

**Testimony of
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Thank you for the opportunity to come before the Ocean Commission to report to you on the Administration's successful participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The United States delegation -- led by Secretary Powell -- was extraordinarily successful on a number of fronts.

My only disappointment is over lost opportunities. There were so many Ministers and other high government officials there, so many NGOs and business representatives, that we could have used the time more productively to seek new practical solutions to discuss the challenging issues facing the world environment. Instead, like so many mega-UN conferences, there was too much focus on renegotiating lowest-common-denominator text that has been already negotiated so many times in the past. But even given this limitation, we still accomplished so much!

Deliberations at the Summit focused on integrating all three pillars of sustainable development -- economic, social and environmental -- with a focus on addressing the needs of the poor. The Summit kept its focus on sustainable development, while recognizing the importance of good governance. Our agenda has clearly been laid before us, and it is now time to implement this agenda and turn words into action. As Secretary Powell told the Summit:

“Plans are good. But only actions can put clean water in the mouths of thirsty girls and boys, prevent the transmission of a deadly virus from mother to child, and preserve the biodiversity of a fragile African ecosystem.”

In the area of oceans, we achieved particularly dramatic successes. First, the Plan of Implementation contains strong, positive oceans language. Second, a number of important oceans-related partnerships were announced.

After intense negotiations, including several late-night sessions at the ministerial level, the delegates to the WSSD finally came to closure on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation on the eve of the Summit's final day. This Plan of Implementation reflects key United States priorities and supports a strong oceans program.

The opening paragraph of the oceans section of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation reiterates and recognizes the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea and Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 as the basic legal and policy frameworks, respectively, for oceans activities. Importantly, the text recognizes the need for greater coordination among United Nations bodies and includes a reference to the work of the open-ended oceans consultative process - a process to be reviewed by the United Nations General Assembly this year. There is also a call for increased coordination at the regional level. Here again, a relatively new idea, i.e. links between regional seas/fisheries and science organizations, is identified.

The second paragraph focuses on sustainable fisheries. There is a call to quickly rebuild depleted fish stocks on an urgent basis and, where possible, not later than 2015. Ratification and implementation of the various fisheries agreements developed since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 is urged, as well as the development of regional implementation plans, where appropriate. The fisheries paragraph also calls for elimination of subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and overcapacity to developing countries, and for sustainable development of aquaculture. The WSSD text identifies several steps to implement the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities developed in 1995 as a result of Agenda 21 and its regional partnerships.

With respect to maritime safety and the protection of the marine environment, the Implementation Plan calls on states to implement the IMO conventions and protocols and to develop stronger IMO mechanisms to secure such implementation. IMO is urged to finalize its action on ships ballast water and sediments.

The Plan of Implementation reiterates text previously agreed in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development dealing with the shipment of radioactive waste.

Finally, there is a call for strengthening science and capacity in marine science. States are called upon to strengthen the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, FAO and other relevant international science bodies. An important new development is the call for establishment of a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment. Relatedly, the Plan has twelve specific references to satellite/remote sensing and earth observation.

Oceans Partnerships

But the most significant accomplishments go beyond text. The innovation we brought to the WSSD is the concept of practical partnerships of willing nations who want to commit to solving real problems in the world. We developed major new initiatives and partnerships to manage and conserve the vital resources of our oceans and coasts, and provide integrated, watershed approaches to manage water and land resources.

- The key U.S. ocean initiative was our "White Water to Blue Water" partnership. It is a cross-sectoral, ecosystem approach to ocean and coastal management, including land-based sources of pollution, watershed management, fisheries, coral reefs, sustainable tourism and other issues. Its goals are to improve the national capacities of coastal states to manage entire coastal-marine ecosystems by engaging the full range of up-stream and down-stream stakeholders; and to promote better regional and cross-border coordination between states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to make best use of available resources. The first phase will focus on the Wider Caribbean, and be launched with a partnership conference in May, 2003. Similar programs could later extend to Africa and the South Pacific. Our initiative has

attracted other governments (UK, France, and the governments of the Wider Caribbean such as Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Panama), civil society (IUCN, Ocean Conservancy, CORE, Oceana, and several universities, among others), and international organizations (UNEP, GPA, IOC – Caribbean, and IMO) as partners. We have received interest from the hotel, cruise line, and tourism industries; the Bacardi Foundation; and the Offices of Governor Bush and Senator Graham.

