Stockholm, Rio, Johannesburg

Brazil and the Three United Nations Conferences on the Environment

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FOREWORD

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Since the conflicts of the extractivist movement in the state of Acre, in the eighties, to the Ministry of the Environment, in the current administration, I have taken in the experiences of many people and institutions. These helped shape the ideas, principles and objectives that guide me today and give meaning to my actions in the public sphere. In the beginning, environmentalism did not exist for us, in Acre; it was a struggle for a way of living and producing that had the forest at its center, the provider, a presence we could not do without for reasons ranging from the cultural-emotional to the economic. Only later did the awareness of being part of something much larger arrive. Larger than our "colocações" (area assigned to rubber tappers in the forest for living and producing); larger than Acre, than the Amazon; larger than Brazil. It was the size of the world.

In this period, of about 25 years, it was as if our little canoe—coming from a river of predictable waters, with its known margins and meanders—had suddenly been thrust into the sea. A place where one is frailer, where one is almost nothing in the face of unknown risks and where the eye can only see vastness, not the limits. A place where one needs navigation instruments far more than in the river.

It is interesting that today, having covered so much sea, I see that my navigation instruments are basically those given to me by Acre and the forest; that is, the understanding that there is no such thing as separate social and environmental struggles. What exists is a conception of the

world in which production, the quality of people's lives and the natural environment must be inseparable, generating a new vision of public ethics.

In this sense, I find myself—and my challenges – in Andre's thesis (now book). This is the direction to which we must row: that of describing, analyzing and unveiling complex processes involving the environmental issue without losing the wealth of the interactions and various meanings of this complexity, and thus consistently informing public action, be it of the individual, communities, or nations. It is a thesis in which knowledge builds an immediate bridge to reality and is concerned with answers. I would even say—looking back at an old motto in a new light—that this is a committed work, not from the point of view of demarcating an ideology, but from a perspective that we could call active intellectual citizenship. The author is present in his analyses; without losing academic rigor, he makes his ethics and his choices clear. He concerns himself with his own time and includes himself as an agent.

Besides its obvious contribution to the knowledge of fundamental processes for the future of our country and the world, the work has important characteristics: it is direct and does not yield to the temptation of being exclusive and elitist through words, expanding access to the reading and understanding of complex themes. This is no small feat, for many times extraordinary works are lacking in a minimal effort to communicate, which is a good indication of a democratic spirit.

André makes a great academic and political contribution by covering the period of the most significant milestones in the world's multilateral approach to the environmental issue—particularly the Stockholm, Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg Conferences. He uncovers the themes, concepts, scenarios, negotiations, power games and trends that make up this issue in a global setting with strong repercussions for Brazil, the country most identified with the Environment in the world.

Brazil's role – its decisive action and leadership to ensure that the treatment of the environment is associated to the issue of development, is addressed in a competent and critical manner; as is the role of the Ministry of External Relations in the formulation and expression of Brazilian positions and its progressive interaction with other sectors of the government and civil society, especially after the Rio Conference and the creation of the Ministry of the Environment.

André also takes note of and analyzes the application of the concept of governance, identifying its innovative character in public management and also pointing out its manipulation by developed countries to limit international cooperation (and, implicitly, the commitments of solidarity and common responsibilities established in Rio) for developing countries. He quite rightly reminds us that the environmental issue was created and shaped according to the interests of industrialized countries, but "disfigured" by developing countries - under strong Brazilian leadership - to reflect their visions and necessities, giving the issue a more equitable balance, which is finally reflected in the construction of the concept of sustainable development and its evolution.

Today, sustainable development is a backdrop to the national debate on the return to economic growth with a clear, crosscutting and multifaceted environmental policy—the foundation and condition for governability. This is still not the case, but inroads have been made through emblematic experiences—such as the struggle against deforestation in the Amazon—which end up as a means of developing and implementing policies, both with respect to their successes and to the understanding of their obstacles and contradictions. What is important is the convergence of numerous actors in the objective of creating processes, giving them qualitative advancements in the political and institutional culture and democratic practices. It is not just the goals that are important but also how they are achieved.

This book also deserves attention because, in a certain way, it expresses the enormous gains in process, for it joins research and method to the author's sensibility to his numerous direct experiences as a member of the Itamaraty, many of which we shared. Those occasions confirmed his discipline, understanding and, above all, his personal skill in interacting, in a proper and balanced manner, with the great diversity of social and technical segments represented there. André is a diplomat who has the essential ability to look at the world without loosing contact with the plurality and complexity of Brazil, revealing in his professional actions a deep sense of belonging and commitment to his country. His work is a symbol of those talents connected to the current needs of the public sphere, both nationally and internationally, which are prepared to respond to the ensuing demand for differentiated and permanently innovative competencies.

Marina Silva[*]

June 2005

[*]Senator Marina Silva was Minister for the Environment from 2003 – 2008.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The great interest generated in Brazil by the World Summit for Sustainable Development, held in August and September of 2002, left no doubt as to the space that environmental issues had occupied in the most varied sectors of Brazilian society. As the environment became one of the major global themes, the degree of complexity it achieved in just a few decades became increasingly clear. Initially seen as a restricted debate, given its technical and scientific characteristics, the environmental issue was transferred to a much broader context, with important ramifications in the political, economic and social arenas. This evolution is, largely, the result of the manner in which the subject was addressed in the multilateral sphere, whose three major milestones were the Stockholm, Rio and Johannesburg Conferences.

The Stockholm Conference (United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 1972) was the first large meeting organized by the United Nations focusing on environmental issues. The meeting was convened as a result of growing international concern for the preservation of nature and of the dissatisfaction among various sectors of society with regard to the impact of pollution on the quality of life. The concern of public opinion and political pressures were mostly seen in industrialized countries, where the scientific community and a growing number of non-governmental organizations were attracting substantial attention to disseminate their accusations and warnings. The Conference introduced some concepts and principles that, over the years, would become the foundation for the evolution of diplomacy in the environmental area.

The Rio Conference (United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, 1992) was convened two years after the publication of the Brundtland Report (written by the World Commission on Environment and Development, presided by the then Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Brundtland), whose broad dissemination enabled new aspects to enrich the environmental debate. The report also introduced new perspectives and coined the concept of sustainable development, a goal that requires equilibrium among "three pillars": economic, social, and environmental. The Rio Conference consolidated the concept of sustainable development and contributed to a greater awareness that damages to the environment were primarily the responsibility of developed countries. At the same time, it recognized that developing countries would need to receive financial and technological support in order to achieve sustainable development. At that point, the position of developing countries became better structured and the international political environment favored the acceptance by developed countries of principles such as common but differentiated responsibilities. The change in perception regarding the complexity of the issue occurred very clearly in diplomatic negotiations, although its impact was smaller from the point of view of public opinion.

The Johannesburg Summit (World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002) was convened with the goal of establishing a plan of implementation that would accelerate and strengthen the enforcement of the principles approved in Rio de Janeiro. The decade that separates the two conferences confirmed the diagnosis reached in 1992 and the difficulty of implementing the Rio Conference's recommendations. Johannesburg also revealed the increasingly close relations between the global trade, financial and environmental agendas. The fact that the Summit took place months after the Doha (IV World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference) and Monterrey (United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development) Conferences enabled this perception and

allowed the three conferences to be viewed as important stages in the strengthening of cooperation between States.

Brazil, traditionally one of the most active countries in the United Nations system, held a particularly important position in the discussions on the environment right from the very beginning. At the same time, the environmental issue became one of the topics that most generated global interest in Brazil, especially in the developed countries. Despite the different internal, regional and international conditioning factors that marked the moments of these environmental conferences, Brazil's positions ensured it a role of acknowledged leadership, even when such leadership was controversial. The strong Brazilian commitment to most issues is surely explained by the coexistence of often conflicting interests within the country that are directly or indirectly affected by the international environmental agenda, taking into account not just the size of Brazil's economy and population, its continental dimensions, natural resources, but also regional inequalities and social injustice.

Since it has vast natural resource reserves—including the largest reserves of fresh water – and is the biggest repository of biodiversity on the planet, Brazil is the target of constant attention. The focus of international public opinion, concentrating on the preservation of natural resources, collided with the Brazilian emphasis on industrial and agricultural development. Since Stockholm, the international perception that Brazil is unable to preserve its extraordinary heritage has been consolidated. This perception became stronger in the following years, and was aggravated in the second half of the 1980's due to the repercussions of the intensifying forest burnings in the Amazon.

Brazil's development process in recent decades, enabled considerable advancements in industry, agriculture, science and technology, but it did not correct, and at times even intensified, internal inequalities.

Part of the population faces sustainable development challenges similar to those in developed countries, having to alter its unsustainable production and consumption patterns; another part of the population cannot consider the environmental dimension of development because it lacks access to the most basic social and economic necessities.

Brazil sought, in the three conferences, to emphasize the issues it considered crucial to its development. Negotiations in the environmental area started to have impact on financing and trade negotiations, becoming particularly relevant for countries like Brazil, China, India and the other important developing economies, who felt that their economic growth was endangered. Access to financial resources and technology transfer for sustainable development—the main goals of developing countries—tend to collide with the political and economic interests of developed countries. The fear that the environmental agenda might create new trade barriers, as well as the efforts of developed countries in supporting selective cooperation agendas , have accentuated North-South divergences.

Brazil's role in these conferences deserves to be broadly discussed. This role has evolved significantly, with the increasing participation of other government bodies, academia, NGOs, and several other actors involved in the debate created in the country on sustainable development. In this context, it seems necessary to examine the official Brazilian participation in the three United Nations conferences that addressed the environmental issue, taking into consideration the evolution of the environmental agenda and the political and economic changes that occurred in Brazil in the period between Stockholm and Johannesburg. Emphasis should be given to the role played by the Ministry of External Relations in the development of the Brazilian discourse—understood as the ensemble of statements and speeches that reflect the position of the country. The manner in which Brazilian positions have evolved, due both to internal changes in the country and to the strengthening of new internationally

accepted concepts and principles, will also be analyzed. In seeking to stress the importance of the expansion of the environmental agenda, this work offers a brief study of the different areas in which this expansion was seen and an analysis of the ensuing implications and opportunities, as well as how they there are reflected on the Brazilian discourse.

The work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents an analysis of the three conferences with the goal of examining the evolution of the environmental debate in the international context and as a result of the interests of the major negotiating groups. A brief description of the preparatory processes and the evolution of the conferences themselves allows identification of the moments in which the action of developing countries was most decisive.

The second chapter examines the importance of the three conferences in the Brazilian context. A brief analysis of the national political context of the three periods in which the conferences were held is followed by a description of the preparatory process in Brazil and of the most important aspects of the country's actions.

The third chapter contains an analysis of the Brazilian discourse organized by themes. These themes were selected from those in the environmental agenda since Stockholm—including the principles established and strengthened by the three conferences—and those that gained importance in Rio and Johannesburg.

Bearing in mind that the Brazilian delegations wrote detailed reports of the three conferences, this work intends to bring together, through a brief analysis of these conferences, the information to justify the selection of the themes that will be addressed foremost. Finally, it must be said that some topics of great relevance, such as the relationship between trade and environment, which deserved specific study due to

their complexity and scope, will be analyzed in the broader context of the evolution of the Brazilian positions.

The International Relations Research Institute (IPRI) published the Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the Rio Conference in 1993, and the Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the Johannesburg Summit in 2005. The Report of the Delegation to the Stockholm Conference, on the other hand, was not published. The texts of the Stockholm and Rio Declarations are also part of the Appendices because of the comparative study undertaken in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 1

FROM STOCKHOLM TO JOHANNESBURG: THE EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

1. From Stockholm to Johannesburg: the evolution of the international environmental agenda

A) The Stockholm Conference

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was convened to examine national and international actions that could limit and eliminate, as far as possible, obstacles to the human environment[1] and to "provide a framework for comprehensive consideration within the U.N. of the problems of the human environment in order to focus the attention of governments and public opinion on the importance and urgency of this question"[2]. The Secretary-General of the Conference, the Canadian Maurice Strong, declared in the opening ceremony that Stockholm was launching "a new liberation movement to free men from the threat of their thralldom to environmental perils of their own making"[3]. There is no doubt that the Conference raised the discussion of environmental issues to a level previously reserved to topics with a long diplomatic tradition.

The Stockholm Conference, and its preparation, occurred at a historic moment marked by a strong questioning of both the Western and socialist development models. In the 60s, the world witnessed, in the United States, the intense struggle for Civil Rights, the debate on the Vietnam War

[1] UNITED NATIONS, ECOSOC, doc. E/RES/1346 (XLV). July 30th 1968. "Question de la convocation d'une conférence internationale sur les problémes du milieu humain".

[2] UNITED NATIONS, A/RES/2398 (XXIII). 6th December, 1968. "The problems of human environment".

[3] STRONG, Maurice. Speech given at the Opening Ceremony of the Stockholm Conference, UNEP website. Stockholm, 1972, Brief Summary of the General Debate.

and the emergence of new patterns of behavior, including consumer rights. In Western Europe, the year 1968 was symbolic of the resistance of a new generation to an established system of values. In the same year, the Soviet Union buried the Czech dream of "socialism with a human face" and established a new doctrine that, "deep down […] amounted to a version of the Monroe Doctrine that was a little more convoluted, a little coarser, and less refined [than the original]" [4].

Outside the two centers of power that constituted the core of the Cold War, discussions were concentrated on the search for solutions to grave social and economic problems. In several developing countries, from Brazil to Spain, fear of the spread of communism "justified" authoritarian regimes that sought to legitimize their power through significant results in the economic sector. In Africa and Asia, still under the impact of decolonization—and despite attempts by the Non-Alignment Movement to search for venues of greater autonomy for the developing world—new ideas and challenges were still developing within the apparently insurmountable context of the Cold War. As the Indian economist Amartya Sen states:

> the United States and the West were ready to support undemocratic governments if they were sufficiently anticommunist, and the Soviet Union and China would support governments inclined to be on their respective sides no matter how anti-egalitarian they might be in their domestic policies.[5]

The environmental concerns of the sixties resonated only in a few sectors of civil society in the wealthiest countries of the West. "Although since the beginning of the decade [the sixties] awareness was seen in a few

[4] **Araújo Castro** quoted in AMADO, Rodrigo. p. 302
[5] SEN, Amartya. **Development as Freedom**. p. 183.

segments of public opinion, mainly in the United States, of ecological problems [...], the rise of the 'greens' as a political movement was largely connected to the protest movements of 1968."[6] Greater attention was paid to environmental concerns in these societies for a number reasons, including a series of environmental disasters of great proportions (e.g., the mercury poisoning of fishermen and their families in Minamata, Japan, in the fifties through to the seventies—which caused public opinion revolt and was widely publicized through the extraordinary and dramatic photos of W. Eugene Smith; or the damage to the English and French coasts caused by the sinking of the "Torrey Canyon" tanker in 1967) and accusations by the scientific and academic communities.

Nevertheless, the strength of the ecological movement in the sixties came, above all, from the fact that the negative consequences of industrialization—such as pollution, traffic and noise—had begun to affect most of the population in wealthy countries: the middle class, whose education and degree of freedom enabled the exploration of political alternatives to express its dissatisfaction. The middle class of the wealthiest societies, after twenty years of uninterrupted growth, in which its necessities of life such as health, housing, education and food had been satisfied, was ready to alter its priorities and embrace new ideas and behaviors that would directly modify its way of life.

The impact of works such as **Silent Spring** (1962), by Rachel Carson, and **This Endangered Planet** (1971), by Richard Falk, or of essays and books by Garrett Hardin, like **The Tragedy of Commons** (1968) and **Exploring New Ethics for Survival** (1972), had a strong impact on public opinion. The changes suggested by the more radical environmentalists—from the profound alteration of production and

[6] ALMINO, João. **Naturezas Mortas: ecofilosofia das relações internacionais**. p.30.

consumption patterns to the notion of "no growth"– were gaining significant attention from the media, but seemed difficult to accept from both the economic and political perspectives, specially in the short-term. Despite their considerable influence, these works did not achieve the international political impact of **The Limits to Growth**, published under the auspices of the Club of Rome.

The Club of Rome meetings were conceived, in 1968, by the Italian industrialist Aurélio Peccei and sponsored by major companies such as FIAT and Volkswagen. In the early seventies, the meetings brought together around seventy scientists, academics, economists, industrialists, and members of public institutions from developed countries. The discussion forum showed that the concern for the environment did not limit itself to an "alternative" section of more developed societies, but also involved decision makers, who were aware of the political and economic implications of a paradigm shift. It was known that a broad study sponsored by the Club was to be published, thanks to the dissemination, in 1971, of a document that summarized the study's results under the encouraging title of "The Club of Rome Project on the Predicament of Mankind" (RETROSPECTIVA HISTÓRICA 29).

Published under the title **The Limits to Growth**, a few months before the opening of the Stockholm Conference (March 1972), this document presented an almost apocalyptic view of the consequences of "progress" as envisioned in the current model. The book reflected the view that modern society was heading towards self-destruction, a view increasingly adopted at that time. This led numerous authors to revisit the theories of Thomas Malthus that the world population would increase faster than the capacity for food production. **The Limits to Growth**, according to economist Tom Tietenberg[7], is an important example of a

[7] TIETENBERG, Tom. **Environmental and Natural Resource Economics**.p.4.

