

## Meeting global challenges – The contribution of SD strategies

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Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for the introductory remarks. Looking around, I see quite a number of those responsible for successes. I see my good old friend, Wolfgang Burhenne, one of the icons of all those discussions coming to Sustainable Development. It is nice to mention as well, but it goes to a lot of others. Success has always a lot of parents, fathers and mothers. The very moment they have a problem, then there is a step child much more likely, therefore it is good to come together today and to ask in this really European context: Where are the challenges in front of us and what can we do in the Council for Sustainable Development in the different countries in Europe contribute to this? It is a very important day and an important year.

Tomorrow we have World Environment Day, and we have the year 2007, exactly 20 years of Brundtland Report. He didn't mention it, but I have to add Volker Hauff was the German member in the Brundtland commission, and I believe it is worth to stop a moment and to ask: What are the experiences with this, where are we with Sustainable Development, for sure one of the success formulas in the world at all? Ever if we have a new concept which is accepted, there is a high risk that you come to something like inflational use of this wording, and the more this inflational used, the less it is really linked to its specific context. Therefore I believe it is very important to stop a moment in this year, and to ask: Where we are now and what is in front of us?

My friends in Germany know that I always quote an old Spanish philosopher, Baltasar Gracián. Anyhow there was one sentence saying that the most difficult part in running is to stand still. That is exactly the moment up to 20 years, where you have to stand still and ask, "What is it?" To have something like an **Archimedic point**, and to look for the structure –not only running, seeing lots of trees but not the forest anymore. Therefore it is good to have these interrelations, World Environment Day on the one side, and twenty years Brundtland Report on the other.

It is quite interesting to mention here, with all the experts knowing much more than I know right now on this concrete topic, that the motto of this year's World Environment Day was decided by UNEP and by my good friend, Achim Steiner, who is doing a great job to make UNEP going to an even higher level than I was able to do and the motto is, "**Melting Ice, a Hot Topic?**". I fully agree with this. I have my problem with the question mark in this title. I believe that it is a very specific topic again that we are mentioning this question mark because we are never sure that what is developed by science will be all the time to come the right outcome. Also in the IPCC report you learn that there is 90% probability for climate change. I learned always that 100% never can happen, we have always to decide on risk, therefore 90 % doesn't earn the question mark in real life, but it is good to mention it anyhow so that each and everybody know we have to do more.

We did not decide right after this IPCC this year's assessment report to cancel IPCC. IPCC must go on, and hopefully they make in five or six years the next IPCC assessment report. Lots of politicians are coming back and say, "But if you are not sure, why should we act?" I only want to say: Don't misuse open questions as an alibi for non-action; this is the answer to this question mark. We know enough, we know that this can be and must be handled as soon as possible, because the longer we wait, the more extensive will be the cost side. This is the result of Sir Nicolas Stern. So, first let's always be always be scientifically honest, add a question mark where it is necessary, but don't allow taking this question mark as an alibi for non-action. That is the main topic. I am very sure that we have then the legitimacy and the good discussion for action.

By the way, that links directly to the topic of precaution. You know that this is the Rio principle number 15: that you have to act even if full scientific knowledge is not available. And you know that wherever we discussed it, it was one of the most challenging topics to convince some people on the other side of the Atlantic to accept a precautionary *principle*. It is mentioned in Rio that it is a precautionary *approach*. My topic is: You need scientific knowledge to single out where there still are open questions and why you are deciding, nevertheless. Therefore this is a scientifically approved approach. Of course, we have to do quite a lot with priorities in Sustainable Development. And I quote from Rio agenda saying that countries are to adopt national strategies for Sustainable Development, and that they "should build upon and harmonize a value sector of economic social and environment policies and plans".

So we need those national plans, and we need them on three pillars, on economic, social and environment policy. **Therefore Councils for Sustainable Development are not Environment Councils.** They are Councils on integration, and I believe we have to really underline and to stress this to the public again and again. There are lots of people believing that Sustainable Development is Environmental Development. It is much, much more. Therefore it is not a problem that we have for example in other countries as well a Council on Environment giving advice to the Government and the Council for Sustainable Development.

