MINUTA DE DISCURSO NA XIX REUNIÃO DO FORO DE MINISTROS DO MEIO AMBIENTE DA AMÉRICA LATINA E DO CARIBE, DO PROGRAMA DAS NAÇÕES UNIDAS PARA O MEIO AMBIENTE

(Los Cabos, 12 de março de 2014)

Mister Secretary Idelfonso Guajardo

Mrs Gisela Alonso, distinguished member of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Post 2015 Development Agenda

Mr. Executive Director, dear friend Achim Steiner

Honorable Ministers.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the people and Government of Brazil, I would like to express our deepest appreciation to the people and Government of Mexico for hosting the XIX Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean. I would like to recognize and to welcome Mexico´s leadership in conveying renewed dynamism to this Forum. Los Cabos should be a special opportunity to identify common perspectives and promote the unity of the Region as we prepare for the first meeting of UNEP´s Environment Assembly.

I propose that here in Los Cabos we collectively recognize the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources as a paramount strategic challenge of our Region. This political decision would reflect our vision towards the exceptional natural resources that our nations hold: the significance of biodiversity to ensure well-being, generate prosperity and provide cultural identity, and its importance for the promotion of nationally appropriate sustainable development strategies.

CDB's COP-12 in Korea is expected to be a historical occasion as we approach the number of ratifications necessary for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol. It is worth recalling the role that many countries from our Region played in the negotiations that led to the adoption of that instrument. We must now engage in ratifying the Protocol, as a strategically important tool that will provide legal certainty and ensure that genetic resources are acessed under mutually agreed terms and that effective benefit sharing modalities are implemented and respected, hopefully making biopiracy a practice of the past.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – Rio+20 has updated and given new vigor to the international debate on sustainable development. Our leaders emphasized the pressing need to address environmental challenges from a development perspective, setting the eradication of poverty and the shift to sustainable patterns of production and of consumption at the core of the international agenda. This global consensus has allowed for the consolidation of an inclusive approach to the environmental agenda placing it at the forefront of development efforts and policymaking.

We must therefore address the urgent requirements to ensure water, food and energy security, under the premises of poverty eradication, the struggle against inequality and the drive towards inclusive economic development.

The processes launched in Rio provide the international community with concrete elements to move forward from discussion to action, from reiteration to implementation of the sustainable development paradigm.

The XXI Century will be the age of sustainability. A century that can be defined by great opportunities or stained by unwanted reversals. Sustainability should not be only a tendency or a convention, a style to tailor our development approaches. It must be perceived as a bold political statement that recognizes the strategic nature of environmental priorities for the well-being and prosperity of our nations.

The aspiration and disposition towards sustainability must be translated into concrete strategies, policies and programs.

In this we must continue to work together as developing countries and strengthen our bonds at the regional level. Many of the challenges ahead of Latin American and Caribbean nations are the very essence of the sustainability agenda and must focus on development. Our nations stand to gain from the transformational shift that the world must face towards more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, with developed countries taking the lead.

Our Region should be actively engaged in the necessary realignment of environmental policy making with global priorities. We must face and overcome the challenges of eradicating poverty, of ensuring food security and well-being to previously marginalized sectors of our societies, making our infrastructure more robust and resource effective, tackling inequality and leapfrogging towards environmentally friendly, carbon neutral economic prosperity. This means that we should be ready to play our part to ensure a better and more just world for future generations.

This is an agenda of opportunities. It is not a recipe of obstacles and vulnerabilities.

It is therefore strategic to tackle, at the political level, the tasks of setting in place the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Financing Strategy, the 10 Year Framework for Sustainable Production and Consumption, amongst other processes agreed to in Rio. I here recognize Dr Gisela Alonso´s role in ensuring that poverty eradication be given the highest priority in the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Mr.Secretary,

Brazil has been actively engaged in implementing the Rio+20 Conference mandate to strengthen UNEP as the leading authority that sets the global environmental agenda. But beyond being the voice for the global environment, we must ensure that UNEP performs the strategic function of promoting the environmental dimension of sustainable development, as the whole United Nations system adjusts to the sustainability paradigm, in the context of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

I would like here to acknowledge the crucial role played by our almost Brazilian Executive Director of UNEP, Achim Steiner, in support of the results achieved in Rio and his tireless efforts towards the implementation of the processes and decisions reached during that Conference, amongst which is the crucial strengthening of UNEP. Thank you, Achim, for your commitment and for your engagement.

The First meeting of UNEP´s Environment Assembly or UNEA, next June, will set the stage for Member States to agree on how the Program can best serve this strategic purpose. We are confident that universal membership and closer follow up procedures will enable UNEP's Governing body to more effectively perform its tasks. UNEP's new phase needs to unfold in the context of the strengthening of the UN institutional and policy framework for sustainable development.

It is urgent to rethink the governance structure and operational modalities of international agencies and programs, and particularly of international financial institutions. These should become more democratic, more transparent and accountable, review their internal organizational models so as to make them more effective, and better represent a world that is very different from that of the time in which they were established.