"pessimistic model" of development with respect to natural resources. The book, written by several authors under the coordination of D. H. Meadows, was based on the results of a model developed by MIT Professor Jay Forrester, thanks to an advanced computer (for its time) that simulated the evolution of the world economy. A summary of the book was published by the Woodrow Wilson Center and underscores that:

> [a]ssumptions were made, tested against existing knowledge, revised if necessary, and implications for the future traced without error by computer. While the model is imperfect and will be constantly improved, the broad conclusions reached probably will not be substantially altered. […] All peoples will be required to prepare for a great transition – the transition from growth to equilibrium.[8]

The presented solutions questioned several aspects of modern industrial society but presumed the need for drastic action in the areas of population and preservation of natural resources, "problems" associated with Third World countries. The latter naturally felt threatened by the Club of Rome's support of the ideas of some sectors of the environmental movement that interpreted the development of poorer countries as a menace to the world. For these sectors, the developed countries did pollute, but if the poor also develop, the scale of destruction will be much larger.

Another book that had a strong impact just before the Conference was **Blueprint for Survival**, published in January 1972 by the English journal **The Ecologist**. The proposals – difficult to accept today—were supported at the time by a significant number of respected English scientists and included limiting the world population to 3.5 billion,

[8] WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS. **The Human Environment. A Selective, Annotated Bibliography of Reports and Documents on International Environmental Problems.** Volume 1, p. 90.

banning immigration and a very strict control of curtailing population growth. The responsibility for keeping the population at the recommended level would be entrusted to "national population services":

> There is no doubt that the long transitional stage that we and our children must go through will impose a heavy burden on our moral courage and will require great restraint. Legislation and the operations of police forces and the courts will be necessary to reinforce this restraint.[9]

From the perspective of several developing countries, the environmental agenda in the late sixties – so recently developed in wealthier societies – was being too hastily transferred to the international arena. However, the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, through Resolution 2398 of the XXIII Session of the General Assembly, made it inevitable for developing countries to begin studying strategies and positions that could guide the introduction of the subject into the international debate in a manner such that mirrored their concerns.

The accelerated pace of this process of internationalization of the environmental issue, however, only reflected the speed with which domestic environmental agendas of the major developed countries evolved. What had begun with small victories by organized groups of civil society regarding pollution problems – in most cases, of merely local dimensions (waste, smog and others) – was gradually transformed into an issue of great political and economic impact, receiving widespread support from public opinion and attracting national attention. In few years, mainly in the United States – particularly in states like California – environmental legislation evolved in an extraordinary manner, catching some economic sectors unprepared.

[9] ROWLAND, Wade. **The plot to save the world**. Quoted p. 23-24.

From the very first moment, many segments of the production sector—industry, agriculture, energy – were opposed to strengthening environmental legislation in developed as well as in developing countries. This sector had to confront the challenge quickly: in some cases, it incorporated values of the environmental movement; in others, it found ways of weakening or circumventing the environmental legislation and media attention. Some analysts interpreted the greater emphasis on preservation as a tactic by wealthier countries to concentrate attention on the problems of developing countries.

In this context, the Stockholm Conference constituted a historical stage in the evolution of the treatment of issues linked to the environment on an international as well as on a domestic level for a great number of countries. The subject, however, having gained increasing international legitimacy, started being discussed less from a scientific point of view and more within a political and economic context. As the report by the Brazilian Delegation to the Stockholm Conference says, "the 'environment' corresponds to [...] an essentially political problem. [...] what really matters is to know who makes decisions, who these should benefit and who bears the burden"[10]. The divisions at the heart of the scientific community, the statistical inaccuracies, the differing political objectives and the major economic interests at stake led the environmental issue to undergo serious manipulation, already by the late sixties. The attempt to find those responsible for environmental problems became increasingly complex in so far as it went from a local dimension—in which blame could be laid in a reasonably objective manner—to the regional, national, and finally global dimensions that became entwined within the established contexts of the East-West and North-South confrontations.

[10] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment,** p.6.

The Stockholm Conference contributed significantly to direct the attention of the international community to the environment, to the satisfaction of the most fervent environmentalists. According to journalist Wade Rowland, who in 1973 published a detailed account of the Conference, "the fight to preserve the global environment required international action, and only the United Nations was equipped to encourage and co-ordinate that action".[11] Generally, however, the importance of the diplomatic approach to the environmental issue and the results obtained thanks to international negotiations are not perceived by the general public, the press, or even by the most influential authors on the subject. The negotiating process is seen much more from a pessimistic viewpoint—as a grinder of progressive ideas—than from an optimistic standpoint as a mechanism for introducing and strengthening of some progressive ideas in an imperfect, although considerably democratic, manner.

MAIN THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS PREPARATORY MEETINGS

The XXIII United Nations General Assembly endorsed, in Resolution 2398, the proposal for a United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, transmitted by Resolution 1346 (XLV) of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This was based on the Swedish proposal presented in the preceding year at the XLIV Session of ECOSOC.

Resolution 2581 of the XXIV Session of the General Assembly encompassed the terms of ECOSOC Resolution 1448 (XLVI), which transcribed the results of the *ad hoc* group (Doc. E/4667) with suggestions for the preparation and organization of the Conference. The Resolution also contained acceptance of the offer made by the Swedish government to hold the Conference in Stockholm and the establishment of a Preparatory Committee constituted by twenty-seven representatives

[11] ROWLAND, Wade. Op cit, p. 135.

nominated by the Governments of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Singapore, Costa Rica, U.S. France, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iran, Italy, Yugoslavia, Jamaica, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, Nigeria, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Togo, Soviet Union and Zambia.

The Committee's First Session took place in March 1970, in New York, and focused on the definition of the organizational structure, the program content and the selection of topics for the Conference; it also established recommendations. The dissatisfaction of the developing countries with the path being traced for Stockholm, however, could already be seen. When the proposal for a conference on the environment emerged, Rowland recalls that,

> Opinion among the developing nations ranged from an assumption that problems relating to the environment were a concern for the highly developed nations alone […] to a belief that the developed nations were using environmental doomsday predictions as a racist device to keep the non-white third world at a relatively low level of development. Environmental concerns were a neat excuse for the industrialized nations to pull the ladder up behind them.[12]

During the XXV General Assembly, two months before the Committee's Second Session, an informal meeting of the delegations was held with the recently designated Secretary-General of the Stockholm Conference, Maurice Strong, to examine the suggestions for alterations in the Agenda of the Second Session of the Committee to emphasize the importance of the connection between development and the environment. According to Enrique Iglesias, Strong felt from the beginning that the developing countries' resistance could undermine the Conference, and he

[12] Ibid, p. 47.

tried to demonstrate that "the environment would not be a trap for them".[13] Iglesias, a disciple of the influential Argentinean economist Raoul Prebisch[14], who would later become the Executive-Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), Foreign Minister of Uruguay, and President of the Inter-American Development Bank, was called by Strong in 1971 to take part in the advisory group in which James Wolfensohn, later President of the World Bank, was also present.

By giving special importance to the concerns of the Third World countries, Resolution 2657 of the XXV General Assembly was the first significant step in the new direction that the preparatory process of the Conference would take:

> [...] environmental policies should be considered in the context of economic and social developments, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries.

Maurice Strong did not conceal that his sensibility to the concerns of the developing countries owed itself partly to his own humble origins and to his almost two-year experience in Africa, mainly Kenya, between the ages of 22-25. In an interview to the **New Yorker** magazine, Strong commented that, "because of my experience, I feel that the elimination of basic poverty should be man's top priority. The existence of mass poverty is totally incompatible with the concept of human dignity."[15] Strong was directing the Canadian International Development Agency when he was invited by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, and by the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, to plan the Stockholm Conference. Strong had worked in the petroleum industry for several

[13]IGLESIAS, Enrique. Interview with the author, Washington, October 2003.
[14] STRONG, Maurice. **Where on Earth are We Going?**. p. 125.
[15] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, p. 36.

years – during which he had made a fortune – but in 1962, he abandoned his corporate career:

> it was my long–standing concern with the destructiveness of poverty that got me into foreign-aid work […]. I felt I could make an impact there.[16]

In order to obtain greater support from the developing countries regarding the Conference, Strong undertook several trips to meet with leaders of the developing world and to clarify the direction in which he as Secretary-General intended to take the Stockholm Conference. Nevertheless, the determining factor in obtaining the support of the majority of the developing countries was his decision to convene a Group of Experts on Development and the Environment to meet in Founex, Switzerland, in June 1971.

This decision was made during the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, which took place in February 1971, in Geneva, in which considerable progress was made in the preparations for Stockholm. A provisional agenda for the Conference was drafted, the structure and content of the Declaration on the Human Environment was discussed and a decision was made to hold, in addition to the abovementioned experts' meeting. a UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research) symposium on Development and the Environment, as well as a series of seminars to be organized by the Regional Committees of the United Nations in that same year of 1971: in Prague, in May; Bangkok and Addis Ababa in August; and Mexico City and Beirut in September.

Founex was the essential for the definition of the focus of the Conference. Iglesias believes that, at the beginning of the preparatory

[16] Ibid, p. 36.

process, Stockholm, in his words, "did not have a *libretto*" and that Founex brought one. This *libretto*, we could say today, changed the direction of the environmental negotiations in general, significantly broadening the relevance of the environmental debate for the developing countries and therefore legitimizing the introduction of the issue into the international agenda. Strong[17] himself confirms, in a text published in 2003, that the meeting "produced a seminal document articulating the essential relationships between environment and development that provided the policy and intellectual underpinnings for the Stockholm Conference".

The Founex meeting took place between June 4th and 12th, 1971. Twenty-seven experts were present, including Brazilian Ambassador Miguel Ozório de Almeida, the only diplomat among all the participants. Nine working papers were presented at the meeting, including one by Miguel Ozório ("Economic Development and the Preservation of the Environment"), another by Enrique Iglesias ("Development and the Human Environment") and also one by Ignacy Sachs ("Environmental Quality Management and Development Planning: some suggestions for action"). Sachs' growing dedication to the theme of development and the environment – today he is one of the promoters of so-called "eco-development" – would lead Strong to call upon him again for assistance during the Rio Conference. The Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq's presentation, "International Aspects of Environmental Concern", had special impact in Founex.[18]

The presence of Iglesias and Miguel Ozório assured that the final document would reflect the thinking of ECLAC, where both had

[17] STRONG, Maurice. "Stockholm Plus 30, Rio Plus 10: Creating a New Paradigm of Global Governance". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 35.

[18] Interview by the author with Enrique Iglesias, Washington, October 2003, and STRONG, Maurice, Where on Earth are we going?, p. 125.

had a major role. "Few times have I seen someone commit himself to a cause with such ardor and conviction", writes Celso Furtado about Miguel Ozório in "*A Fantasia Organizada*".[19] Furtado was referring to the Mexico Conference in May 1951, when the then young diplomat Miguel Ozório, member of the Brazilian Delegation, "simply saved ECLAC", states Iglesias. The Brazilian Ambassador would demonstrate – during both the preparatory process and the Conference itself – the same enthusiasm that impressed Celso Furtado.

According to the Founex "Report on Development and Environment", while the degradation of the environment in wealthy countries was mainly a result of their development model, in developing countries it was a consequence of underdevelopment and poverty. The Report put forward principles and actions that would become the classic arguments in environmental negotiations, such as references to the "major threats that may arise to the exports of the developing countries from the environmental concerns of developed countries", or the need to "monitor the rise of non-tariff barriers on grounds of environmental concerns"[20], and that,

> additional aid funds will be required to subsidize research on environmental problems for developing countries, to compensate for major dislocations in the exports of the developing countries, to cover major increase in the cost of development project owing to higher environmental standards, and to finance restructuring of investment, production or export patterns necessitated by the environmental concerns of the developed countries[21].

[19] FURTADO, Celso. **A fantasia organizada.** p. 113.
[20] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Conferência das Nações Unidas Sobre o Meio Ambiente: o Brasil e a preparação da Conferência de Estocolomo**. United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Development and Environment (Founex Report). p. 33.
[21] Ibid, p.34.

In the analysis of advantages that the environmental agenda could bring to developing countries, some of the Report's proposals were surprising:

> In some fields, environment issues open up new possibilities for developing countries. The structural changes in production and trade, as well as the geographical relocation of productive enterprises which might be necessitated by environmental considerations, should provide new opportunities for meeting some of the developmental needs of the developing nations. […] In some cases, developing countries might have a possibility of increasing the inflow of foreign capital and of creating new industries[22].

During the preparatory process for the Conference, it became clear that developing countries had been heard with the Founex Report. By enthusiastically endorsing the Report, Strong had ably neutralized what Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti, member of the Brazilian Delegation to the Stockholm Conference, acknowledged was his greatest fear: that the Conference would fail even before it started.[23]. The then First-Secretary Bernardo de Azevedo Brito – who would become one of the most active Brazilian diplomats in the environmental – declared in a speech one month after Founex, "Although we cannot be certain that the Conference will be a success, it is now possible to say that it can be a success"[24]. In the following months, in the seminars held in Bangkok, Addis Ababa and Mexico City, and in the II Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, the position of developing countries would consolidate itself around the Founex Report; furthermore, any concern for the possible lack of

[22] Ibid, p. 4.
[23] Interview with the author, Brasília, September 2003.
[24] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Conferência das Nações Unidas Sobre o Meio Ambiente: o Brasil e preparação da Conferência de Estocolmo**. LI ECOSOC Session, Brazil's participation, July 71. p. 2.

legitimacy of the work of the Preparatory Commission – which, after all, only included twenty-seven of the one hundred and thirty countries expected to meet in Stockholm – was overcome.

In the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee, which took place in New York in September 1971, the Secretary-General's Progress Report was examined and the preparation of a Report on the State of the Environment was discussed. The coordinators of this Report would be Barbara Ward and René Dubos, and it would be published during the Conference with the title "Only one Earth", the event's official motto. This study, conducted by specialists – some specifically identified with the environmental movement of developed countries – and with no government participation, worried developing countries; they saw it as a possible counterpoint to Founex, which it indeed became in the wealthy nations due to its much broader circulation. The debates of the Second Commission – where environmental issues are discussed even today within the context of the United Nations General Assembly – are remembered for the brilliance and hostility of the spar between Ambassador Miguel Ozório and the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, Daniel Patrick Moynihan – who would later become one of the most influential senators in the Democratic Party. These debates are discussed in the next chapter.

The XXVI Session of the General Assembly approved Resolution 2849 on Development and the Environment. By incorporating important elements of interest to developing countries, the Resolution in a way formalized the spirit of Founex, in an official text that guided the work at Stockholm. The text also includes "in the context of measures designed to improve environmental conditions on a world-wide basis"[25] , a call to

[25] UNITED NATIONS, doc. A/RES/2849 (XXVI), 17th January 1972, "Development and Environment".

end all nuclear testing and to prohibit the production and use of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

The disappointment of the developed countries with the direction of the Conference can be understood in light of the Resolution's final text, which contains many more recommendations that refer to the rights of developing countries and to the danger posed to their development by environmental problems. The wealthy nations had been more interested in advancing a strictly environmental agenda. A resort left to them – after their ideas had been undermined in the very heart of the UN during the preparatory process – was utilizing other means, such as the media, "independent" scientific reports and NGOs in order to reassure their public that the essentially environmentalist agenda would continue to dominate the debates and deliberations of the Conference. After the IV Session of the Preparatory Committee ended, however, Wade Rowland states that, "in its largely successful attempt to make itself relevant to the developing countries it [the Stockholm Conference] had decreased its direct relevance to the developed world"[26].

The opening ceremony of the Conference, on June 4th, was marked by the presence of China and the absence of the Soviet Union. It was the first big international event attended by the People's Republic of China as a member of the United Nations. The Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, which had actively participated in the preparatory process, were absent to protest the decision by the United Nations General Assembly, in December 1971, to limit the participation in Stockholm to U.N. Member Countries, or to those belonging to one or more Specialized Agencies. As a result, the Federal Republic of Germany, member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization

[26] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, p. 79.

(WHO) was allowed to participate, but not the German Democratic Republic.

The two documents that should have emerged from the Conference – the Declaration on the Human Environment and the Action Plan for the Human Environment – had been widely discussed during the preparatory process. Nonetheless, new discussions and amendments were anticipated since of the one hundred and fifteen countries present at the Conference, only twenty-seven, as mentioned above, had participated in the Preparatory Committee. The discussion of the Plan of Action was divided into six thematic areas distributed among three commissions–the First Commission: Planning and Management of Human settlements for Environmental Quality (area 1) and Educational, Informational, Social and Cultural Aspects of Environmental Issues (area 4); Second Commission: Natural Resources Management (area 2) and Development and Environment (area 5); and the Third Commission, presided by the Brazilian Ambassador Carlos Calero Rodrigues: Identification and Control of Pollutants of Broad International Significance (area 3) and Institutional Consequences at the International Level (area 6).

The President of the Conference, Ingemund Bengtsson, Sweden's Minister of Agriculture and Head of the country's Delegation, decided that the Commissions should immediately consider proposals for international action without any general debate. The recommendations for national action would be forwarded directly by the plenary to individual governments for their consideration and actions deemed appropriate:

> "As a result of this proposal", states the Report of the Brazilian Delegation, "there was no room left for discussing the documents laboriously prepared by the Secretary-General of the Conference […].If the decision spared the Conference one of its greatest risks – that of trying to cover an impossible volume of material in only ten days – it did

> so at another risk—certainly less dangerous—that of removing the proposals for international action from their explanatory technical context […], leaving them adrift in a purely political sphere"[27].

The debates during the Conference – much less focused than those of the Preparatory Committee–enabled the inclusion of all of the most important international politics issues at that time. Many delegations – within the context of the environment – referred to issues of decolonization (mainly in relation to the Portuguese colonies), *apartheid*, the Vietnam War, nuclear arms, supersonic aircraft (the Concorde was widely debated), occupied territories, and so on. Other delegations "argued that such matters, although of substantial importance, should be discussed in other bodies of the United Nations and were not appropriate for the Conference"[28].

