

Third UNCED Prepcom
Working Group III
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CANADIAN INTERVENTION ON INSTITUTIONS

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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation welcomes this opportunity to reflect on the institutional questions posed by global environment and development needs, and we appreciate the guide to reflection offered by the secretariat papers PC 36 and 80. We find the papers make explicit a number of important issues which lie embedded in other discussions of this PrepCom.

The Canadian delegation agrees with others that we need to have a new look at institutions in the light our commitment to sustainable development. If we are to achieve our objectives in environment and development, institutional capacity at national, regional, and international level requires reinforcement. You will be familiar with the perspective of my delegation from the Canadian non paper distributed Monday.

On institutional questions we are confronted by a dilemma. On the one hand, we need to approach sustainable development in an integrated and holistic way, and to keep track of linkages among subjects like climate change, forestry and biodiversity. For the institutions and mechanisms we agree on to be most effective and relevant, we must be prepared to reach out and capture the expertise, energy, and experience available within and particularly outside the existing UN system. It is essential to refrain from taking a narrowly sectoral view, and to knit together the various elements of our work into a coherent strategy. On the other hand, however, a number of very specific institutional measures appear to be in the works in current convention negotiations, while institutional proposals have also emerged in discussion of Agenda 21 and under the rubric of UN reform.

We have a functioning multilateral system, which includes the multilateral development banks as well as the UN agencies. This system may need to be both streamlined and strengthened, but it probably has the capacity to deliver much of what we seek to achieve.

At the same time, from experience we know that it is always easier simply to add functions, responsibilities, and personnel, than it is to rationalize and optimize current operations. As individual nations, and as a world community we do not have the