More than a question of ensuring the necessary additional resources, these agencies, programs and institutions, in particular UNEP must provide greater access and participation of young people to their proceedings. We must listen to the voices of the new generation. The Future we want is theirs to take.

Mr. Secretary,

Sustainable development strategies require sound science, innovation and technological solutions. UNEPs role in promoting scientific and technological cooperation and in helping build capacities in the developing world should be highlighted. The conservation and sustainable use of natural resources will be best achieved through a policy making process supported and well informed by endogenous scientific and technological capabilities.

This is an area where UNEP' s work in the Region can be further strengthened.

At the Rio+20 Conference, countries set an overarching vision to change unsustainable and promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production so as to ensure that the increased levels of prosperity worldwide and the correlated growth of the human population will not result in undue pressure on our natural resources and ecosystems. SCP is an issue that brings all stakeholders to the table, It amalgamates the three dimensions of sustainability and highlights the need for behavioral shifts and political inclusion processes.

The adoption of the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) is a clear example of an effective tool for implementation. Its operacionalization, with the support of UNEP, can be an effective means to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns in both developed and developing countries. Brazil supports its aims of developing, replicating, and scaling up SCP and resource efficiency initiatives, at national and regional levels, so as to decouple environmental degradation and resource use from economic growth, and thus increase the net contribution of economic activities to poverty eradication and social development.

Likewise, a concise, action-oriented and universally applicable set of sustainable development goals represent a powerful device to focus on the more urgent overarching global challenges which can only be addressed through integrated and coordinated action at all levels, innovative partnerships and international cooperation. We must harness the ingenuity and resources available in the private sector and in civil society to set in place, under the guidance of member states, concrete strategies, programs and innovative mechanisms that will bring new dynamism to the UN system and to the Bretton Woods institutions.

The current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) negotiations together with the work in progress to elaborate an effective sustainable development financing strategy are welcomed initiatives that we trust will contribute to our common objective of strengthening all the public and private processes, institutions, programs and agencies dedicated to the promotion of development. This has to be an inclusive and non-reductionist process.

We should seize the opportunity given by the vigorous and consensual signal the international community sent at Rio+20. The Post-2015 Development Agenda process, together with the Rio+20 agreements, provide us with the means to mobilize all stakeholders towards a more sustainable planet.

The environmental agenda must cease to be the fare of elites. It must consolidate a blueprint for the well-being, prosperity and social inclusion of our societies and of our citizens.

The Post-2015 development framework should be structured on the basis of the sustainability paradigm and benefit from a flexible approach. It “demands a new vision and a responsive framework” in the words of the Secretary-General who also reminded us at the last session of the General Assembly that “sustainable development must become our global guiding principle and operational standard”.

Developing the SDGs and the post 2015 development agenda shall surely benefit from an active participation of all sectors of our societies, unions, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, the development community, international financial institutions and the United Nations system.

In Brazil, with the support of the World Center for Sustainable Development, the Rio+ Center, we are holding consultations with civil society and stakeholders to support the definition of the Brazilian positions in the context of SDG negotiations.

Mr Secretary,

The agenda we are setting should promote and inspire concrete actions to ensure that the necessary strive towards greater levels of prosperity is effectively articulated with the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources and with social policies addressing poverty, focused on universal access to social services and on the respect and promotion of all human rights.

In an increasingly urbanized world, the Post 2015 Development Agenda and UNEP should devote special attention to the promotion of sustainable cities and urban development that ensures social protection and stimulates economic dynamism and job creation. This is an area where UNEP' Environment Assembly s needs to focus its attention and help make the change.

Strengthened international solidarity and cooperation must be the cornerstone of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as it was – and still is - for Agenda 21. The international community must comply with its commitments in terms of increasing the provision of aid, the dissemination and transfer of technologies and sharing of good practices, knowledge and experience. The support for capacity building, especially for those who are lagging behind is a moral imperative and a logical step forward. A robust global partnership that clearly ensures the mobilization of adequate means of implementation is an indispensable element of the sustainable development agenda we must collectively agree to and set in place by the end of next year.

UNEP's role in supporting the implementation of this development agenda is of paramount importance in view of its role within the UN system. Let us therefore join efforts to ensure that the Rio mandate is closely followed and that the Programme gains legitimacy and relevance by becoming more responsive, more accountable and more useful to Member States.

Brazil is committed to strengthen its cooperation with UNEP. As announced by President Dilma Rousseff at the closure of the Rio+20 Conference, a significant donation by Brazil was provided to support the Program, in particular its activities in South America and to promote South-South cooperation. Brazil has been supporting cooperative arrangements in South America, such as in the areas of forest monitoring with the Amazon basin countries, and on water resources with MERCOSUL partners, We understand that the Program´s activities at the regional and subsregional levels should reinforce the iniciatives taken by our nations..

The Brazilian Government is fully committed in making all necessary efforts for the transition for a development model that is fairer, economically feasible, environmentally friendly and focused on the rational use of natural resources.

As sovereign, democratic and multicultural and multiethnic nations, we are no longer in the learning curve. We have build our identities and are aware of our peoples' aspirations. Let’s join hands in the Region and find the common vision we wish to be reflected in the global agenda we are jointly building.

Thank you.