As the Conference advanced, more predictably controversial themes gained ground, with special concern of the developing countries over the recent publication of **The Limits to Growth** and **Blueprint for Survival**. Strong, aware of the damage that could result from the questions raised by the Club of Rome, had clearly expressed in his first speech that the concept of "no growth" was unacceptable. The conceptual connection between development and the environment had been reached in the preparatory process and would become unquestionable during the Conference, and – as verified later– would mark decisively the multilateral treatment of the environment. However, many areas remained in which North-South disagreements persisted. In questions regarding population growth and sovereignty, the developing countries succeeded in preventing the inclusion of most of the concepts they believed harmful. In the areas of financing and cooperation, the developed countries did likewise.

[27] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. 22, 23.
[28] UNEP. Summary of the General Debate, UNEP website.

Some of the rich countries' representatives demonstrated, however, that there was room for a more optimistic perspective or even for self-criticism. Robert McNamara, former United States Secretary of Defense in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and, at that moment, President of the World Bank, aroused great indignation among environmentalists by declaring that:

> there is no evidence that the economic growth which the developing countries so desperately require will necessarily involve an unacceptable burden on either their own or anybody else's environment.

In a reference to what would later be conventionally deemed "unsustainable production and consumption patterns by developed countries", McNamara asserted that:

> the achievement of a level of life in accord with fundamental human dignity for the world's two and three quarter billion people is simply not possible without the continued economic growth of the developing nations, and the developed nations as well. But economic growth on the pattern of the past – and most particularly that in the already highly-industrialized wealthy nations – poses an undeniable threat to the environment and to the health of man[29].

This question was also addressed by the Dutch Sicco Manshold, President of the European Commission:[30]

> Can we in the West […] continue to pursue economic growth on the present pattern? […] If we are to be sincere in our promise to close the gap between the rich and poor nations we must be ready to accept the

[29] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, quoted p. 67.
[30] Mansholt was Agriculture Minister in the Netherlands and one of the creators of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union.

> consequences for our own rate of growth and its direction. […] Are our present social structures and production methods defensible? And what about the problem of the struggle to safeguard the environment? Are we ready – we in the rich countries – to face the consequences? Or will we rather hide behind the struggle to cure the symptoms in order to avoid answering the question[31]?

At the end of the Conference, the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, with twenty-six principles, and the Action Plan on the Human Environment, with one hundred and nine recommendations were approved. The only point in the entire negotiation that was submitted to the consideration of the XXVII General Assembly referred to the text of Principle 20 of the Declaration; there was a deadlock on this Principle between two proposals – one defended primarily by Brazil and the other, by Argentina. China also sought to submit Principle 21 to the General Assembly, whose reference to nuclear arms seemed excessively soft. China ended up accepting to make a declaration on its objections to the text.

The issue dividing Brazil and Argentina in a particularly public manner in Stockholm – which will be discussed in the next chapter – gave the international community the perception of a serious rivalry between the two countries, despite both having presented a joint proposal for an alternative text, approved during the XXVII General Assembly.

Main Achievements and Criticisms of the Conference

For many observers, the United Nations emerged stronger from Stockholm, not only because the success of the Conference model ended up generating a series of other Conferences in the following years – such

[31] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, cited p. 75.

as those on Population, in Bucharest (1974); on Women, in Mexico (1975); and Habitat, in Vancouver (1976) – but also because, in a certain way, the environment gave a new *raison d'être*[32] to an organization accused of being out of touch with the rapid changes of the modern world. Most authors consider the major achievements of the Stockholm Conference – regardless of the success or failure of specific countries or negotiating groups – to have been the following: the definitive insertion of the environmental issue into the multilateral agenda and the setting of priorities of future negotiations on the environment; the creation of a United Nations Environmental Program – UNEP; the motivation for creating national institutions dedicated to the environmental issue in dozens of countries that still did not have them; the strengthening of NGOs and the greater participation of civil society in environmental matters.

The definitive insertion of the environmental issue in the multilateral agenda was mainly due to the main actors' awareness that it was necessary to be fully prepared to face the challenges that the issue would pose and, possibly, to take advantage of opportunities. Both the Stockholm Declaration and the Action Plan created the foundation for the start of a negotiating process that would reach such levels of importance and complexity unimaginable to governments at the time.

The creation of UNEP was a determining factor to maintaining a minimal rate of progress, over the next years, in the debates on the environment within the United Nations context. James Gustave Speth, former Administrator of the United Nations Program on Development (UNPD), states, however, that UNEP is a "peanut- sized UN agency tucked away in Nairobi"[33], whose difficult function, since its inception, has been to stimulate and coordinate the work of larger and more

[32] Ibid, p. 135.
[33] SPETH, James Gustave. "The Global Environmental Agenda: Origins and Prospects".

important agencies. For some analysts, UNEP's success in various activities can be attributed largely to the strong personalities and tenacity of its first two Executive-Directors: Maurice Strong and Mostafa Tolba.

The need of countries to keep themselves abreast of environmental issues and the perspective of channeling resources to studies and projects linked to environmental problems led a great number of countries to create suitable institutions and to establish, or improve, national programs to protect the environment. In the Brazilian case, just after the Conference, a special Secretariat for the Environment (SEMA) was created, within the context of the Ministry of the Interior[34].

NGOs in Stockholm "had sought to obtain information, offer assistance and transmit viewpoints without, however, demonstrating the persistence and influence that enabled them to achieve better results at the Rio Conference 20 years later", says Ricardo Neiva Tavares[35]. Nonetheless, UNEP "invited NGOs interested in the environmental area to support the United Nations, 'with a view to achieving the largest possible degree of co-operation and coordination'."[36]. Stockholm clearly showed the difference between naturalist or conservationist, more traditional NGOs and those that were militant environmentalists, questioning the development model based on industrialization. The latter would achieve a much larger role during the evolution of the environmental debate.

Stockholm had, according to Roberto Guimarães, "a galvanizing effect within national societies"[37], which this new type of NGO knew how to exploit in an extraordinary way, keeping certain sectors of the

[34]GUIMARÃES, Roberto Pereira. **Ecopolitics in the Third World: an institutional analysis of environmental managinent in Brazil:** contains a broad discussion on the creation of SEMA. p. 314 - 334.
[35] TAVARES, Ricardo Neiva. As Organizações Não-Governamentais nas Nações. p. 97.
[36] Ibid, Resolution 2997 (XVII), cited p. 97.
[37] GUIMARÃES, Roberto Pereira, op cit, p. 286.

population engaged and up-to-date in an increasingly larger number of countries. All of the NGOs of the developing countries present at the Conference, however, "could hardly fill a conference table"[38]. In Brazil, for example, as Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti recalls, only the more traditional NGOs existed at that time, and several of their members were included in the Delegation as members, as was the case of Cavalcanti himself[39].

The more radical environmentalists' criticisms of the Conference were aimed at the fact that the preparatory process had diverted the event's original focus and included it in the broader discussion of development. For most of the governments of developing countries, this was the *sine qua non* condition for holding the Conference. Unlike the successes, which can be identified in a more objective and impartial manner, it is not possible to point out criticisms of Stockholm unconnected to some the delegations' sense feelings of defeat. The developed countries ended up being the severest critics, for they certainly did not expect the twist taken by the Conference, in favor of the developing countries; helped by divisions among themselves as their priorities did not coincide on various points of the agenda:

> To put it crudely, the conference had turned out to be something more than the public-relations festival they (United States) had apparently been counting on. They had not been alone in their hopes: most other major industrial powers would also have preferred to see less substantive action[40].

Thirty years later, in his evaluation of the event, Strong concludes that:

[38] Ibid, p. 286.
[39] Interview with the author, Brasilia, September 2003.
[40] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, p. 100.

> The Stockholm Conference starkly brought out the differences between the positions of developing and more industrialized countries but did not resolve them. Indeed, the issues of finance and the basis for sharing responsibilities and costs continue to be the principal source of differences and controversy […] and have become central to international negotiations on virtually every environment and sustainable development subject […] the principal importance of Stockholm was that it established the framework for these negotiations and for the cooperative arrangements they have produced. Most of all, it brought developing countries into a full and influential participation in these processes[41].

B) THE RIO CONFERENCE (THE EARTH SUMMIT):

The Rio Conference numbers are impressive: the biggest event organized by the United Nations up until then, the Conference brought together delegations from one hundred and seventy-two countries and attracted one hundred and eight Heads of State or Government to Rio de Janeiro. According to United Nations data, around ten thousand journalists and representatives from one thousand and four hundred NGOs were accredited. At the same time, the Global Forum, a parallel event, brought together members of seven thousand NGOs.[42] The United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) was convened to:

> elaborate strategies and measures to halt and reverse the effects of environmental degradation in the context of increased national and

[41] STRONG, Maurice. "Stockholm Plus 30, Rio Plus 10: Creating a New Paradigm of Global Governance". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization** and the Environment. p. 37.

[42] BREITMEIER, Helmuth & RITTBERGER, Volker. "Environmental NGOs in an emerging global civil society". In: CHASEK, Pamela. **The Global environment in the** twenty-first century, p. 130.

international efforts to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development in all countries[43].

The Secretary-General of the Conference, Maurice Strong once again, declared on the last day of the meeting that the Rio Conference had been a "historic moment for humanity"[44].

From the perspective of public opinion, the numbers above showed, above all, that the issue of environment – twenty years after Stockholm – had become sufficiently important in the international agenda to justify moving an unprecedented number of Heads of State and Government for a single meeting. Another fact that immediately shows a marked difference in comparison to 1972 is that the Conference was held in a developing country – one that had even been regarded the *bête noire* of Stockholm –[45] an indication that the issue was no longer considered a "luxury" of rich countries and had become, indeed, a topic demanding collective engagement by the international community. The objectives of developed and developing countries continued to have substantial differences, despite the changing perceptions concerning the environment, the radical transformations in the international scenario and the new role that seemed to be emerging for the United Nations due to the decreasing tensions among the Superpowers.

The late eighties and the early nineties, when the Rio Conference was convened and prepared, was a time marked by the end of the Cold War, whose bipolar logic had impregnated – during four decades – almost all dimensions of relations among the States. At that moment "[one]

[43]UNITED NATIONS, doc. A/RES/44/228, "United Nations Conference on Environment and Development."
[44] STRONG, Maurice. Speech at the Closing Ceremony of the Rio Conference, June 14th, 1992.
[45] ROWLAND, Wade, op. cit., p. 53.

imagined the possibility of recovering humanism and a universal vision as a means of generalizing values, such as the protection of human rights and the environment, pluralism, the strengthening of multilateralism and solidarity, that could cement relations between States."[46].

In addition to the favorable political context, there was confidence in the world economy's capacity to grow, thanks to new opportunities for investment – mainly for the larger developed economies – with the opening of markets in Eastern European countries as well as the first steps taken by China towards opening its economy. Contributing in part to this optimism was the success of mid-sized developing countries, such as Chile, Malaysia or Singapore, who had opted for complete liberalization of their economies in the eighties and whose good economic results seemed to indicate that liberalization was an adequate path to development. The foreign debt crisis of countries that had opted for state-development models, such as Brazil, strengthened the notion that "any attempt to 'intervene' in the economy was 'unfruitful'[47]. The discussion about the multilateral approach to trade issues was showing progress and, despite the persistence of subsidies in most countries and the difficulties of developing countries to include their important issues – such as agriculture – in the agenda, efforts intensified to conclude the GATT Uruguay Round, which finally occurred in 1993.

The increasing sophistication of the environmental debate in the two decades between Stockholm and Rio occurred on various levels – governmental, non-governmental, corporate, academic, and scientific. The fact that, between 1973 and 1990, the proportion of countries with democratic systems had grown from 24.6 to 45.4%[48] fostered the discussion of so-called "new topics" (besides the environment, human rights, drug

[46] LAFER, Celso. Discurso no Seminário Rio +10. Rio de Janeiro, June 25th, 2002.
[47] GUIMARÃES, Samuel Pinheiro. **Estratégias para um Projeto Nacional**. p. 7.
[48] BREITMEIER, Helmuth & RITTBERGER, Volker, op cit, cited p. 140.

trafficking and various types of discrimination) at the community, regional and national levels in developing countries. These topics, which frequently originated in the international agenda and were introduced in a biased manner from "top to bottom" in the domestic agenda, started being discussed "bottom-up", thanks to the greater participation of civil society in the political, social and economic spheres. Thus, the environment progressively achieved greater legitimacy in developing countries.

As the economist Charles Kolstad points out, "intelligent and thoughtful people can have very different beliefs about environmental protection"[49]. The strengthening of new trends in the "ecological ethics" enabled the integration of the environmental issue into less radical contexts than those suggested by biocentrism, or ecocentrism. According to João Almino, ecocentrism "is based on the negation of anthropocentrism"[50] and, according to Kolstad, "views humans as just another species with no special claim to the world's resources"[51]. In opposition to this view is the concept of sustainability and the understanding that the equilibrium of the environment is not incompatible with the progress of mankind – which ends up being accepted even by ecologists and environmental activists as a "fresh alternative to blind economic growth"[52].

One of the reasons that "sustainability" gained increasing support was due to the very difficulty of defining the term. With the publication of the Brundtland Report, in 1987, a definition of the concept of sustainable development with broad acceptance emerged, one that became almost "official": "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"[53].

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[49]KOLSTAD, Charles D. **Environmental Economics**. p. 30.
[50] ALMINO, João, op cit, p. 39.
[51] KOLSTAD, Charles D, op cit, p. 30.
[52] Ibid, p.31.
[53] ALMINO, João. op cit., p. 100.

According to Egon Becker,

> the career of "sustainable development" as a keyword for a new understanding of the modern world results from its function as a link between two different crisis discourses – one being on the environment and the other on development; and the tacit promise of a possible rescue from both crises[54].

The notion that sustainable development is based on three pillars– economic, the social and the environmental – advances, in the Rio discussions, the priorities of both the developed and the developing countries.

One year after the Stockholm Conference the first oil shock erupted, which, in addition to its known consequences for the world economy, also forced countries to face, in the short term, what was considered by environmentalists as one of the greatest threats to our planet: the scarcity of natural resources. The lessons of the 1973 and 1979 oil shocks had far-reaching repercussions on ecological thinking and led to what João Almino[55] calls "optimistic technocentric ecological thinking", which advocates the idea that, "through the new technological revolution, we are entering a post-industrial era [...] characterized by the expansion of services and information systems and by the less intensive use of natural resources, rendered possible by the utilization of new materials and by the development of technology in new fields (biotechnology, for example)"[56].

Economic theory in this period progressively incorporated environmental issues and certain authors even asserted that the environment

[54] BECKER, Egon. "Fostering Transdisciplinary Research into Sustainability in an Age of Globalization: A Short Political Epilogue". In: BECKER, Egon and JAHN, Thomas (Eds.). Sustainability and the Social Sciences. p. 287.
[55] ALMINO, João. op cit, p. 50-51.
[56] Ibid, p. 51.

could not be a separate entity from the economy and there could be no changes in the environment without economic impact[57]. The academic community's increasing interest, driven by the studies carried out by the United Nations and entities such as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), enabled the distinction – or evolution – between "ecological economics" and "environmental economics": the first, according to Charles Kolstad, "tends to involve ecologists who have extended their discipline and paradigm to consider humans and the economy". The second "tends to involve economists who have extended their discipline and paradigm to consider the environment"[58].

For the economists Turner, Pierce and Batinan, ecological economics does not disregard the moral argument in defense of the environment, but they believe that:

> [...] the economic argument is often more powerful, and especially so when, as is frequently the case, the "right thing" by nature contradicts other rights such as the right to develop economically and the right to have food and shelter[59].

According to the same authors, the essence of environmental economics,

> lies in a sequence of logical steps: assessing the economic importance of environmental degradation; looking for the economic causes of degradation; and designing economic incentives to slow, halt and reverse that degradation[60].

[57] TURNER, R. Kerry, PEARCE, David and BATINAN, Ian. Environmental Economics: an elementary introduction. p.VII.
[58] KOLSTAD, João. Op cit, p. 5
[59] TURNER, R. Kerry, PEARCE, David and BATINAN, Ian, op cit, p.VIII.
[60] Ibid, p.VII.

The attitude of international executives also underwent considerable evolution, as demonstrated in the book, published in early 1992, by the Swiss industrialist Stephan Schmidheiny, President of the Business Council for Sustainable Development, (BCSD), entitled **Changing Course: A Global Business Perspective on Development and the Environment**. This book intended, in a certain way, to have an impact on the Rio Conference similar to the publication of **The Limits to Growth** in Stockholm. The BCSD, at that time, brought together forty-eight top executives, fifteen of whom were from developing countries. Unlike the Club of Rome, which preached solutions that directly affected the right to development of the poorest and most populous countries, the BCSD proposed global solutions considering that: "each country has its own preconditions and necessities, its own path to development. However, certain concepts offer all countries a guideline for the future."[61] The book even admits that "many leaders in developing countries [...] fear that OECD countries could dictate ecological conditions under which assistance will be conceded. Their suspicions of conditionality and green protectionism are justified"[62].

This new attitude in the corporate sector owes itself largely to the growing knowledge of the real costs of undertakings that take into account environmental aspects or that are meant to solve environmental problems. As the Stockholm Conference was being held, governments as well as business groups feared the possible costs of measures that benefitted the environment. According to the Brundtland Report:

> some felt that they would depress investment, growth, jobs, competitiveness, and trade while driving up inflation. Such fears proved misplaced. A 1984 survey by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), of assessments undertaken in a number of

[61]SCHMIDHEINY, Stephan. **Mudando o Rumo: uma perspectiva empresarial global** sobre desenvolvimento e meio ambiente. p. 162.
[62] Ibid, p. 165.