But if we can not prove that integration is possible, then the need does for this council does not exist. We, for example, have not only to ask for specific projects for the environment impact analysis. We have to ask for the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment. Because the integration of three targets is much more than optimizing just one. We have to discuss in those councils also what are the tradings, trade-offs, bargains between the three topics. On the global level, this seems to be even more important, and you can see it in the development in our global conferences. I have repeated it again and again, 1972 in Stockholm, we started with United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Twenty years later, in Rio de Janeiro, we didn't have the second United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, but we had the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

And believe me, those days (I was responsible in Germany and I toured the world to prepare), when you came to the southern part of the world, they always mentioned the United Nation Conference on Development and Environment. They were in those days already convinced that the **"D" is more important than the "E"**, and it was a dominance of the developed countries that we came to UNCED, and not to UNCDE,

and ten years later in Johannesburg, we had the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. I believe that was a clear signal for the need of integration. Therefore once more, the *raison d'être* for those Councils for Sustainable Development is the integration part of those three topics. If we can do it, then I think we are successful.

I know that integration is an easy word, but extremely difficult to do in a Government. When you look at the development of Environment policy, you will see this. I always differentiate for periods; we started in Environment policy with what we call the “high chimney policy”, we didn't decrease the emissions, but we increased the chimney. We didn't only have chimneys, we had also long tubes in the sea which were a high chimney in a horizontal way. The second was that we made the end of the pipe policy; we added a filter at the end, and we saw that this was changing but not solving the problem and then we came to the integrated environment policy.

By the way, I always mentioned that the Environment Minister is something like the “end of the pipe minister”. For a long time, when we looked at environment and agriculture, environment and transport, environment and trade, we were always the end of the pipe. At the end of the day, we came back and said “is it not better to integrate it”. I only want to make this as a little foot note. The long discussion: what is the right perspective with regards to trade? Do we want to integrate environment in the negotiations of WTO? Or do we want to single it out in a new organisation? It is very, very important to see this, and therefore **integration is easy. But doing it in a way that you are not losing the perspective is much more difficult.** Therefore we have to prove again and again that we are not separating. But we are trying to integrate without losing the context the one to the other. We are quite now concentrated a lot on climate change. That is o.k., but we are neither an Environment Council nor a Climate Change Council, we are a Sustainable Development Council. We shouldn't lose sight with regard to the other topics: biodiversity, chemicals. Congratulations that we have now in the EU the REACH topic. Again, don't ask if it could be a better one, now it is that. I always say: If you want to have the best of tomorrow, but are not doing the good today, then the worst of yesterday remains.

So it is a step in the right direction, and you can build on this. Without the discussion on chemicals in the EU, with regards to REACH, it would never be possible to finalize on a global level the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management process. What we did is a step on the global level. I believe it is always better to have a foot in the door, than to knock on the door and to say: I have a lot of good ideas. At least if the decision is done, let's use the instrument, let's prove where it is good, and let's prove where we have to change. With that, I only underline biodiversity. I am very happy that Germany is the host of the next cup of Committee for Economic Development, and we must come to a solution especially with regard to the access of benefit sharing. Without any doubt, we can not go in the direction to believe that the Official Development Assistance investments are something like charity. I hate this. This is not charity – this is payment for services.

Remember when preparing Johannesburg in 2002, up to the meeting, - I think it was it was in Gothenburg – it was still an idea to make a target for Johannesburg a “global deal”. I was against the title, because I don't believe that we are “dealer”. But the idea behind it was o.k. Developing countries are offering services to the world, but

unluckily, these services are global commons, and they are not paid for this. **That is a topic with force, that is a topic that links biodiversity with genetic resources**, therefore it is good that we'll have this here and avoid having only the eyes on climate change, as important as it is.

The problem of our international agreements, and I can not stop to underline it again and again, and you have to change it, is that they are developed in sectorial isolation and blindness. So, we must come to a much better integration in the chemical agenda. You can not make capacity building for the ozone layer and for Persistent Organic Pollutants and Basel, and at the end of the day if you go with me to Kenyan Government and ask where the experts for chemicals are, and if you have two you are very happy. They must also be on a broad based linked with this. So why are we not making this integration process also on this level on the global scale? By the way, it is also the topic of synergies, and it is worse with regards to the invested money. I think we can do it better. I tried to underline this in Nairobi, and I had the feeling that people are aware of this.

I think a very important step forward is the EU process. So what they decided in Brussels early this year is what I call an agenda **“three times 20 until 2020”**. You can easily remember this. It is good for the people in the media; three times 20 until 2020. It is not by chance that three times 20, because you have exactly reflected these three topics of energy policy, what we call the miracle triangle. We have the one side the need to come to competitive energy structures, to increase energy efficiency – and 20% is increasing the competitiveness of this industry. Even if you had no link at all to climate change, you would have to increase drastically your energy efficiency.

