

Agenda 21 must provide a basis for a new deal for the majority of poor people and countries in order to secure and sustain our common future."⁶

- *Set a threshold for the universal application of environmental conventions.* Put in place a universality formula for critical global conventions which, once ratified by a representative majority of countries, would become automatically applicable for all countries. As a minimum, use the formula in Article 108 of the UN Charter.
 - *Conduct independent assessments of progress made and needed.* The 1972 Stockholm Action Plan lacked any independent mechanisms for periodically assessing and reporting on progress made and needed. The post-Rio institutional arrangements should include an independent capacity and mechanisms for monitoring, assessing and reporting regularly on achievements made and changes needed in implementing Agenda 21 effectively. For example, more extensive use should be made of independent fact-finding bodies, mini-commissions and task forces with specific mandates and reporting deadlines. They should use similar open decision-making processes, public hearings and periodic public reporting as pioneered by the Brundtland Commission.
 - *Give youth and NGOs a greater role in decision-making.* The views and interests of the next and later generations have not been directly represented in decision-making at or since the Stockholm Conference. But the 1990 Bergen Conference blazed a new trail. For the first time at any UN sponsored meeting, the representatives of youth plus four other NGO groups participated on an equal footing with governments in the preparatory work and decision-making. It is now time to move beyond the largely adversarial roles of the last twenty years to more constructive and productive partnerships between governments and NGOs. New ways must be found for NGOs, and especially youth, to participate more directly in national and international decision-making.
- (v) **Elements and Prospects for Success at and after the 1992 Rio Conference**
- To maintain Canada's leadership role and credibility before and at the 1992 Rio Conference, Canada must reduce the gap between its international posture and its domestic policies and performance in key areas (e.g. energy, forestry, agriculture,

⁶ Sustaining our Common Future, Special Report for the UNCED Secretariat by the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, October 1991, p. 32.