> industrial countries, concluded the expenditures on environmental measures over the past two decades had a positive short-term effect on growth and employment as the increased demand they generated raised the output of economies operating at less than full capacity[63].

Finally, the influence of the scientific community was strengthened in the subsequent years of the Stockholm Conference, mainly due to the negotiating processes of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, concluded in March 1985, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, concluded in September 1987. In thirteen years, an as yet unknown phenomenon had gone from being discussed within the scientific arena to being regulated, thanks to international instruments that would become references for environmental diplomacy, creating "new standards in international relations"[64].

Studies by Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina on the potential for depletion of the ozone layer by CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons), published in 1974 ("Stratospheric Sink for Chlorofluoromethanes: Chlorine Catalysed Destruction of Ozone"), brought, in 1995, the first (and, until today, only) Nobel Prize for research in the field of the environment. A series of studies in the following years proved that there were compelling reasons for an international effort to restrict the use of CFCs. UNEP had a decisive role in promoting a meeting in Washington, in 1977, in which the ozone layer and the changes caused by human activity were discussed, as was the impact of those changes on human life, the biosphere and the climate.

One of the results of the meeting was the creation by UNEP, together with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), of a

[63] WORLD COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. **Our Common Future**. p. 211.
[64] TOLBA, Mostafa K. **Global Environmental Diplomacy: negotiating environmental agreements for the world**, p. 55.

Coordinating Committee on the Ozone Layer, which began to present, twice a year, the results of the evaluations of the depletion of the ozone layer and its consequences. After accumulating more scientific information, an *ad hoc* working group was created in 1981 to prepare a framework convention on the protection of the ozone layer. It met four times prior to the Vienna Conference.

Richard Elliot Benedick, the chief American negotiator for the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, asserts in his book **Ozone Diplomacy** that there was little prospect for success, since the objective was to:

> craft an international accord based on unproved scientific theory that certain anthropogenic chemicals could destroy a remote gas in the stratosphere and thereby possibly bring harm to human health and the environment in the distant future[65].

The success of the negotiations, however, was extraordinary and – more than any other international instrument in the environmental field, until the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, –the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol managed to involve governments, scientific and academic communities, industry, the media and public opinion, and also to show, as the Canadian professor Philippe Le Prestre points out, "that a preventive agreement was possible, even in the absence of precise knowledge. Scientific uncertainty can even play in favor of cooperation"[66]. In this context of optimism, at the end of the decade negotiations began on the two Conventions that were opened for signature at the Rio Conference: the Framework-Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

[65] BENEDICK, Richard Elliot. **Ozone Diplomacy: new directions in safeguarding the planet**. p. IX

[66] LE PRESTRE, Philippe, op cit, p. 36

The deciding factor responsible for convening a new United Nations conference on the environment was, without doubt, the World Commission Report on the Environment and Development, known as the Brundtland Report. The Commission, created in 1983 and presided by the Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, managed to galvanize new interest for environmental issues by developed countries, confirming the phenomenon of "cyclical attention to problems" of the environment, put forth by Anthony Downs in "Up and Down with Ecology, the Issue-Attention Cycle"[67].

This variation in the degree of interest in the environmental question, Le Prestre comments, can be identified by phases of mobilization, adoption of programs and creation of new institutions, followed by phases of progressive indifference, "be it because the problem was thought to be solved, be it because the problem is perceived to be more complicated than originally thought – knowledge is limited, costs are high and there is a need for a more prolonged effort than anticipated."[68]. This phenomenon, according to John Kingdon[69] also affects governments "when employees discover that success cannot be achieved without economic, social and political costs".

The stagnation of the European economy and the initial period of radical changes in the American economy, promoted by the Ronald Reagan administration, were moments in which the environment was no longer a priority for rich countries. Many environmental problems in these countries – notably pollution control – had already been taken care of or circumvented at a lower cost than imagined, but in Europe and in the United States concern grew with the projection of high costs of a new environmental wave that sought to significantly alter production and

[67] Ibid, cited p. 78
[68] Ibid, p. 78.
[69] Ibid, cited p. 78.

consumption patterns. The Brundtland Report, which pointed out several areas in which there was still room for progress in rich countries without excessive costs, arrived at a time when all evils were blamed on the developing countries and the socialist bloc. This phase was driven, somewhat justifiably, by the trauma caused to Western Europe by the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station in the Soviet Union, in 1986. As Ambassador Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães points out:

> For the Governments of industrialized countries, facing the pressure of public opinion to reduce pollution levels, there are two strategies that can be simultaneous or alternating: a) reduce their emissions [...] with considerable financial and political costs; and/or b) increase the pressure on underdeveloped countries to reduce their limited participation in environmental degradation in a process that transfers and magnifies their responsibilities[70].

The Brundtland Report was the result of almost four years of work by the World Commission on Environment and Development instituted by the United Nations General Assembly. Several authors place the Report, published with the title "Our Common Future", in the same league as **The Limits to Growth**, published in 1972 under the auspices of the Club of Rome. From the perspective of the impact on the non-specialized public, it may be proper to associate the two works, both widely disseminated. However, the first work, as previously mentioned, represented the reflections of a restricted group that analyzed, in a cold and calculating manner, solutions that would not force the developed world to lower, or to stop increasing, its standard of living.

The World Commission on the Environment and Development was composed of twenty-three commissioners from twenty-two countries

[70] GUIMARÃES, Samuel Pinheiro, op cit, p. 15 and 16.

that acted without links to their governments: Norway (President), Sudan (Vice-President), Germany, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Brazil (Paulo Nogueira Neto), Canada (two representatives, including Maurice Strong), China, Colombia, Ivory Coast, United States, Guiana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Soviet Union and Zimbabwe. Dozens of studies were ordered and thousands of people consulted in the most diverse fields. Members of the Commission visited numerous countries, including Brazil, in which meetings were held with local communities to discuss the issues of environment and development[71].

The Report's conclusions spare neither the developed nor the developing countries, but offer alternatives and point out viable directions that do not exclude development of the poor, while questioning the rich countries' patterns. If there is a document that can be compared to the Brundtland Report, that would be the Founex Report: both focus on the environment within the context of development and establish the conceptual base for the Stockholm and Rio Conferences.

Significant advancements were achieved after the Stockholm Conference in two important negotiating processes involving the law of the sea and hazardous wastes. After nine years of negotiations, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was opened for signature in 1982, but would only enter into force in 1994, one year after its sixtieth ratification (Brazil ratified it in 1988). The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was adopted in 1989 and came into force one month

[71] DEAN, Warren. **A Ferro e Fogo: a história e a devastação da mata atlântica brasileira**. p.344. Dean describes the visit by members of the Brundtland Commission, in 1985, to Cubatão ("The factories would stop their activities as the Commission passed through the place, an attitude which did not go unnoticed".) and to São Paulo ("At the Cetesb headquarters, in São Paulo, the commission ran into hundreds of terrified and irate citizens from the entire South of Brazil—the Commission had never seen a crowd so anxious to 'complain about what had been done to their world'.")

before the opening of the Rio Conference (Brazil ratified the Convention that same year).

The Vienna Conference, the Montreal Protocol and the Brundtland Report made the Rio Conference possible, If it was not "clearly the most important […] high level intergovernmental conference ever held on our planet", as Strong declared,[72] or "the most important meeting in the history of humanity", according to José Lutzenberger,[73] it certainly represented the moment in which the environment generated the most interest in all of the twentieth century.

MAIN THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS PREPARATORY MEETINGS

Resolution 44/228, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on 22nd December 1989, recorded the acceptance of the offer of the Brazilian Government to host a Conference. With the approval of this Resolution, as Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho pointed out (in 1994), sustainable development "became an advantage for Southern countries" and led to "reviving global negotiations between North and South at a moment in which the international agenda had already excluded such negotiations from its calendar"[74]. The official title of the Conference in itself – the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – incorporates the aspirations of the South. The Rio Conference's title summarized, in fact, the efforts of Stockholm, or rather, those of the Founex Report, entitled, "Report on Development and Environment". This would also occur with the official title of the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development – an expression that

[72] STRONG, Maurice. Speech at the Closing Ceremony of the Rio Conference, June 14th, 1992.
[73] LUTZENBERGER, José. Speech at I Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 1992 Conference. Nairobi, 29th August 1990.
[74] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto. "O Tratamento Multilateral do Meio Ambiente: ensaio de um novo espaço ideológico". In: Caderno do IPRI, n. 18. p. 25.

summed up the efforts of Rio and that was coined by the Brundtland Report.

The Resolution listed twenty-three objectives for the Conference, divided into four groups. The first concentrated on issues related to identifying regional and global strategies to reestablish the equilibrium of the environment and to avoid the continuation of its degradation in the context of social and economic development and to advance environmental law. The second was made up of objectives associated with the relationship between environmental degradation and the world economic situation, as well as to the need for financial resources. The third group included issues concerning capacity building of human resources, environmental education, technical cooperation and information exchange. Finally, the fourth group addressed institutional aspects pertinent to the execution of the Conference's decisions.

The Preparatory Committee, presided with great efficiency, according to several observers, by Tommy Koh, Singapore's Ambassador to Washington[75], met four times: the first Session, in New York, was in March 1990; the second and third Sessions in Geneva, in March/April and in August/September 1991, and, finally, the fourth Session in New York, in March/April 1992. According to the Brazilian Delegation's Report, only in the third session did palpable results begin to emerge concerning the key-documents to be adopted in Rio. "The complexity of the theme of the Conference" was one of the reasons for the slow start of negotiations, as well as "the reluctance of developed countries to debate propositions in light of the integrated environment/development focus"[76].

[75] Koh had been essential for the success of the negotiations on the Law of the Sea.
[76] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. Report of the Brazilian Delegation: **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development**. p. 20.

A factor that would lend the Conference a special characteristic was the attribution—ever since the event was first convened —of an important role to NGOs, in recognition of the exponential growth of their influence in the environmental field since Stockholm. They affected governments, multilateral organizations, the media, and above all, public opinion. The Brundtland Report, Ricardo Neiva Tavares reminds us, had constituted an "additional stimulus for the actions of NGOs in the environmental field, not only by stressing government failure to promote sustainable development, but by recognizing the invaluable role of these organizations 'in maintaining the high degree of public and political interest required as a basis for action'."[77]

The participation of specialists, scientists, academics and other representatives of civil society also contributed to give the public the sense that this would not be just another Conference in which bureaucrats would destroy the dreams of a generation. According to journalist Gregg Easterbrook, in his book **A Moment on the Earth: the coming age of environmental optimism**:

> By the time Rio rolled around, traditional diplomats were horrified […], since the issues in play were technical questions requiring the negotiators to consult scientists and non-governmental organizations. This turn of events is terrific […] Perhaps […] environmental concerns will be among the best things ever to happen to international relations[78].

Public opinion remained interested until the end of the Conference, which certainly influenced the manner in which certain themes were addressed. Nevertheless, the considerable dose of naïveté of the media and some NGOs – and, as a result, of public opinion – provoked

[77] TAVARES, Ricardo Neiva, op cit., p. 100.
[78] EASTERBROOK, Gregg. A Moment on the Earth: the coming age of environmental optimism. p. 468.

some disillusionment. As **The Economist** magazine said in its editorial on the results of the Rio Conference: "After all the idealism, the Earth Summit turned out to be mainly about money and sovereignty. That should not be surprising: those are the main themes of most international meetings"[79].

An interesting phenomenon resulted from the significant interaction that occurred between the NGOs of rich countries and those of developing countries because of the Conference. On the one hand, many NGOs of rich countries discovered that the priorities in poor countries could be different. This phenomenon manifested itself in a particularly surprising manner at the heart of the larger transnational NGOs: in his book "Divided Planet: the ecology of rich and poor", journalist and environmentalist Tom Athanasiou says that:

> just before the Earth Summit, […] Greenpeace's German, Dutch and British offices (the "G-3") refused to distribute copies of *Beyond UNCED*, a fine pamphlet produced for the Rio gathering by Greenpeace USA and Greenpeace Latin America. The G-3, it turned out, strongly objected to its use of "leftist" terms like "social equity" and even "democracy". When I asked Paul Hohnen, head of Greenpeace International's political unit, about the flap [...] [he] appealed to Greenpeace's canvassers, who "can't be expected to go door-to-door raising money for a socialist organization[80].

The change of focus by many NGOs also resulted in several initiatives in Third World countries that did not work because they ignored local communities. Although the protection of nature was more appealing to developed countries, the social issue inevitably gained greater traction as developing countries became more democratic and environmentalists

[79] THE ECONOMIST, 13 June 1992, p. 12.
[80] ATHANASIOU, Tom. **Divided Planet: the ecology of rich and poor**. p.17.

felt themselves obliged to respect the priorities of local groups that were directly involved in the issue. According to Athanasiou:

> it is past time for environmentalists to face their own history, in which they have too often stood not for justice and freedom, or even for realism, but merely for the comforts and aesthetics of affluent nature lovers. They have no choice. History will judge greens by whether they stand with the world's poor[81].

Not all of the main documents to be signed at the Rio Conference depended on the Preparatory Committee: the Convention on Biological Diversity was negotiated by the Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts, renamed, in 1991, as the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Convention on Biological Diversity.

Climate change, in turn, began to be discussed from 1988 to 1990, under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), supported by studies conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC, created in 1988, brings together more than a thousand scientists from developed and developing countries and is the main forum for evaluating scientific knowledge on climate change.

In May 1989, UNEP and WMO began promoting "meetings of restricted groups to determine elements for a convention proposal"[82]. In 1990, negotiations for the Convention on Climate Change started to take place under the aegis of the United Nations General Assembly, with the creation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a

[81] Ibid, p. 304.
[82] VARGAS, Everton. **Parceria Global? As alterações climáticas e a questão do desenvolvimento.** p. 62.

Framework Convention on Climate Change, a decision that weakened UNEP as far as it removed its leading position in the negotiations.

According to Mostafa Tolba, in his book *Global Environmental Diplomacy*:

> for reasons that were never clearly stated, the convening governments removed the proceedings for the preparation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change from management by the UNEP. It has been speculated that the developed countries were not ready for the positive action and concrete measures advocated by the UNEP executive director[83].

In reality, this changing of the negotiation forum reflected the interests of a group of developing countries – led by Brazil – who preferred to have the Convention negotiated inform a political and economic perspective rather than from technical and scientific ones. "For a convention that considered the interests of developing countries, it was instrumental that economic issues be emphasized in the negotiation. The General Assembly's decision, therefore, was crucial in enabling a broader, more equitable and favorable result for our interests"[84]. At the closing of the Rio Conference, Brazil would support another decision that would be interpreted as a new demonstration of the weakening of UNEP: the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) "to monitor the progress after the implementation of Agenda 21 and the activities related to the integration of environment and development objectives in the entire United Nations system"[85]. In fact, as Everton Vargas—Director of the Department of the Environment of the Ministry

[83] TOLBA, Mostafa, op cit, p. 95.
[84] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. Report of the Brazilian Delegation: **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development**. p. 25.
[85] UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. **Agenda 21**. Paragraph 38.13(a).

of External Relations—recalls, "since UNEP did not have a mandate in the area of development, the CSD was created as a means to provide higher political profile and bring together various United Nations agencies and bodies that deal with matters related to sustainable development"[86].

The Framework Convention on Climate Change is probably the most debated international document of recent years, not just because of the controversies observed from the beginning of the negotiations – resulting from the profound North-South divergences and also those among developed countries–but, above all, because of the deadlock regarding the enforcement of the Protocol adopted at the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, in Kyoto, in 1997. The deadlock persisted until November 2004, when Russia ratified the Protocol and enabled it to enter into force in February 2005. The Framework Convention was, for many delegations, the most important document to be signed in Rio. Other delegations considered that excessive attention was being paid to climate change. In the opinion expressed by **The Economist**, in its editorial about the opening of the Conference, "the main certainty about global warming is that its consequences are uncertain and far off, whereas the measures needed to prevent it are immediate and (in some cases) costly"[87].

Various questions, such as scientific uncertainties, caused the negotiating process to be particularly complicated, but the greatest difficulties were related to the costs of the measures that would slow the process of global warming. This divided the delegations basically into three groups: 1) developing countries, who expected new and additional financial resources as well as technology transfer in order to take the steps that demanded greater resources, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; 2) rich countries, represented mainly by

[86] Interview with the author, Brasilia, November 2003.
[87] THE ECONOMIST, 30th May 1992. p. 12.

members of the European Community, who had already made progress in decreasing emissions and for whom the costs of reaching the first targets did not seem prohibitive; and 3) other rich countries - like the United States - and oil-producing countries, who considered it impossible to achieve the suggested targets without excessive economic sacrifices.

The solution found was to dilute the text by not mentioning certain specific targets, but at least there was a consensus regarding the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. According to Daniel Bodansky, in **The History of the Global Climate Change Regime**, the Convention:

> reflects a carefully balanced compromise […]. Many of its provisions do not attempt to resolve differences so much as paper thin over, either through formulations that preserved the positions of all sides, that were deliberately ambiguous, or that deferred issues until the first meeting of the conference of the parties. From this perspective, the Convention represents not an end point, but rather a punctuation mark in an ongoing process of negotiation[88].

The stalemate avoided in the Convention, which permitted the United States to sign and ratify it, was only postponed and it resurfaced with full force in the Kyoto Protocol.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), signed in Rio de Janeiro by one hundred and fifty-four countries established three very clear objectives: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components; the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of these resources. The Convention demanded long and strenuous negotiations that sought a satisfactory focus for an issue emerging

[88] BODANSKY, Daniel. "The History of the Global Climate Change Regime": In: LUTERBACHER, Urs and SPRINZ, Detlef (Eds.). **International Relations and Global Climate Change**. p. 34.

from a difficult reality: two-thirds of the world's genetic resources are found in developing countries, but most of the technological and financial resources to exploit them belong to developed countries. At the same time there was – and still is – the perception by certain sectors that biological and genetic resources should be included in the *global commons*[89].

