

Consultative Meeting of Civil Society Organizations of West Asia countries, in preparation for the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum(GC/GMEF-27)

19 to 20 November 2012, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

We, the participants in the Consultative Meeting of Civil Society Organizations for the countries of West Asia, in preparation for the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-27/GMEF) and the Fourteenth Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-14). We met on 19 and 20 November 2012 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and we emphasized Agenda 21 and the Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the final document (The Future We Want) of the Rio+20 Summit.

Civil society organizations in West Asia are aware of the importance of international resolutions in upgrading the forms of international environmental action, they share the disappointment with the civil society institutions in the world in the final document for the Earth Summit "Rio +20", which did not live up to its expectations despite some of its positive elements. And the conferees assert that the shortcomings in the results of the "Rio +20" were mainly caused by the failure of governments of major industrialized nations to fulfill their commitments and obligations, which reverberated negatively on improving environmental work at the global level and led to its subsequent failure in shaping many of the decisions and recommendations to viable programmes of work. However, we emphasize the continuation of our approach to affirmative action and our unwavering commitment to work to influence our governments, to motivate their commitment to the positive outputs of the Summit, which correspond with the objective characteristics of our region, especially in relation to the Green Economy approach as a means of achieving the goals of sustainable development.

The conferees recognize the effects and the magnitude of the environmental risks resulting from the practices of the Israeli occupation in the destruction of elements of the environment, including the sabotage of agricultural land, the uprooting of trees, the depletion and contamination of natural resources in the occupied territories and the dismemberment of the structure of Palestinian society by establishing the apartheid wall, the representatives of civil society in West Asia are appealing to the world community, states and governments and civil society organizations to join us in condemning the authorities of the Israeli occupation and accounting them full responsibility for what the consequent damages are as a result of such practices.

Based on what was presented and in light of the deliberations, it was agreed that:

First: in the field of Green Economy:

Adoption of a green economy as the best practical alternative approach, and the implementation of the current approach to economic development to achieve sustainable development, taking into account the following:

- Taking into account the level of inequality in economic growth among countries in the region, to achieve social justice and equal opportunities.
- The adoption of a gradual application of the green economy approach so that it does not entail any damage.
- Urging the region's governments to adopt development policies based on the pillars of sustainable development (environmental, economic and social).
- The need for the government and private sector to provide the necessary support for the transfer and resettlement of green technology in various sectors of development.
- Support civil society organizations and enable them to fulfill their roles completely in education and mass communication, and exercise their role as a full-fledged partner in the planning, policy-making, implementation, follow-up and monitoring.

Second: in achieving the objectives of Sustainable Consumption and Production:

- Emphasis on the adoption of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production provided in Article 226 of the Final Document of the Rio+20 Conference by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and claim for the designation of a certified body by the Governing Council to be based in one of the countries in the region.
- The empowerment of civil society organizations by promoting their leadership role in education and awareness to changing consumption patterns that are misleading and unjustified, and the adoption of mechanisms of Sustainable Production and Consumption, and work to enact laws and regulations to ensure the adoption of this approach.

Third: in the field of technology transfer:

1. Enable countries in the region to obtain the technology needed to shift towards a Green Economy, and the need to promote civil society organizations in the region to play an active role to facilitate this.
2. Refrain from taking advantage of the absence of green technologies in the countries of the region to impose unacceptable forms of protectionism by developed countries, and to find appropriate mechanisms to transfer green technology, without prejudice to the rights of intellectual property and patents.
3. Need for the advancement of scientific research and policy development in the countries of the region, and providing financial support to create a suitable environment for research and development, to ensure a positive contribution to the global effort in the production of these technologies, and to

emphasize the importance of the role of civil society organizations in achieving this.

4. Urge governments to enact laws and regulations that promote forms of sustainable growth and to facilitate the necessary changes towards a green economy.

Fourth: in the field of the right of access to information:

- Emphasis on the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in urging the General Assembly of the United Nations to adopt paragraph 88 of the Final Document of the Declaration of Rio+20 as an international convention.

- The empowerment of civil society organizations to gain access to information and environmental data bases in an appropriate manner and time. Urge governments to work on the development of policies and laws that guarantee the conditions and requirements for right of civil society organizations to easy access to sources of information for an environmentally sustainable development, and make them available to the public in a manner conducive to the essence (paragraph 88 of the Declaration of Rio +20).

- Commend the efforts of the countries that have worked on the introduction of environmental concepts and knowledge in their educational curricula, and urge other countries that did not work on it yet to adopt systematic educational policies to ensure the incorporation of environmental concepts in their curricula.

Fifth: in the field of working to activate the role of civil society:

The involvement of civil society organizations and small groups that are locally active and enable them to contribute to decision-making related to the environment and sustainable development at the national and regional level, and to ensure the provision of the necessary procedures and the legal and administrative requirements to ensure their active participation in environmental action.

Sixth: in the field of working to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) post-2015:

- The need for regional governments to set targets for development that are transparent and measurable and depend on the involvement of other relevant societal sectors and consistent with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the conditions of each region.

- Strengthening the role and forms of representation of civil society organizations during the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- The need to work to assess the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and combine both paths (Post-Rio+20 and Post-2015) into a path for a unified global environmental agenda.

Seventh: in the field of working to achieve the goals of social responsibility:

States are urged to take the necessary measures to stimulate private sector institutions to adopt plans to support social and environmental projects, and to ensure their actual contribution to activating the principles of social responsibility, and activate the procedures for implementing the principle: "polluter pays" as a firm legal rule that commits the polluter to provide the necessary compensation for damage caused to the environment and society.