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OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21

Letter dated 23 June 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.  
of the Permanent Mission of Paraguay to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Republic of Paraguay, which is the coordinator pro tempore of the Rio Group, I have the honour to request you to have the text of the Declaration of the Rio Group distributed as a United Nations document as part of the documentation to be considered during the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Ramón DÍAZ-PEREIRA  
Minister  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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\* A/S-19/1.

ANNEX

Declaration of the Rio Group

We, the member countries of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Policy Coordination - Rio Group - state our intention to continue to make progress towards sustainable development by carrying out the decisions and commitments laid down in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. To this end, we shall step up our efforts to continue to promote economic and social development as well as environmental protection.

Five years after the Earth Summit, we note some progress towards achieving its objectives, particularly with regard to institution-building, the codification of environmental law, public participation, and the process aimed at reversing the trends in environmental problems. Nevertheless, the general outlook for economic and social development is no better than in 1992. The environment continues to deteriorate and major environmental problems are still deeply rooted in economic structures.

Therefore, aware of the needs to avoid greater environmental degradation and, consequently, a deterioration of human health, we reaffirm our determination to change certain production and consumption patterns in order to help bring about a better life for all.

We believe that international cooperation and dialogue should be guided by principle 7 of Agenda 21, which says that States have common but differentiated responsibilities.

We therefore urge the developed countries, cooperation agencies and international financial institutions to strengthen their support for the developing countries in accordance with the commitments entered into at the Earth Summit, especially with regard to the transfer of technology and financial resources. To that end, we urge compliance with the provisions of chapter 33 of Agenda 21 concerning official development assistance and the implementation of innovative financing mechanisms.

We also believe that the work of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development should be oriented towards the promotion of Agenda 21 as a whole and that, accordingly, attention to emerging sustainable development issues should not be to the detriment of attention to unresolved socio-economic and environmental problems.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), for its part, should continue to provide environmental inputs for decision-making in the area of sustainable development; its strengthening and provision with adequate, predictable budgetary resources are therefore imperative.

We renew our countries' commitment to promoting joint action for the effective implementation of the agreements and Plan of Action of the Summit of

the Americas on Sustainable Development, adopted at Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in December 1996.

These agreements constitute a starting point for a hemisphere-wide position on sustainable development - the cornerstone of a cooperative alliance among the States of the Americas in their common search for a better quality of life for their peoples, based on integrated, mutually reinforcing economic, social and environmental objectives.

We also value the efforts made at the regional, subregional and national levels through the adoption of policies and strategies intended to achieve sustainable development.

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