Despite the concessions made in order to cater to the major American misgivings in the area of intellectual property, the Convention was not signed by the United States in Rio (it was signed later by the Clinton Administration, but the U.S. has still not ratified it). The argument put forward stated that since most of the technology was developed and patented by private companies, so, from the perspective of industrialized countries, it should be transferred according to rules that govern intellectual property and market principles. According to Mostafa Tolba, consensus was reached "over a text of the convention that pleased no one. This seems a good indication that the provisions of the convention were balanced"[90].

The main documents negotiated by the Preparatory Committee for approval in Rio were, therefore, Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the Statement of Forest Principles.

Agenda 21, despite its length and ambition – more than six hundred pages, with proposals for action in more than a hundred of areas to be executed over decades– turned out to be an extremely relevant document. It is a program of action that gives new dimensions to international cooperation and stimulates governments, civil society and academic, scientific and production sectors to jointly plan and execute programs aimed to change the traditional conceptions of economic development and environmental protection.

[89] A broad discussion of "global commons" is undertaken by Le Prestre, op cit, p. 41 - 60.
[90] TOLBA, Mostafa, op cit, p. 159.

The document is organized in four sections; Section 1: the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development (two of the three pillars of sustainable development); Section 2: management of natural resources for sustainable development (third pillar of sustainable development), divided into a) protection of the atmosphere, b) drought and desertification c) oceans, d) freshwater, e) wastes f) biological diversity and g) combating deforestation; Section 3: strengthening social groups in the implementation of sustainable development (women, children, indigenous peoples, NGOs, trade unions, academics, etc.); and Section 4: means of implementation, divided into a) financial resources and mechanisms; b) technology; c) institutions and d) legal instruments.

The negotiations of Agenda 21 advanced considerably during the Preparatory Committees III and IV but, despite this progress, a significant part of the document (about 15%) arrived in Rio still to be negotiated. Strong's idea was to create more than one plan of action aimed at governments, consisting of a document that could be the foundation for government action but that assigned a fundamental role to civil society, who, together with NGOs, would participate in evaluating the progress achieved. Three elements would enable Agenda 21 to acquire unparalleled importance as compared to other plans of action: a financial mechanism with autonomy and significant resources; a commitment that enabled the creation of an efficient system of technology transfer; and the reform and strengthening of institutions to move sustainable development forward in an effective manner and with close monitoring.

The original conception of these three elements underwent profound changes during the negotiations, contrary to Strong's expectations The monitoring mechanism within the United Nations ended up being assigned to a Commission, under ECOSOC, created specifically for this purpose– the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Among its various functions, it would coordinate the work within the United

Nations and be responsible for the evolution of Agenda 21 with the participation of NGOs. The creation of CSD was not the solution preferred by Strong: he tended towards the strengthening of UNEP. For a great number of delegations – particularly developing countries – , however, there was no point to strengthening a strictly environmental agency when the intention was to create a new paradigm– one of sustainable development, whose great strength would be in its crosscutting nature, requiring the participation of bodies linked to the three pillars: environmental , economic and social.

The financial resources to be transferred from developed countries to developing countries for the implementation of Agenda 21 were estimated by the Secretariat of the Conference at 125 billion dollars a year, over seven years. The developing countries would be responsible for about 480 billion dollars a year, allowing a total of approximately 600 billion dollars to be reached[91]. Considering the growing internal and external pressure on developed countries to commit financially to the objectives of Agenda 21, these nations sought an alternative path, which gained ground during the preparatory process, of an independent entity that would manage the "new and additional" resources required by developing countries. Some months before the Conference, the creation of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) was announced outside of the context of the negotiations and without consulting the developing countries. According to Korinna Horta, economist with the Environmental Defense Fund:

> [t]he creation of GEF prior to the Rio Earth Summit allowed the US and its G-7 partners to define global environmental problems as they perceived them and to establish the limits and scope of their responsibilities in assisting developing countries […]. Northern governments established

[91] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. Report of the Brazilian Delegation: **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development**. p. 40.

> the GEF to demonstrate environmental leadership to domestic constituencies and […] to sidestep the more ambitious North-South funding plan outlined in Agenda 21[92].

The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) was far from being the financial mechanism that the developing countries – and NGOs – would have liked to have seen created in Rio, not only because GEF could not (nor intended to) provide the resources deemed necessary for the execution of Agenda 21, but also because GEF was placed under the aegis of the World Bank – that is, subject to the rationale of the Bretton Woods institutions, with weighted voting systems, unlike the context of the United Nations General Assembly where voting is more egalitarian, transparent and democratic. Moreover, GEF would only support projects whose results had global benefits, that is, - and according to the more severe critics - the rich countries would only finance initiatives in developing countries that would improve their own situation. According to Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho:

> The difference in positions between the developed and developing countries was notorious in the negotiating context of Rio; the former insisting on the globalization of environmental phenomena of interest, excluding from these phenomena processes of local effect, and the latter defending the convergence of these processes and non distinction between "global benefits" and "national or local benefits[93].

The discussions in Rio concerning financial mechanisms and resources ended up producing some of the most dramatic moments of the Conference[94]. The most controversial issues – besides GEF – was the

[92] HORTA, Korinna. "Global Environment Facility". In: **Foreign Policy in Focus**, Vol.3, n. 39, December, 1998.
[93] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto, op cit, p. 30.
[94] RICUPERO, Rubens. **Visões do Brasil: ensaios sobre a história e a inserção do Brasil**. A detailed account of the negotiations is found in pages 130 - 148.

replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA)[95]. The significant increase of its capital had been announced by World Bank President, Lewis Preston, at the beginning of the Conference. Also controversial was the issue of Official Development Aid (ODA): developing countries sought the commitment of rich countries to provide up to 0.7% of their GDP to this type of aid. In order to achieve this commitment, the Group of 77 counted on the support of a few developed countries that had already reached this level, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, who wanted to differentiate themselves from other rich countries.

At the closing of the negotiations, the role of Ambassador Rubens Ricupero–then Ambassador of Brazil to the United States – was decisive. The much feared collapse of the process was avoided and it was possible to reach formulations generally acceptable to all parties. With regard to GEF, the text states the need for greater transparency, universality and balance in its management and its the decision-making process. With respect to the goal of 0.7% of GDP for ODA, the developed countries reaffirmed their commitment to that figure, but different categories were implicit – countries that "accept or have already accepted achieving the goal in the year 2000", and countries that "agree in increasing their aid programs in order to reach the goal as soon as possible"[96]. As for IDA, after ascertaining that the major donor countries did not agree with the literal reference to the proposals by Preston in the final document, eventually

[95] The IDA of the World Bank offers financing only to the poorest countries. The information provided by the IDA itself explains some of the misgivings of developing countries: "The Bank took important steps in the spring of 2001 to increase transparency and broaden participation in the formulation of IDA's operational approaches. […] in June 2001, for the first time in IDA's 41-year history, representatives of borrowing countries joined donors in discussions about IDA's future directions". IDA website, The World Bank Group.

[96] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.** p. 56

the expression that "special consideration" would be given to the Preston proposals was adopted.

According to Ambassador Ricupero's account, instead of a "green fund", the Conference

> set up a veritable financial system, a combination of inter-related elements with the common goal of financing environmental programs [...],a flexible system composed of diversified financial instruments (IDA, regional banks, GEF and other multilateral funds, specialized UN agencies, technical cooperation institutions, bilateral programs responsible for almost two-thirds of the aid, debt relief, private funds, investments, innovative financing such as *tradable permits* etc.) […]. One of the main contributions of UNCED was precisely to imprint a basic unity on this diffuse and diverse system emerging from, on the one hand, the detailed plan of action agreed upon in Agenda 21 […] and, on the other hand, the rules that should guide the financial operations of the mechanisms that together could be considered a kind of "superfund[97].

The issue of transnational corporations and the environment was a topic that gained momentum during the preparatory period of the Rio Conference, but ended up included in a diluted form in Agenda 21. The document prepared by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, UNCTC, "Transnational Corporations and Sustainable Development: Recommendations of the Executive Director", did not even circulate in the Conference. According to the then NCTC Executive Director, Peter Hansen:

> [t]he U.S. and Japan had [...] made it clear that they were not going to tolerate any rules or norms on the behaviour of the TNCs, and that any

[97] RICUPERO, Rubens, op cit, p. 145-146.

attempts to win such rules would have real political costs in other areas of the negotiations[98].

Finally, the issue concerning technology required difficult negotiations, for some of the topics were considered an exclusive domain of other organisms and other negotiating groups, in particular the question of intellectual property, negotiated within the context of the GATT Uruguay Round. Considerable progress, nonetheless, was made, due in part to the precedent established by the Montreal Protocol, whose amendments, approved in London in 1990, predicted that the developing countries would only be able to eliminate the production of gases that deplete the ozone layer if they received financial and technological support. Agenda 21 states the need for developed countries to create more favorable conditions for developing countries to acquire technology – such as stimuli to the private sector as well as transferring on a non-commercial basis, to developing countries, technologies whose patents would be bought for this purpose by the governments of rich countries.

Regarding what would become the "Rio Declaration", Maurice Strong's original intention, as expressed in the First Session of the Preparatory Committee was for the Rio Conference to produce an "Earth Charter" – just a one-page text in simple language[99]. At the end of fourth session, however, a final text was arrived at, which was only a few pages long and that managed to summarize, with surprising concision, many of the most important issues that divided the interests and concerns of developed, developing countries and those with economies in transition.

[98] ATHANASIOU, Tom. op cit, cited p. 199. The author tells that in the beginning of 1992, the "United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations" (UNCTC) was restructured and transformed itself into a division(Transnational Corporations Management Division) of the new "Department of Economic and Social Development", a move that reduced the importance of the issue in the United Nations.

[99] STRONG, Maurice.Speech on 6th August, 1990. UNCED website, Preparation for UNCED.

Entitled the "Rio Declaration", the document – representing such a very delicate balance that it was not changed in the Conference–contains 27 principles, which would be frequently referenced and was to inspire intense interpretative literature[100].

Some principles clearly supported the positions of developing countries by reiterating and strengthening their priorities in Stockholm – such as the fact that human beings are at the center of concerns for sustainable development (Principle 1), the issue of the sovereign right of countries to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies (Principle 2), the right to development (Principle 3) and the fact that environmental standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate for others (Principle 11). An important step in the conceptual framework of the negotiations on environment and development was the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (Principle 7), and the need to reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption (Principle 8).

Developed countries, for their part, were able to include several principles that were to their advantage or that represented an important step in the direction of their priorities, such as the principle that environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process (Principle 4); that States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation (Principle 10); that the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States (Principle 15); that environmental impact assessments shall be undertaken (Principle 17); and, finally, that the role of women shall be strengthened (Principle 20). The principles that the developed countries most sought to approve often allow their use as criteria to guide or justify their cooperation policies.

[100] The complete text of the Declaration is in Appendix II.

All of the principles are written in such a way as to allow disclaimers to make them acceptable to less interested parties. Skeptics believe that the strength of each principle can only be measured in the medium term, depending on the ability of its defenders to insert it into other contexts so that, slowly, the disclaimers can disappear. For example, in recent years the fiercest struggles in this sense occurred with regard to Principles 7 (common but differentiated responsibilities) and 15 (precautionary).

Since the world's attention was drawn to the problem of the accelerated pace of forest destruction, environmentalists expected that a convention on forests would be negotiated for the Rio Conference. The G7 leaders, gathered in Houston in 1990, and the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) – the U.N. body that traditionally deals with the issue – showed their support for beginning negotiations on a global convention on forests. The parties most interested in a legally binding instrument on tropical forests are, obviously, countries that do not have these forests. The highly defensive position of developing countries ended up prevailing: the complete title of the Declaration approved in Rio is "Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests".

The issue of deforestation was addressed in both the Declaration and Agenda 21, but the developing countries sought to ensure that the role of forest burnings in increasing global warming be viewed in its true dimensions. This effort avoided the tendency to attribute greater responsibilities to developing countries – and divert attention from the fact that emissions by wealthy countries, because of their production and consumption patterns, are the ones most responsible for global warming. According to Everton Vargas, the forest issue provided the backdrop for one of the major North-South disputes in Rio and led the developed

countries – under the leadership of Germany's Environment Minister at the time, Klaus Töpfer (later Executive-Director of UNEP) – to try, until the last moment, to impose the idea of a convention.

For Strong, "the struggle to obtain an agreement on the modest set of Forestry Principle underscores the difficulty of obtaining binding commitments from governments on protection of the world's forests"[101]. But the "defensive" aspect of the Declaration shows, at the same time, the reticence of the developing countries in accepting greater involvement of developed countries in their forest policies and, above all, the inability of developed countries to offer solid arguments or objective proposals to justify such involvement.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS AND CRITICISMS OF THE CONFERENCE

The Rio Conference was from many perspectives a huge success. Twenty years after Stockholm, the world seemed ready to place the environment among the priority issues of the global agenda. The perspective that sustainable development would be the foundation for a new paradigm of international cooperation, however, turned out to be illusionary once the process of globalization set in. Sustainable development is not necessarily incompatible with globalization: for many, concern for the environment is one of the consequences of globalization. Nonetheless, various aspects point to the difficulties that globalization represents to the effort of imposing sustainable development as a new paradigm, such as the incompatibility between the growth of transnational corporations and the change in production and consumption patterns.

[101] STRONG, Maurice. "Stockholm Plus 30, Rio Plus 10: Creating a New Paradigm of Global Governance" In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 38.

The precise criticisms of the Conference results are mainly focused on the Declaration on Forests (after all, public opinion all over the world had been convinced of the need to act to end the destruction of forests) and on the dilution of energy-related issues in the final text of Agenda 21 – due to the firm opposition of oil-producing and coal-consuming countries. The population issue, which continued to worry many analysts from developed and even developing countries, deserved an editorial in **The Economist** magazine entitled – "The Question Rio Forgets"[102] , which argues that the most crucial problem for sustainable development is population growth. Ten years later, however, the economist W.W. Rostow, whose theories for the last five decades have been so appreciated by the magazine, would write, "From my point of view, the most important event of the twenty-first century in economics will be the decrease in world population. This will happen in the developing as well as the industrialized countries"[103].

Many reasons can be pointed out to explain the frustration with some of the results of the negotiations. A consensus, which gives all countries the right to veto, often leads to the lowest common denominator. A more fair assessment of the Rio Conference was perhaps implicit in the very agenda of the Johannesburg Summit: there should be no questioning or attempt at correcting the Rio legacy; rather efforts should be undertaken to strengthen and improve the instruments that enable a more effective implementation of its results.

C) THE JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT

Resolution 55/199 of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Ten-year Review of the Progress achieved in the implementation

[102] THE ECONOMIST, 30th May 1992, p. 12.
[103] ROSTOW, W.W. "Économie et stagnation démographique" In: MEIER, Gerald M., et STIGLITZ, Joseph E. (Eds.). **Aux frontières de l'économie du développinent: le futur en perspective**. p. 441.

of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development" convened the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The political consensus reached in the Rio Conference regarding the concept of sustainable development seemed to have created solid foundation for putting the recommendations of Agenda 21 into practice. Undeniable gains had occurred in the fields of scientific knowledge, technological progress and involvement of the private sector, at the same time in which, in most countries, environmental legislation was being strengthened and public participation was increasing. In view of the expectations created in Rio, however, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, recognized one month before Johannesburg that "the record in the decade since the Earth Summit is largely one of painfully slow progress and a deepening global environmental crisis"[104].

Despite the strengthening of the legal framework negotiated under the United Nations with direct or indirect consequences for sustainable development, the difficulty of implementing commitments was undeniable. The gap between the willingness of governments to negotiate and the political will to take up challenges caused public opinion to distance itself, which was justified to the extent that the major players were skeptical in the months before the Summit. The multilateral system, which seemed to have been strengthened in Rio, had become a reference for failure due to the lack of results, according to Annan, "[...] as is so often the case, our understanding – popular and scientific – has run ahead of our political response. Johannesburg offers a chance to catch up"[105].

The ten years following the Rio Conference constituted the period of greatest economic growth in history. The major factors contributing to this growth were: political circumstances, such as the end of the Cold War

[104] TIME. World Summit Special Report, 26th August 2002, p. 22.
[105] Ibid, p. 22.

and China's decision to progressively integrate aspects of the capitalist system into its model; technological advancements enabling huge sectoral leaps such as those in telecommunications; and, above all, the exponential increase in the flow of financial and trade transactions. This process revealed the world's increasing attraction for Western living standards, which became known even in the most isolated regions thanks to communication technologies. The goal of reaching Western development standards is the impulse that makes globalization "the most pressing issue of our time, something debated from boardrooms to op-ed pages and in schools all over the world"[106].

Development associated with globalization, however, does not follow the precepts of sustainable development. Globalization, in its current phase, seems to correspond more to wild capitalism than to the more humanistic vision contained in the concept of sustainable development. In reality, through the proposal for equilibrium among its three pillars– economic, social and environmental – sustainable development presents itself as a politically acceptable formula for the promotion of the economic, political and ethical "values" of the West, the result of negotiating processes within the United Nations – the greatest symbol of multilateral democracy. Globalization, according to its defenders, also promotes "values" such as democratization and combating corruption, but it is the result of different negotiating processes directed by the "three main institutions that govern globalization: the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO[107].

