

# Plan for world eco-dictatorship is slowed down, but not halted

by Lydia Cherry and David Cherry

The June Earth Summit to be held in Rio, Brazil will not fulfill the hopes of its architects for concrete accords initiating a U.N. environmental dictatorship against economic growth. Negotiations have broken down in the preparatory meetings. The bad news is that the Third World forces opposing these accords have not established a basis around which this opposition can develop its own positive program, apart from broadly insisting on development. It is instead a case of not wishing to be raped too fast, or without receiving some payment in compensation. Thus, all parties signed a general accord committing themselves not to "damage the environment" (i.e., commit the crime of economic growth), even if there is no scientific basis for the alleged cause of that "damage."

The last series of negotiations to prepare for the U.N. Conference on Economic Development (UNCED) meeting came close to collapse in early April. The hope of UNCED planners had been that the two years of negotiations would result in a number of preliminary agreements that could be signed by heads of governments in Rio. But only one full accord came out of the five-week-long negotiations, and even that text may change before the summit, a spokesman for summit Secretary General Maurice Strong told press. Delegates abandoned a draft statement of principles for the conservation and management of the world's forests after Malaysia blocked all compromises, which U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Curtis Bohlen described as "a giant step backward." And protocols on bio-diversity and global warming didn't fare much better.

The only accord upon which there was a consensus is the 21-point draft declaration on environment and development, couched entirely in terms of "sustainable development." Although there is one mention of "economic growth and sustainable development" in the draft, a newly published Club of Rome study, *Beyond the Limits*, makes clear that "sustainable development" presupposes *zero growth*.

The draft implicitly endorses the hoaxes of "global warming" and the "ozone hole," and explicitly blames the industrialized countries for trashing the planet: "The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear . . . in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command." Concerning population growth—forced onto the agenda by the United States and Britain—the draft asserts,

"To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, states should . . . eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies." According to the April 5 *New York Times*, that means that developing nations should "pledge to curb soaring birthrates that contribute to poverty and to environmental degradation."

The draft also establishes that while nations have a right to exploit their own resources, they have no right "to cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of their jurisdiction." They must avoid any damage, even in the absence of scientific certainty that damage will occur, the document says.

"Developing countries feared recolonization through environmental conditionalities because they are weaker than the North," said Tariq Osman Hyder of Pakistan, the chief negotiator for the Group of 77 (G-77). But Hyder went on to suppose that "this document achieves a middle point between northern and southern goals."

While UNCED estimates that poorer nations will require an additional \$125 billion in annual foreign aid to carry out its environmental proposals, none of the industrialized nations committed any money to this end. Total annual foreign aid to the Third World is at present \$55 billion. But it is clear that the industrialized donor countries intend to increasingly divert existing aid into "environmentally sound projects" and into building up a "green police" apparatus in each country steered by the U.N. and U.N. non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

## Prep-Com IV merely round one

"The Third World could yet change its mind about participating in the process," Cuban delegation chief Ricardo Alarcón mooted on March 27. Cuba is the second country after Malaysia to threaten to boycott the event altogether. Reporting on the exchange at the U.N., IPS news service commented: "Despite assurances from Cuban delegates that this was not a threat, the probability of boycotting UNCED will be discussed in the G-77 conference in Kuala Lumpur in late April, just one week after a meeting of the UNCED financial team in Toyko."

Malaysia, which has come closest to questioning the premises of the summit, reiterated April 2 that it and the 44

other countries who will meet in Kuala Lumpur beginning April 26 will map out a collective action plan to be presented in Rio. Malaysian Science, Technology, and Environment Minister Law Hieng Ding announced that the plan, expected to be called the "Kuala Lumpur Declaration," would address nine issues, notably financial resources, transfer of technology, climatic changes, and forestry. "We will act as one and make our stand felt at the Earth Summit," he said, according to Malaysian news service Bernama. The Kuala Lumpur meeting, under the sponsorship of the G-77, is *not* the "alternate summit" idea that Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed mooted last August. At that time, he suggested that it might be better for developing nations to hold their own meeting where the developed countries would be excluded: "It is only then that we can learn what is the real situation" on the environment, Mahathir said, as reported by the Malaysian daily *The Star* on Aug. 17.