The first 20 is mainly concentrated to the first target in this magic triangular of energy policy: competitiveness. If you go to the second, 20% renewable energy: We all know that the EU all together and a numbers of member states even higher, are extremely dependent on import of energy. So do your utmost to make energies available which do not need to be imported. The 20% of renewable energy are by themselves necessary to do even if there was no link to climate change. My firm conviction is that those countries at the end of the day will have the advantages in the global markets which have the chance to decrease the carbon intensity of their energy structure best. Then you have the 20% less CO<sub>2</sub>, and then you come to the third topic of environment. So again, the good step forward in the EU is exactly this integration again, that you integrate the three topics of energy policy: competitiveness, supply safety, and environment.

To do this is great, wonderful that it was possible in the European Council, of course we see that it is not very easy to convince others as well, therefore lets stick to the topic, that this three times 20 is decided without the precondition that others do it as well. It is decided and it is to implement. If others are going further, we can go further as well. So, nobody should come back from Heiligendamm or later from Bali and say, “But we couldn't get reach an overall solution, therefore we in Europe will be reluctant”. It is decided that **we reach these three times 20 independently of what others are doing**. I believe that we have to underline this very intensively.

The initiative of President Bush: only one word to this from my point of view. It is a good signal that now the President of the United States of America is convinced that we need concrete targets. That is new. Don't ask what kind of targets these are, and don't ask what at the end of the day will be the result of this. But let's take one step on the positive side: He agrees on concrete targets. Second, he is asking for new alliances, he asked for 18 countries. If you go through this list and then you go to Heiligendamm, and ask which of those countries are not already there, you don't come to a lot. I think Korea is not in Heiligendamm, is it? **But we have the G-8, we have the European Commission, these are nine, we have the G-5, that is fourteen, and we have the Africans there.**

So if he believes there should be a concentration of the discussion on those mainly responsible for the bulk of emissions – start at Heiligendamm, do it there! If you go another way, you must be aware that you are going out of the UN system, and we will never come to a legally binding instrument if we are going out of the UN system, full stop. In the UN system, of course you can have something like a specific working group. Maybe at the end of the day you come to the conclusion that we should give a common decision, for example to the least developed countries, and say, “you are not necessary now to be integrated into the climate policy.” But this would have to be decided in the UN and not anywhere else. I believe therefore the German Chancellor is fully correct in saying: The very moment we are succeeding in Heiligendamm that also United States of America comes back and say that we need it and we need it in the UN system, then it is a success.

Coming back to energy, let me just pick up one **topic, coal**. I am very proud that our council in Germany started the discussion on clean coal in the time where nobody was discussing it. We came to the conclusion, in a nut shell, that we can not simply jump out of coal, but that we have to ask, “What are the perspectives?” You may know that I am quite intensively involved with China and I don't believe that until 2050 we will have the situation where we can run the global economy without coal. We will not. Hopefully we can decrease it; hopefully. If you see the development, not only in China, in India as well, also in other countries, then you become aware of its challenge, and therefore again, my old sentence learned in China as well, “A hand you can not cut, you have to take”! So how can you take the hand?

What can we do? What can we do with carbon sequestration? What can we do with more decentralized coal use with a higher possibility of the combined heat and power circle? What can we do with new types of coal power stations? In Germany, the average efficiency rate in coal power station is 35%. If you have a new coal power station, it goes up to 47 %. So at least it is rational to come to a totally different structure of our coal power stations. Of course, others are convinced this is the wrong way. I don't jump out of renewables, I don't jump out of energy efficiency, but I think we have to discuss if that is the right way or not. Simply to say, “I am a purist, I don't want to see it, and I am not interested what the Chinese and the Indians are doing”, is not responsible. **We have to do our utmost to bring better technologies to the market** in Europe. That is a chance for the environment, a new chance for economic stability. By the way, energy efficiency by itself is a huge chance for our economic stability.

Let me take another second example only with a very short step. Our British colleagues, the British Sustainable Development Commission, were the first, maybe even the only, who decided to discuss a result from Johannesburg which is a little bit forgotten. That is changing consumption patterns. If you didn't have the chance until now to read it, please do it, it is a wonderful title, saying "I will if you will - towards Sustainable Consumption". Lots of wonderful, very concrete examples. It is of course one of the hot topics, those having been in Johannesburg, they know that it really was not easy to come to this circle for the first time ever.