As Egon Becker states:

> [...] after the Rio Conference, we can observe within the public debate as well as in scientific discourse the emergence of new keywords, focusing

[106] STIGLITZ, Joseph. Globalization and its Discontents. p. 4.
[107] Ibid, p. 10.

> public attention and intellectual energies – and perhaps also money – on selected issues. *Sustainable development* is still one of them, *globalization* is another[108].

In a short time, however, globalization monopolized the debate, occupying a huge space in recent years that had been expected to be taken up by sustainable development.

From the perspective of developing countries, the adoption of the principles of the Washington Consensus – fiscal austerity, privatization and the opening of markets – would not bring the expected results. As Joseph E. Stieglitz points out, "globalization has not succeeded in reducing poverty, neither has it succeeded in ensuring stability"[109]. International financial crises, occurring between 1994 and 2001 – beginning in Mexico (1994) and followed by Asia (1997), Russia (1998), Brazil (1999) and Argentina (2001) –, profoundly affected the confidence of many developing countries in the capacity of neoliberal policies to help them overcome their problems. This questioning of the formula for economic development proposed in the Washington Consensus had important political repercussions in democratic developing countries, where the conviction grew that:

> critical public discussion is an inescapably important requirement of good public policy since the appropriate role and reach of markets cannot be predetermined on the basis of some grand, general formula – or some all-encompassing attitude – either in favor of placing everything under the market, or of denying everything to the market.[110]

[108] BECKER, Egon, op cit, p. 287.
[109] STIEGLITZ, Joseph, op cit, p. 6.
[110] SEN, Amartya, op cit, p. 124.

The IV World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference (WTO), held in Doha, in November 2001, and the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, in March 2002, organized by the United Nations, became events of enormous media impact because they were presented as the beginning of the restructuring of international trade and of the financial rules. Despite significant advances – specially given the deadlocks of previous meetings such as the WTO Conference in Seattle – the Doha and Monterrey Conferences did not result in substantial changes, but point to changes in direction that enabled some flexibilization of the system. The start of a new round of negotiations in Doha was generally interpreted as a means of strengthening and improving the multilateral trade system and as a "defense against the unilateralism of the great".[111] The Conference of Monterrey, according to the evaluation of Ambassador Gelson Fonseca Jr., Brazil's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, had, on the one hand, brought the United Nations closer to the Bretton Woods institutions, but, on the other hand, confirmed the principles of the Washington Consensus, as defended by the United States[112].

The last decade of the twentieth century had been extraordinary from the point of view of economic growth, but affected different sectors of developed economies unevenly. Their frailty was also demonstrated, above all, by the long stagnation of the Japanese economy and by sluggish European growth. In this context, a growing number of anti-globalization protests in developed countries acquired increasing political force. Despite bringing together a number of groups with very diverse interests under the same banner of anti-globalization, the protests provoked disturbances in Europe and North America not witnessed since 1968. The protestors sought to draw attention to the fact that not only was it necessary to

[111] LAFER, Celso. Mudam-se os Tempos: diplomacia brasileira, 2001-2002. Volume 1. p. 243.
[112] Telegram 608 of the New York Mission, dated 28th March 2002.

change the direction of globalization, but it was also necessary to effect for profound changes in the financial and trade systems. The protests, ironically, had greater impact on the *establishment* than the statistics showing the growth of inequality in the world in the nineties or even the clamor of developing countries. According to Stieglitz:

> […] until the protestors came along there was little hope for change and no outlets for complaint […] it is the trade unionists, students, environmentalists – ordinary citizens – marching in the streets of Prague, Seattle, Washington and Genoa who have put the need for reform on the agenda of the developed world[113].

If, on the economic side, difficulties were already anticipated in Johannesburg, on the other hand, the September 11 attacks caused a radical shift in the priorities of the international political agenda that did not foster the debate on sustainable development. Despite the existence of multiple elements that correlate security and sustainable development, with medium to long-term effects, the political situation considered the short term a priority. Even without the September 11 attacks, the United States would possibly not have paid much attention to the Summit, but the political context enabled the argument that Johannesburg was a distraction, or a waste of time, in light of so many urgent issues on the international agenda.

The long awaited new era of international cooperation after the end of the Cold War did not materialize. One of the hopes prevalent at the beginning of the nineties was a possible redirecting of part of the world military budget to Official Development Aid and other initiatives that could promote sustainable development. As Amartya Sen points out, however, it is significant that, after the Cold War, in the period between 1996 and 2000, the permanent members of the Security Council – the

[113] STIEGLITZ, Joseph, op cit, p. 9.

most powerful countries – were responsible for 81% of the exports of conventional weapons, with the US alone exporting almost 50% – of which 68% went to developing countries. Seen from the economic angle, the data are even more eloquent: the members of the G8 – the richest countries – were responsible for 87 % of the arms exports in the above-mentioned period. Sen points out that the leaders "who express deep frustration at the irresponsibility of anti-globalization protesters, lead the countries that make the most money in this terrible trade"[114].

Despite these obstacles, it was possible to structure the Johannesburg Summit on the basis of some positive developments. Many of the commitments assumed by governments in Rio de Janeiro were, in truth, met thanks to the efforts of communities and local governments, businesses and NGOs, which demonstrated that the concept of sustainable development could have direct impact on populations. Other positive attitudes were seen in major companies that individually – or in groups – adopted codes of responsibility in the social and environmental areas. In "**Walking the Talk"**, a book published in 2002 by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the commitment of major transnational corporations to sustainable development was explained very clearly:

> In its first expressions, sustainable development was, to a large extent, a green agenda. In the middle of the 90s, the situation changed. Not that businesses suddenly realized that they had been ignoring the social side of the concept; the transformation was more in the sense that many business problems moved from the environmental to the social…As a cause or effect of several scandals, opinion polls indicated

[114] 115 SEN, Amartya. "Addressing Global Poverty". In: **The Economist**, the World in 2002, p. 50.

> that consumers were showing as much concern for the history of labor relations of the company as well as for its background in environment and animal rights.[115]

The perception that humans, nature and animals deserved similar attention ought not to have been a "revelation" to the business community, but it did bring great relief to the delegations of developing countries who fought so hard in the preparatory process leading to Stockholm for environmental concerns to be placed in their appropriate context, with human beings as a priority.

Sustainable development also gained supporters in conservative political circles for attributing less power to central governments, for encouraging technology and, most importantly, for having been proven economically viable in an increasing number of areas. Moreover, sustainable development would stimulate internal coordination of governments that would balance short-, medium-, and long-term policies[116]. The conservative view in 2002, therefore, was no longer concerned with the scarcity of natural resources or with the increase in prices of these resources.

The great strides in the environmental area, however, had their greatest impacts on the richest countries. This did not happen because of important changes in production and consumption patterns, but due to interventions in critical areas where visible progress for local populations was achieved without excessive costs, as feared by many. In the energy sector, for example, despite the progress in the development of new technologies and the cost reduction of alternative energy– such as solar and wind —subsidies for the use of "dirty" energy sources such as coal

[115] HOLLIDAY JR., Charles O., SCHMIDHEINY, Stephan and WATTS, Philip. **Cumprindo o Prometido: casos de sucesso de desenvolvimento sustentável.** p. 25 and 26.
[116] THE ECONOMIST. Survey: How many planets?, 6th July 2002, p. 13-15.

seem to remain unaltered for political reasons. The emissions of rich countries continue to grow, and Mahatma Gandhi's famous phrase remains true, "God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West […] it took Britain half the resources of the planet to achieve this prosperity. How many planets will a country like India require?"[117]

The issue of climate change evolved in a particularly complex manner between Rio and Johannesburg. As seen above, the success of the formula adopted to fight substances that deplete the ozone layer–a framework convention with basic principles and vague commitments followed by a protocol in which goals and commitments are specified in the areas of finance and transfer of technology – led to the search for a similar solution with regard to climate change. The signing in Rio de Janeiro of the Framework Convention on Climate Change was followed, as predicted, by the negotiation of a protocol that would include more specific targets and commitments.

A key question in the international negotiations on the environment is the role undertaken by the United States. As James Gustave Speth points out, "The world's most powerful country led in the fight for national level action in the 1970s, but has largely failed to provide international leadership on the global agenda"[118]. Stephen Hopgood provides– in his essay "Looking beyond the "K-Word": Embedded Multilateralism in American Foreign Environmental Policy" – an interesting interpretation of important aspects of the American attitude, by recalling that:

[117] Ibid, p. 5.
[118] SPETH, James Gustave. "Two Perspectives on Globalization and the Environment". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 8.

> [c]oncerted multilateral action on the international environment dates back to the late 1960s and a Swedish proposal to hold a UN environment conference because of fears about transnational industrial pollution, especially acid rain. Thus, the unrivalled scale of domestic environmental politics in the United States at this time was *not* the catalyst for international action. As a result, the international agenda was framed in a very different way from the domestic American agenda, the latter much less clearly reflected in the former than is apparent in other issue areas like international trade, terrorism, or drug trafficking[119].

Another important aspect is the known difficulty of getting the U.S. to accept the discussion of issues that seem to them relevant in a broader context, such as the General Assembly or the large United Nations Conferences, in which the country's *de facto* exceptional condition is not formally acknowledged. This condition is significantly more recognized in the Security Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in OECD or at the heart of the Bretton Woods institutions – multilateral contexts in which the US clearly prefers to act. In a certain manner, as Foot, Mac Farlane and Mastanduno state, instead of the United States recognizing the compatibility between multilateralism and its much treasured domestic value of pluralism, what actually happens is that "the pervasive yet very parochial American concern over the suffocating power of 'big government' is carried over into the international arena"[120].

The analysis of the positions of the United States on the Montreal and Kyoto Protocols by American authors offers an interesting perspective: in the former, there was clear American leadership; in the latter, there was

[119] HOPGOOD, Stephen. "Looking Beyond the 'K-Word': Embedded Multilateralism in American Foreign Environmental Policy". In: FOOT, Rosemary, MACFARLANE, S. Neil and MASTANDUNO, Michael Eds.). **US Hegemony and International Organizations**. p. 141.

[120] FOOT, Rosemary, MACFARLANE, S. Neil and MASTANDUNO, Michael (Eds.). US Hegemony and International Organizations. p. 3 and 11.

reluctance, followed by an attempt to adapt the document to the interests of the country, which in the end was considered inadequate. For Hopgood[121], in fact, the same motives provoked opposing attitudes. The negotiations on the ozone layer were encouraged by the US because they elevated a decision already taken domestically to a global level. Domestic legislation had determined, in 1978, the elimination of the use of CFCs in aerosols, which required that the major American chemical companies find replacements. Once these replacements had been found, American companies were interested in supporting the Vienna Convention to create, also on a global level, the limitations that had already been imposed on them by American legislation, which provided them a competitive edge vis-à-vis foreign companies. Therefore, the American Congress approved the Convention and the Protocol because both legitimized the domestic agenda, and also because of what Araújo Castro considered to be the American tendency to "confer its internal legislation with universal validity and effect".[122]

The American attitude was inverted in the case of global warming: the Convention was encouraged by Europeans for motives similar to those of the Americans in the case of the ozone layer – their comparative advantages. The European energy supply mix had already undergone modernization as a result of adjustments to oil crises and increasingly harsh environmental legislation in the European Community. For the Americans, however, "[a]mbiguous science, higher potential costs, and the lack of industry support […] all gave a boost to those arguing that climate change would simply be used by America's competitors to make relative gains at the US's expense"[123]. The George Bush Administration in 1992 managed to negotiate sufficiently vague language and signed the Convention. Clayton Yeutter, who coordinated climate

[121] HOPGOOD, Stephen, op cit, p. 141-150.
[122] AMADO, Rodrigo, op cit, p. 318.
[123] HOPGOOD, Stephen, op cit, p. 149.

change policies in the White House, reassured Congress, affirming that the US "would do its share only because of domestic policy and not [...] because of any compulsion arising from this proposed document"[124].

In 1997, however, while Bill Clinton negotiated the Kyoto Protocol, "the Senate took pre-emptive action with support from the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and Defense, passing a resolution (Byrd-Hagel) 95-0 that it would not ratify any protocol emerging from Kyoto that did not explicitly include emissions restrictions from developing countries"[125]. The Clinton Administration signed the Protocol, even knowing that it could not be ratified at that moment: "this may have happened if Al Gore had been elected President"[126], according to Hopgood.

For the developing countries – especially the largest developing economies such as those of Brazil, China and India – unconditional support for the Kyoto Protocol became a priority in the Johannesburg agenda. The importance of this instrument was due principally to two reasons. From the political perspective, the fact that the Annex 1 countries (OECD members and economies in transition) had to meet emission targets, and that the developing countries did not, represented a clear reiteration in a document of fundamental importance of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, one of the pillars of the Group of 77 and China's position with regard to sustainable development. From the economic point of view, the fact that non Annex 1 countries did not need to meet targets ensured some flexibility for their development projects. If the estimated cost of meeting the Kyoto Protocol targets justified its non-ratification by the United States, the developing countries certainly could not accept these targets.

[124] Ibid, p. 150.
[125] Ibid, p. 159.
[126] Ibid, p. 160.

By having to confront the need for simultaneously immersing themselves into the modern globalized economy and overcoming their social and economic problems, the developing countries arrived in Johannesburg with renewed demands, aware that international relations had, as former Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Lafer points out, been guided "less by cooperation, justice and equity than by the resurgence of the North-South divergences …and the emergence of selective cooperation agendas"[127] .

The resort to selective agendas became an instrument of critical importance for the industrialized countries to communicate, to their constituencies, the perception that they were making major efforts towards the sustainable development of developing countries. The flaws in governance of these countries are pointed out as the main factor for the non-fruition of the developed countries' cooperation efforts. Governance is a concept that has been strengthened in recent years and whose definition may vary. According to Rosenau and Czinpiel, in **Governance without government: order and change in world politics**:

> Governance is not the same as government. There may be, in extreme cases, governance without government and government without governance. Government emerges from formal authority with enforcing power that guarantees the implementation of instituted policies. Governance refers to activities supported through common and shared objectives that range from governmental institutions to informal mechanisms of a non-governmental nature, but that only work if accepted by the majority, or, more precisely, by the main actors of a certain process.

[127] LAFER, Celso. Speech given at the Rio + 10 Conference, Rio de Janeiro, 25th June 2002.
[128] CAMARGO, Aspásia. "Governança para o Século 21". In: TRIGUEIRO, André (Ed.). **Meio Ambiente no século 21, 21 especialistas falam da questão ambiental** nas suas áreas de conhecimento. p. 307.

> In other words, governance is a broader phenomenon than government.[128].

The issue of governance, which awoke great interest at the Summit for being one of the issues that involved the participation of various sectors of society, is identified with the agenda of developed countries in the context of a "stimulus" to greater participation by civil society in these countries. Along the same lines, the emphasis that the Johannesburg Summit attributed to Type 2 initiatives (projects that do not depend on an understanding between governments and that encourage direct relations among local governments, communities, entities and businesses linked to them) was interpreted by some delegations as a means of "privatizing" the United Nations, reducing government intervention and giving the private sector, NGOs and civil society the capacity to effectively accelerate advancements in the environmental area.

These initiatives, however, received broad support because they strengthened a tendency considered productive in the ten years following the Rio Conference. UNEP Executive-Director, Klaus Töpfer, considered one of the major successes of Johannesburg to be the establishment of partnerships[129]. The attitude would be, above anything else, realistic, for as Paul Wapner points out, in 1994, the UNEP budget was 75 million dollars, while that of Greenpeace was 100 million and the WWF, 200 million[130].

The main criticism of Type 2 initiatives, however, do not refer to the establishment of partnerships, but to the possibility of becoming another selective cooperation instrument through which developed

[129] TÖPFER, Klaus. Speech given at the Ministry of the Environment, Brasilia, August 2003.
[130] WAPNER, Paul. "The transnational politics of environmental NGOs: Governmental, economic, and social activism". In: CHASEK, Pamela. **The Global Environment in the Twentieth Century**. p. 92.

countries could channel their contributions directly to projects and countries of their interest, and, even worse, using an instrument sanctioned by the United Nations. The concern of developing countries would be in the sense that this process would legitimize the tendency of industrialized countries to reduce the cooperation dimension of the United Nations operational activities, of which one of the examples would be the reform of UNEP in the last decade.

The Type 2 initiatives also demonstrated the degree to which NGOs had become more willing to accept market forces as an ally of environmental protection in the period between the Rio Conference and the Johannesburg Summit. This perspective proved to be essential to developed countries, where the limits of the so-called "command and control" system began to be recognized. When initiatives were local and there was no legislation, nor institutions, that protected the environment, progress was readily visible and costs turned out to be reasonable. As the phase of local challenges in developed countries was overcome, global issues – such as the ozone layer or climate change – started to demand large investments and changes in production and consumption patterns. Even the more radical environmentalists knew of the difficulty of approving (today) in rich countries a law with environmental impact without the business community having analyzed the costs of its implementation. This factor represents one of the most powerful incentives for projects in least developed countries, where each applied dollar can produce results incomparable to those achieved in Europe or the United States.

In the years following the Rio Conference, another significant change occurred due to greater knowledge and interest of institutions and NGOs in developing countries. Therefore, many concepts linked to the protection of the environment, created in developed countries, began to be analyzed in the specific contexts of developing countries. The evolution

– even if partial – of environmental thought in the Third World was one of the main elements that legitimized the environmental movement in developing countries. As Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator, explains, "[…] the old environmental movement had a reputation of elitism […] the key now is to put people first and the environment second, but also to remember that when you exhaust resources, you destroy people"[131].