Just how divided the developing sector is, however, was shown by a report in India's *Economic Times* on April 7 which disclosed that the Brazilian government of President Collor had quietly sent representatives to India and China to attempt to coax them to accede to the North's demands. The Indian press called the action "groveling."

Establishing an environmentalist dictatorship as part of the new world order is not progressing swiftly enough for its planners. UNCED chief Maurice Strong, speaking in Geneva on April 7, just four days after Prep-Com IV was disbanded, let his displeasure be known. Strong insisted that a failure in Rio would mark the biggest breakdown yet in North-South relations and it would take years to mend the rift. "It would be the beginning of a very pervasive rich-poor war . . . a cold war of deepening division, deepening suspicions, and the gradual manifestation of selective violence," he threatened. He said he was still confident that the June 3-14 meeting in Rio would result in a deal on the crucial issue of financing the transition to "sustainable development."

At the urging of Strong and his backers, former Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita hastily called a meeting in Tokyo in mid-April designed to obtain the financing demanded by the Third World as their price for agreeing to their own doom in the name of "sustainable development." Takeshita, from the Mitsui banking group, has recently written a blueprint for the greening of Japan entitled "For a Humanistic and Prosperous Japan." His connections to Strong are not surprising, since he has had strong Anglo-American connections in the past. The convening of the Eminent Persons' Meeting on Financing Global Environment and Development, as the Tokyo meeting is labeled, will attempt to extract at least \$2 billion from the Japanese government for the developing sector's environmental programs (as contrasted to the \$125 billion per year that UNCED assesses will be needed). Among those invited to the meeting are former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sánchez, former World Bank President Barber Conable, former Singapore Prime

Minister Lee Kuan Yew, and former Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid.

Takeshita's involvement does not necessarily mean the involvement of the Japanese government, however. "The whole process of the UNCED summit is ridiculous," and the Japanese government has no intentions of financing it, a Japanese diplomatic source told *EIR* recently. Asked about a report that Indian government officials are lobbying Japan to "take over" the summit by funding it, he laughed. "Miyazawa is not going; the only countries pushing it at this point are the British—Mr. Major—and the Nordics [sic], and of course the NGOs, the World Bank-International Monetary Fund bureaucracy." Regarding the great divide between the North and the South on these questions, he added: "The United States, U.K., and the NGOs say the Third World has to help clean up and keep clean the earth 'for the next generation.' The Third World points out that 'by the next generation, you mean the next generation of the rich countries—because we in the Third World may not have a next generation; *this* generation is dying in our countries!" He concluded that it is known in Japan that development is the only way to reduce the rate of environmental degradation, "not the other way around."

### **UNCED planners pacing themselves?**

An interview with an Indian government official intimately involved in the UNCED process provided an antidote to the too-quick perception that the Earth Summit is finished. UNCED Deputy Secretary General Nitin Desai, who served in the office of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, was questioned by a reporter from the *Economic Times* who claimed nothing had been achieved. Desai noted that through the UNCED process, Business Councils had been set up throughout the world. He talked about how NGOs had come into their own during the two-year period, noting that a number of governments have now accepted their premises. "This is only the beginning," he said, drawing the parallel to the seven-year process by which the Montreal Protocol, which phases out use of chlorofluorocarbons, was finally signed. In spite of debates over funding, "that protocol was signed," the Indian official reminded the interviewer. Richard Benedick, the U.S. negotiator for the Montreal Protocols, made a similar point in his book *Ozone Diplomacy*. He noted that the North was never forced to make firm commitments as to funding levels. It was simply a step-by-step process, he said.

UNCED planners intend to circumvent even the forestry protocol, some experts think, by taking advantage of the contradictions inherent in the South's stand as it has been expressed thus far. The South has alternated between rightly insisting that the planned agenda at Rio violates sovereignty, and making clear that with enough funding all things are possible. Thus, the back-up plan being mooted is that it will be a country's own NGOs who will be set up as environmental policeman.