for all.

Governments, do not disappoint us once more!

***Let's face our responsibilities together!***

## CSD HUMOUR



## Contribute to Taking Issue

To publish articles in this newsletter, please submit your text before 5.00 p.m. to one of the SDIN facilitating organisations' staff.

### SDIN Facilitating Organisations:

ANPED, The Northern Alliance for Sustainability

TWN, Third World Network

ELCI, Environment Liaison Centre International

Or send an e-mail to:  
kirstenkossen@yahoo.com

***The editors reserve the right to refuse articles or edit for length and clarity***