Kofi Anan sums up the context in which the Johannesburg Summit was prepared: "Clearly, this is not Rio"[132]. Despite its shortcomings and disappointments, however, Johannesburg still represented a significant stage in the evolution of the environment and development agenda.

MAIN THEMES OF THE SUMMIT AND ITS PREPARATORY MEETINGS

The preparatory process of the Johannesburg Summit was, from the very beginning, less ambitious than that of Rio: there were no negotiating processes for Conventions to be signed at the Conference, nor was there the intention to develop a document as complex and wide-ranging as Agenda 21. The challenge of the preparatory process was to make progress on those points in Rio that remained deadlocked or were not implemented and to find realistic means to implement what had been agreed upon in Rio. The Preparatory Committee of the Summit on Sustainable Development met three times in New York: in April/May 2001; in January/February and March/April 2002; and once –a ministerial meeting– in Bali, in May/June 2002. Dr. Emil Salim[133] of Indonesia was elected President of the Committee (Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, of the Brazilian Mission to the United Nations, was one of the ten for Vice-Presidents). Kofi Annan picked Indian Nitim

[131] TIME, op cit, p. 12.

[132] SPETH, James Gustave. "Environment and Globalization after Johannesburg". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 155.

[133] Salim's talent for negotiating and conciliating was not comparable to that of Tommy Koh in the preparatory process of Rio-92, according to diplomats who participated in both processes.

Desai, then Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs at the United Nations, to be the Secretary-General of the Summit.

Desai, who had been Under Secretary-General at the Rio Conference, did not have Maurice Strong's (his predecessor in Stockholm and Rio) vibrant personality and network of personal contacts. However, both his vast bureaucratic experience, in both the Indian Ministry of Finance and the United Nations, and his knowledge of matters relevant to sustainable development, are undeniable. Desai was the Senior Economic Advisor of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) of which both Emil Salim and Maurice Strong had been members.

The Summit was planned to attribute special importance to the contributions that showed the feasibility of sustainable development at the local, regional, national and international levels, and to the roles played by *multistakeholders* – non-governmental actors from the most diverse sectors of civil society such as business, trade unions, NGOs and the scientific and academic communities. Since the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, the participation of non-governmental sectors was already proving to be important, which, thanks to meetings, presentations and side events brought many enriching elements to the intergovernmental debate.

It seemed clear that political-diplomatic efforts would face considerable obstacles, for there were no signals from the main political actors in the process–the United States, the European Union, the Group of 77 and China – that they were willing to "go beyond Doha and Monterrey" (a phrase constantly repeated in the preparatory process and during the Summit), or to make greater concessions. One alternative was to attribute greater importance and a greater role to *multistakeholders* at the Summit, which could emphasize the relevance of the meeting

for public opinion and for influential sectors of civil society, which, in turn, could exert pressure on governments to increase their commitment.

As the Johannesburg Summit drew nearer, and all of its objectives referred to other meetings – such as those in Rio, Doha and Monterrey – South Africa took advantage of the political opportunity to maximize the attention given at the Conference to regional priorities. When asked what would be the main theme of the Johannesburg Summit, South Africa's Minister of the Environment, Valli Moosa, answered "poverty"[134]. Principle 1 of the Rio Declaration– "Human beings are at the center of the concerns for sustainable development." – underscores Valli Moosa's point, but the focus on poverty – extreme poverty, in the African interpretation – represented a significant detour from the priorities of the G77 and China which, besides strengthening the Rio principles, wanted to see progress in the commitments of developed countries concerning new and additional financial resources, technology transfer and access to markets. The issue of poverty doubtlessly involved other more traditional demands of the Group – such as the increase in Official Development Aid (ODA) – but the excessive attention paid to "aid" would mean a grave simplification of the agenda of developing countries with regard to sustainable development.

The focus on poverty was well received by developed countries, which, by strengthening the issue, could satisfy important sectors of civil society in their countries that wanted to see attitudes that showed some kind of progress in the mitigation of the negative impacts of globalization. Thirty years after the United Nations statement by Indira Gandhi at the Stockholm Conference, in which she said "poverty is the greatest polluter", the relation between poverty and the environment continued to be interpreted in different ways. Developing countries read the phrase as follows: the fight against poverty is the main path towards sustainable development, or the essential

[134] THE ECONOMIST, 24th August 2002, p. 38.

condition for sustainable development. The industrialized countries preferred, in 1972, to understand the phrase differently: the decrease in pollution is linked to the decrease in the poor population, through birth control (and not development). In Johannesburg, the interpretation of the developed countries had evolved: the main environmental problems are linked to poverty, therefore, to developing countries.

Compared with advances in the financial, trade and technological fields, or greater "aid" to combat poverty, there was no doubt for the developed countries that the focus on extreme poverty would represent a minor political challenge. The document prepared by the African countries that was expected to be one of the main outputs of Johannesburg, "New Partnership for African Development" (NEPAD), reflects the legitimate priorities of the region, but reveals its willingness to be singled out with respect to the rest of the developing world and – above all – through the absence of the term "*sustainable*" in its title, the lack of commitment to the solid, cohesive and coherent position developed with great difficulty by the G77 and China in the years between Stockholm and Johannesburg.

It was impossible for the non-African members of the G77 and China not to support the NEPAD, but the singularized African initiative led the group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to demand attention to their exceptional condition as well. This small group brings together countries that are particularly sensitive to issues of fishing and energy and, most of all, vulnerable to climate change. Countries such as Tuvalu depend on the decrease in the rate of global warming for their very existence, since most of their territory could disappear with the rise in sea level.

[135] The translation into Portuguese of the Plan of Implementation was published by the Ministry of the Environment in 2003.

When Emil Salim presented his proposal for a "plan of action" at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee, the structure of the Plan of Implementation to be approved in Johannesburg could already be recognized[135]. The document, divided into ten sections, dedicated one entire section (section 7) exclusively to SIDS and another (section 8) to Africa. In Bali, however, during the Fourth Session of the Preparatory Committee, the G77 and China – through Brazil's initiative – were able to create a new section in the Plan of Implementation where the demands of Latin America and the Caribbean were included. These were joined by the demands of Asia and the Pacific and even Europe's–on the initiative of countries with economies in transition – thus reducing significantly the focus on Africa, which was so pronounced in the original document.

The other themes that were treated as priorities in the proposal for the plan of action were: poverty eradication (section 2); changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production (section 3); protection and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development (section 4); sustainable development in a globalizing world (section 5); health and sustainable development (section 6); and means of implementation (section 9) and governance (section 10). Part 1 of the document was an introduction.

The negotiation of the Plan of Implementation turned out to be more difficult than originally expected and the wish of the President of the Preparatory Committee of announcing a "Bali Consensus" at the end of the meeting did not come about. Emil Salim attributed great importance to his country's association with the document that would only be formally agreed to in Johannesburg. Indonesia had grudgingly given up on its candidacy to host the Summit and, for internal reasons, expected to achieve more than the mere organization of the last Session of the Preparatory Committee – even if it was at ministerial level and presided by an Indonesian. The reports

by the media and participants of the Bali meeting were unanimous with regard to the deep impasse that had been arrived at and to the large number of substantive issues to be resolved in Johannesburg. The second document to be approved in Johannesburg, the "Political Declaration", was not even discussed in Bali since efforts were concentrated on the Plan of Implementation.

The deadlock arising from the radicalization of the positions of both developed and developing countries in the preparatory process meant that issues such as the reiteration of the principles agreed to in Rio, globalization and means of implementation (with strong emphasis on trade) and governance – had to be negotiated, under heavy pressure, during the Johannesburg Summit itself. However, important issues divided developed countries. The United States and the European Union argued on several occasions, such as on renewable energies, climate change, monitoring of Type 2 initiatives or corporate responsibility.

Another striking phenomenon was the difficulty in coordinating the members of the European Union: some conflicts even managed to interrupt the negotiations of the Working Groups for hours, for no EU representative could be present if a consensus had not been reached among its 15 members. In this sense, the Spokesperson of the European Union in Bali, Spanish diplomat Román Oyarzun who said that unlike the EU, the Group of 77 and China, despite having to conciliate the positions of 133 countries, did not ever paralyze the negotiations. This happened in Bali and, mostly, in Johannesburg due to the clashes between member-countries and the staff of the European Commission.[136]

The presence of more than 100 Heads of State and Government in Johannesburg – despite the absence of President George W. Bush –

[136] Interview with the author, New York, October 2003.

ensured media attention for the Summit, one of the most important aspects of the meeting. The formula for United Nations Conferences, initiated in Stockholm and repeated in various other fora, from children to racism, seemed to many to have been exhausted in Johannesburg, where results seemed not to have been achieved.. "*Much ado about nothing*", was the comment made by a member of the English delegation to a colleague in the Brazilian delegation. For others, however, the results are less important than the event itself, since today's society, easily influenced by the media and having little time to dedicate to such events, the importance achieved by issues is proportional to the show they can put on for the media. The political priority achieved by the environment in Rio would not be repeated, but the level achieved would be maintained because of the involvement of new actors. For the Natural Resources Defense Council, if Rio were the "Earth Summit", then Johannesburg would be the "Down to Earth Summit"[137].

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS AND CRITICISMS OF THE SUMMIT

The most significant achievements of the Johannesburg Summit include, for most people, the fixation or reassertion of the goals involving poverty eradication, water and sanitation, health, hazardous chemicals, fishing and biological diversity; the inclusion of two issues that had been difficult to advance in several previous negotiations (renewable energies and corporate responsibility); the political decision to create a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication; the strengthening of the concept of partnerships among different social actors to make projects more dynamic and efficient. The greatest victories for the main negotiating groups should also be considered in terms of what they manage to prevent from being approved at the Summit.

[137] SPETH, James Gustave. "Environment and Globalization after Johannesburg". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 156.

The criticisms of the Summit on Sustainable Development were infinitely more numerous than the references to its achievements. Results demonstrated, however, that a considerable consistency remains in the treatment of issues concerning the environment, and that the importance of continuing along the path established in Rio cannot be minimized, despite the economic and political obstacles in the decade separating the two Conferences.

If, in Rio, NGOs acquired legitimacy – after being viewed by many delegations in Stockholm as "intruders" – their role in Johannesburg was even more strengthened. Their overcoming of Manichean and idealist views enabled them to draw closer to a more political rather than scientific light and to be integrated (in most cases) in a more constructive manner. NGOs proved to be more mature, with some of their members present in official delegations - defending local, regional or national interests - and other members representing the organizations themselves – defending issues rather than countries. Combative attitudes did not disappear, but other modes of action were consolidated, such as the willingness of many international NGOs to view the world from the perspective of the underdeveloped countries.

Johannesburg witnessed, further, the strengthening of a more effective and constructive participation by the business community in international discussions on sustainable development. In fact, the production sector has always had a dominant role in countries' decisions concerning their domestic environmental policies the environment. The legitimacy of a greater role for business – above all for transnational corporations – in this sense cannot be denied, when it is evident, that globalization has the potential to either promote or downgrade sustainable development in a few years. Nevertheless, it is easy to understand the concern of some governments and NGOs regarding possible excesses of transnational

corporations as they defend their interests in various countries of the world in order to gain market share.

In the view of Margot Wallström, then European Commissioner responsible for the environment,

> Johannesburg [...] with Doha and Monterrey, have shaped a global partnership for sustainable development. This partnership includes commitments to increased development assistance and market access for developing countries, good governance and a better environment[138].

The Rio Conference had established a dialogue between developing and developed countries that enabled universal acceptance of the concept of sustainable development. In Johannesburg, where efforts were undertaken to translate the concept into concrete actions, it wasn't possible to deny, as James Gustave Speth points out, that "the transition to a globalized world is progressing rapidly, but the transition to a sustainable one is not"[139]. Just as the Rio Conference's official title reflected the main theme of Stockholm–"environment and development" – the Johannesburg Summit's official title contained the main theme of Rio: "sustainable development". If the next Conference receives a title that best reflects the focus of the Johannesburg Summit, that would be "sustainable development and globalization".

[138] WALLSTRÖM, Margot. Speech "From Words to Deeds. The Results of the Sustainability Summit in Johannesburg", 11th September 2002, comment in Telegram 883 from Braseuropa, dated 13th September 2002.

[139] SPETH, James Gustave. "Two Perspectives on Globalization and the Environment". In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.) **Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment**. p. 2.

CHAPTER 2

BRAZIL'S ROLE IN THE THREE CONFERENCES

2. Brazil's role in the Three Conferences

A) Brazil at the Stockholm Conference

At the time the Stockholm Conference was taking place, Brazil was undergoing its "economic miracle", with annual growth rates surpassing 10%. This period was also one that experienced the greatest political repression in the country's history.

As with many other authoritarian governments of important developing countries, the Brazilian Government depended on good economic results to maintain the support it received from influential sectors of society – results measured in terms of GDP growth, not income distribution. In the early seventies, countries with authoritarian regimes and high economic growth rates, such as South Africa, Spain, Iran or South Korea, viewed the growth of the environmental movement with concern. Its repercussion on these countries' economies was unknown and its political effects on their societies could not be positive, since environmentalism was associated with leftist movements.[1]

Therefore, developing countries with totalitarian regimes such as Brazil were doubly concerned: they feared, on the one hand, a questioning of the economic policies that sustained the regime and, on the other hand, the possibility of creating a new factor of political instability.

[1] Journalist and environmentalist Tom Athanasiou refers to a "never-ceasing charge that environmentalists are only watermelons, 'green on the outside but red on the inside'". ATHANASIOU, Tom. **Divided Planet: the ecology of rich and poor**. p. 17.

Both fears were justified: the economic growth of developing countries, as mentioned above, had, in fact, been questioned by certain lines of thinking that favored "*no growth*" or limitations on growth. There was also the perception that promoting the economic growth of totalitarian countries aggravated even further the problems related to human rights and the environment.

At that point, there was a considerable gap between the positions of public opinion in rich countries with regard to Brazil and the positions of governments. Public opinion openly criticized the abuses of the Brazilian Government in the area of human rights – especially with regard to indigenous peoples – and the environment. Governments, mindful of their political and economic priorities, viewed Brazil as an enemy of communism, which offered excellent prospects for investment. The major fears of the United States and Western Europe governments with regard to the authoritarian regimes of developing countries concerned – in fact – security, modernization and increasing power of the armed forces and the development of nuclear programs and their consequences for regional rivalries and conflicts.

In the Nordic countries such as Sweden, however, the attitudes of governments were closer to those of public opinion, and the environment was considered a priority. Brazil naturally feared that its positions during the Conference would be interpreted within a context of lack of democracy and abuse of human rights. The Swedish government, led at that moment by Prime Minister Olof Palme, was known for a policy of protesting and militancy that was causing (specially in the United States) serious concern: Palme provoked the ire of the Head of the American Delegation by referring, in a speech to the plenary, to the "ecocide" perpetrated by the United States in Vietnam[2]. According to the Brazilian Delegation's Report, "the

[2] ROWLAND, Wade. **The Plot to save the World** p. 118.

Scandinavian countries and Sweden in particular seemed willing [...] to turn the environmental crusade into a force of regeneration of their societies and an element of national prestige."[3] Brazil ended up being targeted by criticisms – even in the context of the negotiations – but it was certainly not the preferential target of the Swedish government during the Conference[4].

In the general context of the country's foreign policy, the Brazilian government interpreted the growing international attention to the environment as part of a process that could not favor Brazil and that would prioritize the so-called "new tasks", particularly issues like the environment, human rights, law of the sea, drugs, population, among others.

According to Ambassador Araújo Castro, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, in a speech given in 1970:

> No one doubts the need for timely and efficient measures, some of which depend on international cooperation, to combat pollution and to preserve the human environment. What seems essential is that these measures should not be taken in the abstract, but should consider the vital necessities of economic development. Developing countries can only view with apprehension the trend towards a policy of balance of power that places all its emphasis on regional disarmament, population control, discouraging the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes and discouraging a rapid of industrialization process[5].

[3] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment**, p. 1- 2.
[4] Interview with the author, Brasilia, September 2003.
[5] **Araújo Castro** quoted in AMADO, Rodrigo.. p. 183.

The positions Brazil would take to the Stockholm Conference reflected this context, in which many different and contradictory elements seemed to run counter to the country's interests. The Delegation was aware of Brazil's image as it arrived in Stockholm: not the image of an "economic miracle", of *bossa nova* or of the three times winner of the World Cup. The image was one of a country that had been, for the past eight years, under a military regime that gave total emphasis to economic growth, with no intention of controlling population growth, terrible records in the areas of human rights and in the preservation of nature, with strong nationalistic tendencies and ambitions to master nuclear technology.

The major challenge for Brazil in Stockholm, however, would not come from Europe or the United States, but from Argentina, whose position with regard to the hydropower potential of the Paraná River was affecting the construction plans for what was to be at the time the largest hydroelectric dam in the world: Itaipu. The opposition to the Argentinean proposal turned into the main battle of the Brazilian Delegation, headed by the Minister of the Interior, General José Costa Cavalcanti, who had been Minister of Energy and who would be, a few years later, the first Brazilian President of the bi-national Itaipu Company.

The preparation for the Stockholm Conference in the Brazilian government was the sole responsibility of the Ministry of External Relations. Given the awareness that the Conference would have an eminently political character, according to Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti – then Vice Minister of the Interior and member of the Brazilian delegation[6] – it seemed natural to the various members of the delegation that the preparatory process should be centered on the Ministry of External Relations.

[6] Interview with the author, Brasilia, September 2003.

