

Decision 8/COP.4

Declaration on the commitments to enhance the implementation
of the obligations of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the provisions of the Convention related to its implementation and to the obligations of the Parties,

Recalling also decision 8/COP.3,

Having considered the report from the Executive Secretary as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/3/Add.9,

1. *Decides* to approve the text of the declaration attached to the present decision;

2. *Decides also* to include the declaration as an annex to the report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourth session.

*12th Plenary
22 December 2000*

Annex**Declaration on the commitments under the Convention to enhance implementation of the obligations of the UNCCD**

WE, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Parties and observer States to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, participating in the fourth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties held at Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany, from 11 to 22 December 2000, as a follow up to "The Recife Initiative: Towards Enhancing the Implementation of the Convention"¹;

PURPOSE

ACKNOWLEDGE that Agenda 21, in particular Chapter 12 which relates to the "management of fragile systems: the combat against desertification and drought", highlights concepts, actions, goals and activities that remain valid;

REAFFIRM that human beings in affected or threatened areas are at the centre of the concern to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;

ACKNOWLEDGE that desertification and drought are problems of global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world, and that joint action by the international community is needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought;

REAFFIRM the provisions of the Convention and resolve to fulfil the commitments and to enhance the implementation of the obligations under the Convention and to actively continue to support its effective and full implementation;

REAFFIRM ALSO our political will and commitments to the implementation of the Convention in line with its provisions, including through the formulation and implementation of action programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought;

FURTHER REAFFIRM, in pursuing the objective of the Convention and in accordance with its provisions, that Parties shall adopt, *inter-alia*, an integrated approach addressing the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of the processes of desertification and drought;

ENCOURAGE synergies between the Rio Conventions and related Multilateral Environmental Agreements as well as international organizations to strengthen their cooperation and seek partnerships, with due regard to their respective mandate, with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of these Conventions at all levels;

EXPRESS our satisfaction with the steps being taken by developing country Parties to elaborate and implement action programmes, and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations, in the process of implementation of the Convention;

¹ Decision 8/COP.3.

EXPRESS ALSO our appreciation for the measures taken by developed country Parties to assist in the elaboration and implementation of action programmes of developing country Parties;

FURTHER EXPRESS our appreciation for the valuable work undertaken by international, regional and subregional organizations, including multilateral financial institutions, and civil society including non-governmental as well as community-based organizations, in their efforts to implement the Convention at all levels;

OBJECTIVES

ACKNOWLEDGE the need to strengthen international cooperation, within the framework of the Convention, to enhance combating desertification and drought through the identification of ways and means to promote and facilitate access to appropriate technology by affected country Parties, and to provide substantial financial resources, particularly to affected developing country Parties;

RECOGNIZE the need to ensure that effective action is taken on initiatives derived from the Convention, in combating poverty with a view to achieving sustainable development in affected areas;

RECOGNIZE ALSO the need to implement action programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought as important instruments, *inter alia*, for long-term protection of ecosystems in affected countries;

EMPHASIZE the necessity to develop and/or strengthen genuine partnership and cooperation by enhancing efforts in collaboration with all relevant actors, including those from civil society, at all levels, through appropriate action so as to further enhance implementation of the obligations of the Convention with a view to improve the living conditions of women and men and achieve sustainable development in affected countries;

TIME FRAME

STRESS the need to enhance special efforts to combat and prevent desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought during the first decade (2001-2010) of the 21st century, in order to address the severe situation prevailing in various affected developing country Parties, particularly in Africa;

SPECIFIC THEMATIC AND SECTORAL AREAS

DECLARE that during this decade the strategic areas for action at all levels, in accordance with national plans and priorities and in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, should include the following:

- sustainable land use management, including water, soil and vegetation in affected areas;
- sustainable use and management of rangelands;
- development of sustainable agricultural and ranching production systems;
- development of new and renewable energy sources;
- launching of reforestation/afforestation programmes and intensification of soil conservation programmes;

- development of early warning systems for food security and drought forecasting;
- desertification monitoring and assessment.

DECLARE ALSO our intention to concentrate our efforts on areas identified at the national level, including: the promotion of traditional knowledge; the promotion of appropriate environmental education; and the enhancement of cooperation with institutions and organizations dealing with development policies and programmes to eradicate illiteracy and the development of capacity-building in affected areas;

CONCRETE MEASURES AND MEANS FOR ENHANCING
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REAFFIRM our obligations, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, to undertake, *inter alia*, the following actions:

- provide substantial financial resources and other forms of support to assist affected developing country Parties, particularly those in Africa, effectively to develop and implement their own long-term plans and strategies to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;
- promote the mobilization of new and additional funding^{2/};
- encourage the mobilization of funding from the private sector and other non-governmental sources; and,
- promote and facilitate access by affected country Parties, particularly in affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how;

EXPRESS concern that, despite important efforts made by all interested partners, adequate financial and other resources have not been mobilized, which has constrained the ability of affected developing country Parties to fulfil their commitments under the Convention;

URGE all relevant actors to take a set of proactive financial measures;

DEVELOP and carry out activities to promote the mainstreaming of the implementation of national action programmes, within relevant national strategies for sustainable development, including strategies for poverty eradication;

INVITE affected developing countries, that have not yet adopted their national action programmes, and, where appropriate, regional and subregional action programmes, to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes with a view to finalizing them no later than the end of 2005;

INVITE ALSO other affected country Parties that notify, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the Permanent Secretariat of their intention to prepare a national action programme, to accelerate the process with a view to finalizing such programme no later than the end of 2005;

CALL UPON the international community, in particular the developed country Parties and the United Nations system, and invite multilateral financial institutions, the private sector and all other interested actors, to support the efforts of affected

² Pursuant to article 20, 2 (b) of the Convention.

developing country Parties in the process of elaborating and implementing action programmes to combat desertification including, as appropriate, interregional programmes and platforms of cooperation, by providing them with financial resources and other forms of assistance;

ENCOURAGE enhanced cooperation between the Rio Conventions and other relevant agreements as well as international, regional or subregional forums, within their respective mandates, with a view to promoting the Convention's objective of combating desertification and/or mitigating the effects of drought;

INVITE Parties to take action to improve and facilitate further access by affected developing country Parties to Global Environment Facility (GEF) resources for the implementation of the Convention;

WELCOME the decision of the GEF council which "requests the Chief Executive Officer to explore the best options for enhancing the support of the GEF in assisting affected countries, especially those in Africa, to implement the United Nations Convention to combat desertification taking into account the third replenishment";

CALL FOR the strengthening of the Global Mechanism in order to enable it to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms and to promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources, including for the transfer of technology, on a grant basis, and/or on concessional or other terms, to affected developing country Parties;

URGE all relevant actors to facilitate access to small and medium sized credit lines, and to promote and encourage partnership agreements and/or arrangements with the private sector, in order to increase investments and to foster activities related to the implementation of the Convention at the local and national levels;

MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP

RECOGNIZE that methodologies on desertification assessment and monitoring need to be better implemented so as to enable the affected countries concerned to meet the objectives of the Convention;

RESOLVE that the provisions of this Declaration should be given due consideration in the framework of the regular review of the implementation of the Convention and, in this regard, invite Parties to include in their reports, submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, appropriate information related to the enhanced implementation of the obligations of the Convention, as a follow-up to this Declaration, and request the Executive Secretary of the Convention to compile, synthesize and submit such information through a report to each COP during this decade, starting in 2003;

URGE all Parties, relevant international organizations, regional and non-governmental organizations, foundations and the private sector to continue supporting action to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, and to bring into concrete actions the provisions of this Declaration.