- An oceans gala “Uniting for the Oceans: People, Oceans, Stewardship” was held at the WSSD by governments (including the USG), NGOs, and international organizations to highlight coastal/marine ecosystems and partnerships. Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher Jr., USN (Ret), Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, presented “White Water to Blue Water.” The International Maritime Organization, Indonesia, UNEP-GPA, South Africa, and Australia also announced partnerships. The Crown Prince of the Netherlands, the Executive Director of UNEP, and Ministers of Environment from Senegal and Portugal spoke, contributing to the gala’s success.
- Ocean efforts are strengthened further through the “Clean Water for People” initiative, launched by the U.S. and Japan at the WSSD. One key area is to promote the management and protection of water resources, including resources that have effects on coastal areas; and the U.S. will invest nearly \$400 million over the next three years to do this. Regional and national policies and regulatory frameworks will be developed for joint and integrated management of shared water resources. Advanced technologies, such as Geographic Information Systems, will be used for better watershed management and interventions to reduce contamination.
- The U.S.-led “Geographic Information for Sustainable Development (GISD)” initiative is an international alliance that can bolster our ocean efforts; as remotely sensed data can be used to support activities such as the management of coastal and ocean resources, flood monitoring, and sustainable agriculture. The four GISD pilot projects in Africa are the Kenya-Tanzania Coast, Limpopo/Zambezi Basin, Upper Niger, and East African Great Lakes. Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs John Turner, Assistant Administrator of USAID Emmy Simmons, and Vice Admiral Lautenbacher rolled out the GISD initiative at the WSSD. The Government of Japan stated interest in joining the initiative.
- The U.S. made statements at other partnership events such as the Heads of State-level “Africa Process for the Development and Protection of the Marine Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” and the “International Legislators Forum on Land Use, Watershed and Marine Ecosystems.” The U.S. promoted global observing systems at events and bilateral meetings, emphasizing the need to develop one observation plan that integrates satellite and in-situ systems for the ocean, atmosphere, and land. The U.S. showcased large marine ecosystems projects through presentations, exhibits and courses.
- NOAA and other United States Government agencies were part of the Oceans Partnership (made up of government agencies, international bodies, NGOs, and academic

institutions) that released a statement urging delegates to strengthen protection of the oceans through international cooperation, cross-sectoral approaches and base architecture for global ocean and climate observations.

U.S. delegates took advantage of the WSSD to pursue topics of interest with senior counterparts from other countries. A notable example was Vice Admiral Lautenbacher, who met with the prime Minister's Science Advisor from the UK, the French Minister of the Environment, and senior officials from Japan and several UN organizations to convey the importance to the U.S. of the Global Ocean Observing System. The U.S. message was that long-term, global observations are essential for assessing and predicting climate change. Strong collaboration exists between the U.S. and its partner countries in implementing a number of observing systems capable of meeting some of these needs. One example is the El Nino-Southern Oscillation Observing System. Another is Argo; with initial funding in 1999, there are now over 500 profiling floats operating in the oceans today, with funding secured for an additional 1,000; and at the present rate of progress, the full global array of 3,000 floats will be achieved by the end of 2005 or early 2006. Still other examples include a number of satellite systems.

The overall mood in Johannesburg was positive and forward-thinking. Secretary Powell spoke on the final morning of the Summit. He delivered a strong statement calling on all stakeholders to "expand the circle of development to all God's children," underscoring the need for good governance and practical partnerships, and highlighting the United States commitment to development. Secretary Powell highlighted President Bush's Millennium Challenge Account.

At WSSD, the United States government used every available means to deliver a very positive message on sustainable development. The United States exhibit at Ubuntu Village was a great success, engaging the public and broadly disseminating information about sustainable development activities in the United States and with its partners abroad. The U.S. government exhibits reflected the United States' commitment to work with communities and governments at all levels to address sustainable development issues. Part of the U.S. exhibit will remain in South Africa to be used by the U.S. Embassy and Consulates.

In sum, we are pleased with the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We consider the outcomes as helping further President Bush's development vision.