



# General Assembly

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## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/66/L.56)]

### 66/288. The future we want

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 64/236 of 24 December 2009, in which it decided to organize, in 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development at the highest possible level, as well as its resolution 66/197 of 22 December 2011,

1. *Expresses its profound gratitude* to the Government and the people of Brazil for hosting the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June 2012, and for providing all the necessary support;
2. *Endorses* the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, annexed to the present resolution.

*123rd plenary meeting  
27 July 2012*

### Annex

#### The future we want

##### I. Our common vision

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives, having met at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, with the full participation of civil society, renew our commitment to sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations.
2. Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In this regard, we are committed to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.

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3. We therefore acknowledge the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.

4. We recognize that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development. We also reaffirm the need to achieve sustainable development by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration and restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges.

5. We reaffirm our commitment to make every effort to accelerate the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

6. We recognize that people are at the centre of sustainable development and, in this regard, we strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, and we commit to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all.

7. We reaffirm that we continue to be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with full respect for international law and its principles.

8. We also reaffirm the importance of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food, the rule of law, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development.

9. We reaffirm the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>1</sup> as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law. We emphasize the responsibilities of all States, in conformity with the Charter, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status.

10. We acknowledge that democracy, good governance and the rule of law, at the national and international levels, as well as an enabling environment, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger. We reaffirm that, to achieve our sustainable development goals, we need institutions at all levels that are effective, transparent, accountable and democratic.

11. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen international cooperation to address the persistent challenges related to sustainable development for all, in particular in

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 217 A (III).

developing countries. In this regard, we reaffirm the need to achieve economic stability, sustained economic growth, the promotion of social equity and the protection of the environment, while enhancing gender equality, women's empowerment and equal opportunities for all, and the protection, survival and development of children to their full potential, including through education.

12. We resolve to take urgent action to achieve sustainable development. We therefore renew our commitment to sustainable development, assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges. We express our determination to address the themes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, namely, a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

13. We recognize that opportunities for people to influence their lives and future, participate in decision-making and voice their concerns are fundamental for sustainable development. We underscore that sustainable development requires concrete and urgent action. It can only be achieved with a broad alliance of people, governments, civil society and the private sector, all working together to secure the future we want for present and future generations.

## **II. Renewing political commitment**

### **A. Reaffirming the Rio Principles and past action plans**

14. We recall the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972.<sup>2</sup>

15. We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,<sup>3</sup> including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in principle 7 thereof.

16. We reaffirm our commitment to fully implement the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21,<sup>4</sup> the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,<sup>5</sup> the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)<sup>6</sup> and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,<sup>7</sup> the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados Programme of Action)<sup>8</sup> and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the

<sup>2</sup> See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972* (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), part one, chap. I.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.

<sup>5</sup> Resolution S-19/2, annex.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, resolution 1, annex.

<sup>8</sup> *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.<sup>9</sup> We also reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action),<sup>10</sup> the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,<sup>11</sup> the political declaration on Africa's development needs<sup>12</sup> and the New Partnership for Africa's Development.<sup>13</sup> We recall as well our commitments in the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration,<sup>14</sup> the 2005 World Summit Outcome,<sup>15</sup> the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,<sup>16</sup> the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus,<sup>17</sup> the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals,<sup>18</sup> the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,<sup>19</sup> the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development<sup>20</sup> and the Beijing Declaration<sup>21</sup> and Platform for Action.<sup>22</sup>

17. We recognize the importance of the three Rio conventions for advancing sustainable development, and in this regard we urge all parties to fully implement their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,<sup>23</sup> the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>24</sup> and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,<sup>25</sup> in accordance with their

<sup>9</sup> *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10–14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>10</sup> *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. II.

<sup>11</sup> *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003* (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.

<sup>12</sup> See resolution 63/1.

<sup>13</sup> A/57/304, annex.

<sup>14</sup> See resolution 55/2.

<sup>15</sup> See resolution 60/1.

<sup>16</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

<sup>17</sup> Resolution 63/239, annex.

<sup>18</sup> See resolution 65/1.

<sup>19</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

<sup>20</sup> Resolution S-21/2, annex.

<sup>21</sup> *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

respective principles and provisions, as well as to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels and enhance international cooperation.

18. We are determined to reinvigorate political will and to raise the level of commitment by the international community to move the sustainable development agenda forward, through the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. We further reaffirm our respective commitments to other relevant internationally agreed goals in the economic, social and environmental fields since 1992. We therefore resolve to take concrete measures that accelerate implementation of sustainable development commitments.

**B. Advancing integration, implementation and coherence: assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges**

19. We recognize that the twenty years since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 have seen uneven progress, including in sustainable development and poverty eradication. We emphasize the need to make progress in implementing previous commitments. We also recognize the need to accelerate progress in closing development gaps between developed and developing countries, and to seize and create opportunities to achieve sustainable development through economic growth and diversification, social development and environmental protection. To this end, we underscore the continued need for an enabling environment at the national and international levels, as well as continued and strengthened international cooperation, particularly in the areas of finance, debt, trade and technology transfer, as mutually agreed, and innovation, entrepreneurship, capacity-building, transparency and accountability. We recognize the diversification of actors and stakeholders engaged in the pursuit of sustainable development. In this context, we affirm the continued need for the full and effective participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in global decision-making.