Changing consumption and production patterns: everybody is now praising it, because that is again integrating economic social and environment topics. At the end of the day, we have to ask how to implement these changing consumption patterns. Some say changing consumption pattern, meaning less consumption. If you go to the NGO field, lots of those are convinced that we have an over-consumption, and changing consumption patterns is to decrease consumption. A very risky perspective, because I will never forget when I was ahead of the Commission on Sustainable Development once, we were discussing the consumption patterns., One morning Mr. Nowitzki, environmental Minister from Poland, came back to the bureaux meeting and he was very angry. He said: We are always discussing here in the headquarters of the United Nations changing the consumption patterns, and then I go to my hotel room; switch on the television set, and what they are saying is consumption, consumption, and consumption.

If I see the situation in Germany, for a long time to consume was something like the requested obligation of the citizens. They always say, "But the private consumption is not coming", and then we say we have to decrease consumption? **We should change consumption.** The question is "What are the footprints of consumption", "How can we do it better?" – The other interpretation is that the others come back and say: Changing consumption is not necessary, the market is doing it, and we have the consumer as the king and the market. Well, I also once studied economics, and I know that this king resigned quite a long time ago. He resigned in front of a behaviour industry of information. I don't want to say manipulation, but when I see today in our television that we are allowed to have non-mentioned advertisement integrated in the programme, then I have my doubts in the quality of a "king" of the consumer.

We have to of course do more, and I can only underline this study from our friends in the UK, it is a very very good development. I am fairly sure that we have to do it in other examples as well. For example, why are we not starting at the Government level? Then changing and coming to the decision in Europe that until 2012, the end of Kyoto, **all the public buildings and transport, would have to be carbon neutral.** Can we not do it? We know that this is a possibility. Isn't it possible until 2012, to have for all households intelligent meters for their electricity? I think these are very concrete steps you can go, also for other consumer goods. Not to ask the consumer to fix it, but to say that we have to cooperate with business, with consumers and with the government to changing consumption pattern in the mentioned way.

You see twenty years of Sustainable Development Concept, twenty years Brundtland Report. I don't know whether you made a public pole, asking the board of public, "Do you know what Sustainable Development is?" In Germany we ask: "What is Nachhaltige Entwicklung?" I think the outcome is around twenty percent. Therefore we have not to discuss like in a University, the first two semesters, what is Sustainable Development, but we have to act. There are challenges for the European Union, and I want to mention at least five of those.

**First**, I think we have to re-direct the structural funds. Thanks to European Parliament, we got a new article as you know to the funding package, it mentions the obligation of taking Sustainability into account. It fits very nicely into what I asked for before. We have to go beyond environment impact analysis. We have to go to Sustainable Development Impact Assessment, we need systematic guidance and implementation rule for this new article. So redirect structural funds.

**Second**, as I mentioned before, build up demand side Sustainability policies. I know that the European Union isn't the only place where this changing consumption pattern is mentioned when integrating policies. We should not forget that others are interested in this as well. I never dared to mention changing consumption pattern in development countries, because I was convinced that this is a little bit cynical to ask in countries where the need to have something to consume is the main topic. I learned a totally different story in China. They ask for changing consumption patterns because they are convinced that the western type of consumption can never be the basis for their development model. We are always discussing huge increase rates of the Gross National Product in China. At the end of the day if they come to the quadrupling of their GNP until 2020 (I have not doubts that they will do it), their per capita income will be one seventh of the income of the United States or in Europe. So they mention a "moderate" economic well being. They mention the society, exactly this. So, second, build up demand sides of Sustainability.

**Number three**, make communication and Sustainable Development fancy. That is linked with consumption patterns. Do what ever is possible, not to make it something like specific idea of some agreeing people, but to integrate it fully.

**Fourth**, I didn't mention it in full detail; invest into Sustainable research and development. I believe we will see this very clearly in the overall framework of climate change.

**Fifth**, link up with local communities. If you go back to Rio, and you ask me what the success story of Rio is, it is without any doubt the Local Agenda 21. Lots of cities working in this agenda process made much more that only to decrease energy use – they changed the way of thinking, and therefore we should do our utmost to link it up.

These were some of those ideas that I wanted to mention, and I hope that it gives you one or the other idea to discuss the next hours. Hope to see you also tomorrow. We have this nice habit that the President invites himself lots of people to his garden. I am fairly sure that there is a direct link of the President to higher activities. We will have sunshine, and if you have sunshine there, it is a wonderful place. Therefore it would be wonderful to see one of the others as well. Thank you very much, have a good time.