



GREENPEACE



92-gruppen

Poverty and the environment beached at Bali; will governments let us down in Johannesburg too?

Bali, 8 June 2002: As these two weeks draw to a close, the Johannesburg Summit is sinking in a sea of indecision and intransigence. The question the world is asking is – how did the governments let us down? Was it incompetence or was it sabotage?

Hardly any country can leave Bali without embarrassment. The list of guilty parties is a long one, but it starts with the three who shamelessly hijacked the process in Bali: the United States, Australia and Canada. They are abandoning their responsibilities to their citizens and to poor people across the world.

The United States' cynical and coercive approach to the process has been outrageous, but entirely consistent with its recent record of stalling progress and using strong arm tactics in United Nations negotiations.

The European Union, "led" by Spain, portrayed itself as the good guy in the face of US stubbornness but was hardly convincing. It delivered rhetoric, but few real commitments.

It has been embarrassing to watch this process, to see different nations and blocs single-mindedly pursuing their own narrow interests at the expense of poor people and the planet's future.

The system of horse-trading, back-room deals and bullying by powerful blocs is becoming common practice in international negotiations. Rarely has it produced so little by way of

firm results. We have been appalled to watch governments renege upon commitments made at Rio 10 years ago. And the unwillingness of powerful countries to align international trade rules with sustainable development is undermining the chance of reaching any meaningful agreement. If we emerge from Johannesburg with an agreement that sets us back pre-Rio, we will have lost more than ten years. Governments will lose the confidence of the world that they have the will to save it.

So where do we go from here? We and many other NGOs have worked honestly and openly to make this process work. We are not giving up. The Rio Principles, Agenda 21 and the agreements reached since must be made to work - the world's future is at stake. Now we call on Heads of State and Government to demonstrate real commitment to get this show back on the road.

Signed by: Consumers International, Danish 92 Group, Friends of the Earth International, Greenpeace, Oxfam International, The World Wide Fund for Nature, and ANPED

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