

The Rio Outcomes: Implementation and Beyond

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The recent UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro was another major international event with high-level attendance since the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. Against the backdrop of increasing difficulties in the global economy and international development cooperation, the Conference, with concerted efforts of all parties, has sent a positive, clear and powerful message to revive international cooperation on sustainable development and has injected fresh vitality into the cause of sustainable development.

The Conference was attended by over 100 heads of state and government as well as more than 50,000 delegates from governments, international organizations, media and major groups. Focusing on the two themes of the Conference, namely "green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" and "institutional framework for sustainable development", participants had in-depth discussions on the progress and gaps in various aspects of sustainable development over the past

two decades and reached extensive consensus. Thanks to the efforts of all parties, the Conference produced a comprehensive, positive and balanced outcome document entitled "The Future We Want". The document captures the cooperative spirit of international community to rise above differences on behalf of the common interests of all mankind and future generations and serves as an important guide for sustainable development in the future.

The Conference has achieved positive results in many areas: first, it reiterated the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", avoided erosion of the guiding principles of international development cooperation, and safeguarded its foundation and framework; second, it decided to launch discussions on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which sent an important and positive message for strengthening international cooperation on sustainable development and provided important guidance for international development agenda beyond 2015; third, it recognized green economy as important means for achieving sustainable development and encouraged countries to implement green economy policies according to their national conditions and development stages; fourth, it decided to establish a high-level political forum on sustainable development to replace the UN Commission on

Sustainable Development and to strengthen the functions of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), thus elevating the status and relevance of sustainable development institutions within the UN system; fifth, it urged developed countries to honor their ODA commitments, transfer environment-friendly technologies to developing countries on preferential terms and help developing countries enhance capacity building.

Although the Conference came to a successful conclusion, the journey ahead for global sustainable development is long and arduous. Developing countries should continue to work together in solidarity to promote the implementation of the Conference outcomes and achieve sustainable development at home. We must uphold the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" as the foundation of international development cooperation and urge developed countries to fulfil their assistance commitments, provide financial and technological support to developing countries, and help developing countries enhance capacity building. We should be proactive and exert our influence on the deliberations on SDGs. In this regards, flexible, plural and non-binding indicators in some priority areas may be promoted as a reference for countries when mapping out development strategies in light of their own national

conditions, but any "one-size-fits-all", compulsory indicators or standards should be rejected. We should fully and deeply engage ourselves in the discussions and negotiations of reforms of sustainable development institutions, strive to increase the voice and decision-making power of developing countries in relevant institutions and address the challenges facing developing countries in finance, technology and capacity building. The South Center can continue to play an active role in mobilizing and coordinating developing countries.

As an important player in international sustainable development process, China has taken an active and constructive part in the run-up to and during the Conference and contributed its wisdom and energy. The Chinese Government established an inter-agency national preparatory committee for the Conference and co-hosted with the UN a High-level Symposium on the UN Conference on Sustainable Development last September. Last month, China published its *National Report on Sustainable Development*, which elaborates on China's progress over the past decade, its challenges and future actions on sustainable development. China was fully and deeply engaged in the consultations and negotiations of the outcome document, encouraged parties to reconcile their differences and

made its contribution to the final consensus on the document reached just before the Conference. Premier Wen Jiabao attended the Conference, expounded the principled position of the Chinese Government on international cooperation on sustainable development, presented three-point proposals regarding future global sustainable development and announced China's initiatives to facilitate developing countries' pursuit of sustainable development.

The end of the Rio+20 Conference ushers in a new beginning. China will work with all parties for full implementation of the outcomes of the Conference and take forward the cause of global sustainable development.