

Resolution 1319 (2003)¹

Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development: a common challenge

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Ten years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Unced), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the heads of state and/or government of the world's countries met in Johannesburg for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, from 26 August to 4 September 2002 to settle a plan for the practical implementation of the actions specified ten years earlier but yet to be put into effect.
2. This summit reaffirmed the three strands of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) and reiterated the determination to combat extreme poverty, social exclusion and the degradation of our planet's natural resources.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly has noted that as far as outcomes are concerned, the Johannesburg Summit was credited with a slight edge over the Rio Conference. This advance was due to a stronger political will and probably also to the larger presence of economic players with whom the governing class and civil society cemented actions of partnership aimed at attaining specific goals.
4. In spite of this, the Assembly's assessment is that the action plan remains weak, and that disappointment remains considerable with regard to certain questions such as energy, biodiversity, regulation of world markets and the change in production and consumption patterns.
5. The downbeat assessment of a summit of this kind has encountered a severe verdict from a significant part of the international community, some of whose members have even seen it as challenging the role of multilateral co-operation.
6. The Assembly, while regretting that the results of the Johannesburg Summit are not more conclusive, is nonetheless convinced of the expediency of a process which has made it possible to carry out a useful effort of reflection giving prominence to certain otherwise neglected issues.
7. Unfortunately, the fact must be faced that some of the undertakings made at these meetings may be in vain. The Assembly considers that it is therefore indispensable that all parties involved should make every effort to ensure that the declarations of intent are actually followed up with concrete action.
8. In that respect, the Assembly deplores the fact that the United States has pulled out of the ratification process for the Kyoto Protocol and that Russian Federation, after announcing at the summit that it would shortly ratify the Kyoto Protocol, does not yet seem ready to take this decision, thus impeding the instrument's entry into force.
9. In this spirit, parliamentary action can make a useful contribution. National parliaments as well as interparliamentary co-operation bodies, such as the Parliamentary Assembly, can play a part in achieving the set objectives, both through their legislative action and by means of the pressure that they can bring to bear on the governments, or again as the elected representatives of civil society.

1. Assembly debate on 30 January 2003 (7th Sitting) (see [Doc. 9659](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Meale). Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 January 2003 (7th Sitting).



10. In this connection, the Assembly especially welcomes the co-operation built up with the European Parliament on the occasion of the latest conferences of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
11. It has also noted with satisfaction that at the Johannesburg Summit an interparliamentary round table was organised with the European Parliament to identify a possible parliamentary contribution to the process.
12. The Assembly moreover shares the concern of the parliamentarians present in Johannesburg that parliamentary bodies should be associated more closely with these negotiations and with the follow-up to the decisions. It therefore insists that the new agreements be subjected to increased parliamentary control and that the parliamentarians be associated more with action to implement the decisions taken.
13. It accordingly expresses particular interest in the proposal put forward at the conclusion of the round table to look into the possibility of arranging parliamentary monitoring of the undertakings made in respect of the environment, and specifically the Kyoto Protocol.
14. In the light of the foregoing, the Parliamentary Assembly:
 - 14.1. decides to continue and develop co-operation with the European Parliament in this field, in order to ascertain ways and means to develop a process of monitoring jointly undertakings made in respect of the environment, and especially those of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Kyoto Protocol;
 - 14.2. is satisfied that the approaches which it has made with the European Parliament to the Duma for a speedy ratification by Russia of the Kyoto Protocol have been successful;
 - 14.3. in the same spirit, it considers that efforts should be made to induce the United States, and other countries that have so far indicated their opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, to reconsider their position;
 - 14.4. invites national parliaments, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliamentary Assembly for Black Sea Economic Co-operation (Pabsec) to join in the endeavours which it and the European Parliament will be making at the next Conference of Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and in the monitoring of the undertakings given in Johannesburg;
 - 14.5. also believes that the implementation of social rights, in particular efforts to combat extreme poverty and social exclusion, should be regarded as one of the priorities in the Parliamentary Assembly's assessment under the monitoring procedure of member countries' commitments