20. We acknowledge that, since 1992, there have been areas of insufficient progress and setbacks in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, aggravated by multiple financial, economic, food and energy crises, which have threatened the ability of all countries, in particular developing countries, to achieve sustainable development. In this regard, it is critical that we do not backtrack from our commitment to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. We also recognize that one of the current major challenges for all countries, particularly for developing countries, is the impact from the multiple crises affecting the world today.

21. We are deeply concerned that one in five people on this planet, or over 1 billion people, still live in extreme poverty, and that one in seven — or 14 per cent — is undernourished, while public health challenges, including pandemics and epidemics, remain omnipresent threats. In this context, we note the ongoing discussions in the General Assembly on human security. We acknowledge that with the world's population projected to exceed 9 billion by 2050, with an estimated two thirds living in cities, we need to increase our efforts to achieve sustainable development and, in particular, the eradication of poverty, hunger and preventable diseases.

22. We recognize examples of progress in sustainable development at the regional, national, subnational and local levels. We note that efforts to achieve sustainable development have been reflected in regional, national and subnational policies and plans, and that governments have strengthened their commitment to sustainable

development since the adoption of Agenda 21 through legislation and institutions, and the development and implementation of international, regional and subregional agreements and commitments.

23. We reaffirm the importance of supporting developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and promote empowerment of the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including removing barriers to opportunity, enhancing productive capacity, developing sustainable agriculture and promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, complemented by effective social policies, including social protection floors, with a view to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

24. We express deep concern about the continuing high levels of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people, and note the need for sustainable development strategies to proactively address youth employment at all levels. In this regard, we recognize the need for a global strategy on youth and employment building on the work of the International Labour Organization.

25. We acknowledge that climate change is a cross-cutting and persistent crisis, and express our concern that the scale and gravity of the negative impacts of climate change affect all countries and undermine the ability of all countries, in particular, developing countries, to achieve sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals, and threaten the viability and survival of nations. Therefore, we underscore that combating climate change requires urgent and ambitious action, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

26. States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

27. We reiterate our commitment, expressed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals of 2010, to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must be combated and eliminated.

28. We reaffirm that, in accordance with the Charter, this shall not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

29. We resolve to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove obstacles and constraints, strengthen support and meet the special needs of people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism.

30. We recognize that many people, especially the poor, depend directly on ecosystems for their livelihoods, their economic, social and physical well-being, and their cultural heritage. For this reason, it is essential to generate decent jobs and incomes that decrease disparities in standards of living in order to better meet people's needs and promote sustainable livelihoods and practices and the sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems.

31. We emphasize that sustainable development must be inclusive and people-centred, benefiting and involving all people, including youth and children. We recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment are important for sustainable development and our common future. We reaffirm our commitments to ensure women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making.

32. We recognize that each country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development, and we underscore the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries. Countries in situations of conflict also need special attention.

33. We reaffirm our commitment to take urgent and concrete action to address the vulnerability of small island developing States, including through the sustained implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, and underscore the urgency of finding additional solutions to the major challenges facing small island developing States in a concerted manner so as to support them in sustaining momentum realized in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy and achieving sustainable development.

34. We reaffirm that the Istanbul Programme of Action outlines the priorities of least developed countries for sustainable development and defines a framework for renewed and strengthened global partnership to implement them. We commit to assist the least developed countries with the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action as well as in their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

35. We recognize that more attention should be given to Africa and the implementation of previously agreed commitments related to its development needs that were made at major United Nations summits and conferences. We note that aid to Africa has increased in recent years. However, it still lags behind commitments that were previously made. We underscore the key priority for the international community of supporting Africa's sustainable development efforts. In this regard, we recommit to fully implement the internationally agreed commitments related to Africa's development needs, particularly those contained in the Millennium Declaration, the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development,<sup>26</sup> the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as well as the 2008 political declaration on Africa's development needs.

36. We recognize the serious constraints to achieving sustainable development in all its three dimensions in landlocked developing countries. In this regard, we reaffirm our commitment to address the special development needs and the challenges faced by landlocked developing countries through the full, timely and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, as contained in the declaration on the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action.<sup>27</sup>

37. We recognize the progress made by middle-income countries in improving the well-being of their people, as well as the specific development challenges they face in their efforts to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and achieve their

<sup>26</sup> See resolution 57/2.

<sup>27</sup> See resolution 63/2.

development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and to achieve sustainable development in a comprehensive manner integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions. We reiterate that these efforts should be adequately supported by the international community, in various forms, taking into account the needs and the capacity to mobilize domestic resources of these countries.

38. We recognize the need for broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product in order to better inform policy decisions, and in this regard we request the United Nations Statistical Commission, in consultation with relevant United Nations system entities and other relevant organizations, to launch a programme of work in this area, building on existing initiatives.

39. We recognize that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home and that “Mother Earth” is a common expression in a number of countries and regions, and we note that some countries recognize the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development. We are convinced that in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature.

40. We call for holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystem.

41. We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world, and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

### **C. Engaging major groups and other stakeholders**

42. We reaffirm the key role of all levels of government and legislative bodies in promoting sustainable development. We further acknowledge efforts and progress made at the local and subnational levels, and recognize the important role that such authorities and communities can play in implementing sustainable development, including by engaging citizens and stakeholders and providing them with relevant information, as appropriate, on the three dimensions of sustainable development. We further acknowledge the importance of involving all relevant decision makers in the planning and implementation of sustainable development policies.

43. We underscore that broad public participation and access to information and judicial and administrative proceedings are essential to the promotion of sustainable development. Sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and active participation of regional, national and subnational legislatures and judiciaries, and all major groups: women, children and youth, indigenous peoples

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