In the explanation sent to the President of the Republic, dated December 22nd 1971, the Secretary-General of the National Security Council, General João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo, listed the six items "that the Ministry of External Relations, attuned to the problem and judging it appropriate to establish a position in accordance with national interests, proposes as lines of action to be adopted by Brazil" among which were: (item 5) "Avoiding isolated or fractionary initiatives by public administration bodies of the country that could damage the established policy"; and (item 6) "Development of initiatives aimed at public opinion to clarify the implications and repercussions of each proposal, neutralizing possible pressures considered damaging to our interests." According to the same document, "Considering the complexity of the subject […], it is necessary to listen to the ministries that are most engaged in the issue. All of the institutions consulted expressed their support for the line of action proposed by the Ministry of External Relations".[7]

When this information arrived at the President, General Emílio Garrastazu Médici, only the IV Session of the Preparatory Committee was left. When the official Delegation, designated by Presidential Decree of 24th of April 1972 – including several representatives of other institutions – met for the first time, the preparatory process had already ended. At this first meeting, which took place on the 10th and 11th of May, 1972, "the background of the Conference was analyzed as well as one of the basic documents […] [and] then tasks were distributed by theme and by commission to the various participants, who were responsible for analyzing them and presenting a Report of applicability and repercussions, the respective recommendations for the Brazilian case. A new meeting on

[7] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. A-2. The other items mentioned refer to the defense of the propositions that: a) the greater burden of correcting the deterioration of the environment falls on developed countries; b) economic development is an adequate instrument for resolving the problem of pollution of underdeveloped countries; c) propositions that result in a compromise that hinders development should be resisted; e) the debate should be conducted with a technical and political focus.

May 25th was dedicated to an appraisal of the themes and the general documents of the Conference[8]."

The extent of the Ministry of External Relations' autonomy in the preparatory process was such that the Report of the Brazilian Delegation read:

> The intrinsic limitations of the meeting – time, thematic diversity, conflicting interests, among others – […] restricted the value of the Conference as an effective forum for negotiations, contributed to making the preparatory phase of Stockholm, in practice, into a true process of understanding and coming together [...] As of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, held in Geneva in February 1971, the Conference was already underway.[9]

The Head of the Brazilian Delegation to the First Session of the Preparatory Committee, which took place in New York, in March 1970, Ambassador João Augusto de Araújo Castro, imprinted the Brazilian discourse, from the very first moment, the tone that would characterize the Brazilian positions in the following years. According to Vera Pedrosa:

> The Brazilian Delegation's efforts were aimed at reorienting the preparatory works of the Conference, broadening their initial scope to include the theme of development as a positive element of the solution to environmental problems. In this manner, one could avoid that the Conference would turn out to be a mere conservationist exercise, of interest to just a few developed countries. A battle was in place to prevent the conservative interests of developed countries in the sense of maintaining the *status quo* of the world economy, made use of the

[8] Ibid, p. 19.
[9] Ibid, p. 13.

"environmental path" to try to justify immobilist procedures and strategies.[10]

The important point in this analysis is the curious association between the interests of "conservationists" and "conservatives", whose short-lived marriage was only possible due to the controversial lines of action proposed by the Club of Rome. As Araújo Castro points out, the arguments involving the limitation of growth were only applicable to developing countries: "Clearly the developing countries will not want to incur the same errors of the highly industrialized countries, but it is evident that we could not accept the resurrection, in the middle of the twentieth century, of Rousseau's noble savage concept that gave color and flavor to French Romanticism".[11]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was considered at that time a precursor to environmental thought. According to Swiss professor Bernard Gagnebin, "Rousseau élève une véhémente protestation contre le progrès des sciences et l'accumulation des richesses [...] il ne faut pas oublier qu'en plein Siècle des Lumières l'idée de progrès était ancrée dans tous les esprits"[12]. (Rousseau raises a vehement protest against the progress of science and the accumulation of wealth [...] we should not forget that in the very Century of Lights the idea of progress was imprinted in all spirits). The search for the justification of modern environmentalism in Romanticism was not an acceptable argument for most analysts at the end of the sixties, a period in which the concept of progress and development was also "imprinted in all spirits". Years later, in analyzing the evolution of environmental thought, Luc Ferry, author of **Le Nouvel Ordre**

[10] PEDROSA, Vera**. O Meio Ambiente Dez Anos Após Estocolmo: a perspectiva brasileira**. p. 29.
[11] AMADO, Rodrigo, op cit, p. 183.
[12] GAGNEBIN, Bernard. "Jean Jacques Rousseau" In : **Enciclopeadia Universalis**, Corpus 16, p. 202.

Ecologique (1992) believes that there is an anti-humanist strain in the philosophical line of thinking that places the biosphere as a priority, and decries this attitude which, according to him, is inspired in German Romanticism and constitutes a deviation from "des droits de l'homme codifiés par la Révolution Française"[13] (human rights encoded by the French Revolution).

There is no doubt that the environmentalist discourse is strongly influenced by Romanticism[14], but special attention should also be given to the dangerous detours that the conservative focus had on the issue of the environment in the twentieth century. As João Almino reminds us, "Nazism enabled ecologism to be presented as a State ideology, there were even ecologist ideologists among the Nazi leadership".[15] Green activist Peter Staudenmaier, a student of the "green wing" of the Nazi party, asserts that "from its very beginning […] ecology was bound up in an intensely reactionary political framework"[16]. Ernst Haekel himself, the biologist who coined the term "ecology" in 1867, believed in the superiority of the Nordic races and was opposed to race mixing.

In 1930, Richard Walther Darré, by proclaiming that "the unity of blood and soil must be restored" transformed the Romantic motto into doctrine. The movement "Blut und Boden" (blood and soil) incorporates, according to João Almino, ecological ideals: "the attachment to the land, to nature (…) the criticism of progress, of the industrialized

[13] DOELNITZ, Tristan. "Environnement et développement: le rendez-vous de Rio" In: **Universalia** 1993, p. 95. Luc Ferry, France's Minister of Education between 2002 and 2004, caused controversy in the French environmentalist movement by associating environmentalism with Nazism, in 1992.
[14] ALMINO, João. **Naturezas Mortas: ecofilosofia das relações internacionais**. Almino comments on the influence of Romanticism on pages 13 - 14.
[15] Ibid, p. 28.
[16] STAUDENMAIER, Peter. "Fascist Ecology: The Green Wing of the Nazi Party and its Historical Antecedents". Institute for Social Ecology website, Vermont.

world and the artificiality of modern technology also reinforces the tendency, at the ideological level, of Nazism to refute both capitalism, and its market consumerism, and socialism"[17].

Rudolf Hess, the greatest promoter of the "green wing" of the Nazi party, placed Darré in key posts in the government (Leader of the Peasants of the *Reich* and, later, Minister of Agriculture). As early as 1935 new environmental legislation had been enacted in Germany and, in 1935, particularly severe legislation on the preservation of flora, fauna, and "natural monuments" was approved. A short time afterwards, a proposal was put forward for a wide-ranging law for the "protection of Mother Earth". According to Staudenmaier, "all the ministries were prepared to cooperate, save one; only the minister of the economy opposed the bill because of its impact on mining"[18].

It would be tempting to associate the results of new research on ecologism in Nazi Germany with recent events. The accusation by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, former student and environmentalist leader, that "ecofascism" could be detected in the dangerous resurgence of the "blood and soil" movement in Germany[19] seems strengthened by the historical revisionism of Darré.[20] The theories of the Club of Rome, in representing the return of a defense of ecologism by the corporate elite – at a time when the movement was mainly associated with the Left – can also be viewed from the "ecofascist" perspective. Despite the anti-Fascist credentials of the Club of Rome's founder, Aurélio Peccei – a hero of the resistance

[17] ALMINO, João, op cit, p. 28.
[18] It is worth noting that Goebbels, Bormann and Heydrich, according to Staudenmaier, were opposed to the "green wing" and considered Hess and his companions as "undependable dreamers, eccentrics, or simply security risks". After Hess's trip to England, "the environmentalist tendency was for the most part suppressed".
[19] ALMINO, João, opcit, p.29.
[20] BRAMWELL, Anna. "Darré: Was this man the 'Father of the Greens'?" In: **History Today**, September 1984, cited by Staudenmaier.

during World War II—his opinions in Stockholm during the "Distinguished Lectures Series", made an impression in the Conference:

> The main conclusion to be drawn from this study (The Limits to Growth) is that equilibrium within the human system and between it and its environment will anyhow be re-established. Evidently, it is in our collective interest rationally to plan for it, even at the cost of heretofore unimaginable sacrifices, and not to wait for forces outside our control to settle it. […] Collapse may also be caused by war and civil strife – if, for instance, the next wave of human population which will invade the planet in the next three or four decades does not find a place to settle or the means to satisfy its needs. […] On the other hand, society in equilibrium does not mean stagnation. Non-material-consuming and non-environment- degrading activities may be pursued indefinitely – such as education, art, music, religion, scientific research, sport, social interactions and most service activities[21].

The aforementioned studies associating environmentalism with Nazism did not exist in the early seventies; yet today they justify even more the indignation expressed by Araújo Castro and Miguel Ozório regarding the Club of Rome and other promoters of the limits to growth.

In a communication dated 12th November 1970, Ambassador Araújo Castro recalls Strong's first meeting as Secretary-General of the Stockholm Conference, mentioned in the previous chapter:

> Mr. Maurice Strong (Canadian), who U Thant has just designated as Secretary-General of the Conference [...] sought to avoid the more obviously contentious points in the presentation of purely "conservationist" theories on the "environment" and, in private

[21] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, p 15 18.

> conversation with the Brazilian representative, he confided his desire to ensure a more balanced position with regard to the priorities of developing countries.[22]

The positive evolution of the attention given to the demands of developing countries since Strong's nomination has already been mentioned relayed in Chapter 1 and, in this context, it is interesting to note Ambassador Araújo Castro's enthusiasm with this development. According to the Ambassador, Resolution 2657 on the preparatory work for the Conference approved by the General Assembly

> caused displeasure in certain circles, for the elements introduced through Brazil's initiative […] tend to transform what had seemed to be a mere enshrinement of the *status quo* and the economic gap between developed and developing countries into a clear protest movement[23].

Araújo Castro does not hide his misgivings regarding Strong's capacity to resist the pressures of rich countries, "despite his repeated professions of faith in 'development'." According to Araújo Castro, notwithstanding "Mr. Strong's willingness to 'play' politically on two fronts […] he was, already, clearly inclined towards a concept of policies on the human environment aimed above all at the preferences of the industrialized world".[24] Strong demonstrated, however, that he could resist the pressures of rich countries and ended up taking the Conference in the direction that interested Brazil.

Strong felt that his mandate would be brief if the direction the Conference was taking were not changed. In a recently published text, he states that, "when I became Secretary-General of the Conference […]

[22] Telegram 1140 of the New York Mission, confidential
[23] Telegram 1552 of the New York Mission, confidential.
[24] Ibid.

there was a strong movement on the part of developing countries, led by Brazil, to boycott the Conference"[25]. In reality, there was no desire on the part of Brazil to boycott the Conference, but rather to place it within a favorable context that could elicit the support of other developing countries.

Brazil had been taking a preponderant role in the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and in the Economic Commission for Latin America:

> We will not deny that, as of 1964, when for the first time an attempt was made to recognize the close correlation between problems of economic development and problems of international trade, developed countries showed some signs of more constructive consideration of the problems of underdeveloped countries. [26]

Brazil's position with regard to the environment started to be guided by the same reasoning: developing countries would accept the new theme proposed by the rich countries, but they wanted to see it included within the context of social and economic development—one of their traditional priorities within the United Nations, one of the three "Ds" – Disarmament, Decolonization and Development (from Araújo Castro's speech at the XVIII United Nations General Assembly, in 1963).

It is, therefore, not surprising that the Brazilian diplomat responsible for preparing and defending the Brazilian position was Ambassador Miguel Ozório de Almeida, recognized as one of the first

[25] STRONG, Maurice. "Stockholm Plus 30, Rio Plus 10: Creating a New Paradigm of Global Governance" In: SPETH, James Gustave (Ed.). **Worlds Apart: Globalization** and the Environment. p. 35.
[26] Araújo Castro quoted in AMADO, Rodrigo, op cit, p. 193.

diplomats to dedicate himself to economic development issues. Endowed with extraordinary intelligence, Miguel Ozório was not so much a formulator of ideas as was Araújo Castro, but he was a highly educated man and had particular talent for constructing precise arguments. Miguel Ozório's strong personality and the brilliance of his interventions, together with his freedom to act in the negotiations, turned him into one of the central figures of the preparatory process of the Conference.

Strong would probably have preferred to have given a more environmentalist connotation to Stockholm, but in view of Brazil's consistent opposition and that of other important developing countries who were already following Brazil's lead, he perceived that there was an alternative which, if on the one hand deviated from the goals of the Conference, on the other hand it certainly did not diminish the event's relevance. In a pragmatic attitude, Strong created the conditions for moving the Conference forward—with some of its original intentions—permitting, at the same time, the environment to be discussed within the context of social and economic development.

Miguel Ozório and Strong, as Enrique Iglesias recalls, mutually respected each other and had a good personal relationship. Miguel Ozório knew that a less intelligent attitude on the part of the Secretary-General of the Conference could result in a deadlock whose political repercussions were not in Brazil's interest.[27] The collection of speeches and documents "Brazil and the Preparation of the Stockholm Conference", prepared in April 1972, recognizes this *entente* from which both Strong and Miguel Ozório emerged as winners. The introduction states: "Mr. Maurice F. Strong, Secretary-General of the Conference, on his visit to Brazil in January 1972, characterized this Brazilian role [among the 27 member-countries that comprised the Preparatory Committee] as the greatest

[27] Interview with the author, Washington, October 2003.

contribution received by any country, which he came to thank for personally"[28].

Even before the start of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, Araújo Castro already refers to the importance of "stressing the leadership Brazil assumed in the reformulation of the United Nation's policies on the human environment".[29] This reformulation would become definitive after the Founex Meeting, in June 1971, in which Miguel Ozório would have a major role in including Brazilian propositions in the final Report.

In the working document presented at the Meeting, the Brazilian representative constructs a veritable theory on the interrelation of economic development and the environment and he manages, in an extraordinarily direct and succinct manner, to create arguments that constitute the foundation for concepts that, continually strengthened since then, are still used by developing countries. By explaining the series of obstacles faced by poor countries in their efforts to accelerate their development – having rich countries as a reference, but without their resources – Miguel Ozório argues that

> [w]henever the perspective of an investment in environment improvement cannot be directly or indirectly linked up to an increase of production (or productivity) and if this increase is not equal to or greater than the average productivity obtained in other economic endeavours, then the investment in environment will not be justified at this specific stage of economic development[30].

[28] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for Stockholm Conference**. p. 2.
[29] Telegram 1553, of the New York Mission, confidential.
[30] OZÓRIO, Miguel. "Economic Development and the Preservation of Environment". Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil´s Preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p. 14.

Miguel Ozório does not deny that some investments in the preservation and recovery of the environment could have important positive impacts on economic growth, even in particularly underdeveloped economies, and he believes that environmental investments could be justified for purely economic reasons. In discussing possible interrelations between economic development and the environment, the Brazilian Ambassador selected nine "elements" that could represent the main economic and environmental "actions" and "reactions". This led to a series of combinations involving cases ranging from environmental activities capable of causing excessive economic limitations to economic activities whose environmental consequences would require excessively expensive recovery. Miguel Ozório demonstrated in this exercise that there are many different combinations of development and environment to be applied in the specific cases of each country or region[31].

Theories on preservation and population control were approached in an ironic and courageous manner:

> for whom – or under what criteria – is the environment to be considered healthy, pleasant, desirable? If the subject should be an "anaconda", the world should be a swampy forest; if a "dromedary", then the destruction of forests and the creation of deserts would be proceeding at too slow a pace; if the human race, then there are too many forests and deserts […] In short, the environment under consideration will have to be considered from a "subjective" standpoint, and the "subject" will have to be "man". Even more than that, "man" must be understood as "homo sapiens" at his most advanced civilization stage […]. It is for that "subject" that environment must be preserved or recuperated[32].

[31] Miguel Ozório anticipates the theory that would be defended in Rio and Johannesburg, that there is no one formula for the preservation of the environment and the promotion of development.
[32]OZÓRIO, Miguel, op cit, p 3 and 4.

The theories concerning population control and limitations to growth were rejected for confusing means and ends and for ignoring the importance of the scale and growth of economies in themselves for creating the ability to understand the environment:

> any processes that would limit the dimensions of the subject, as a condition for environment improvement, would tend to reduce the overall enjoyment to be derived from the environment in inverse proportion to its improvement. It might have some characteristics of a zero sum game[33].

Miguel Ozório's conclusions point to the differing responsibilities of countries:

> the main environmental responsibility belongs to developed countries, and the main responsibility of underdeveloped countries is accelerated economic development itself […] the responsibility for the preservation of the environment grows as a function of economic development itself, being at a maximum among the most developed nations and at an absolute minimum in the conditions of initial stagnation[34].

The Founex Report, which would incorporate the Brazilian representative's line of thinking, manages to be surprisingly up-to-date, above all when compared to other documents that it sought to challenge, such as the reports of the Club of Rome which – from today's perspective – seem extraordinarily dated and shocking both for their "ecofascist" aspect mentioned above and for their distance from humanist thought. The position defended by Brazil, ironically, was essentially more democratic than the position defended in the line of thought strongly influenced by the European developed countries.

[33] Ibid, p. 9.
[34] Ibid, p. 14.

The ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) seminar, "held in beautiful – and as they say with pride – highly-polluted Mexico-City[35]", revealed the region's perception was that it still found itself in a comfortable position regarding pollution, which ensured it clear advantage for greater industrial development Therefore, Miguel Ozório could express a "friendlier" view of the environment, given the absence of the developed countries: "As we begin to see, in the long run the very goals of development become environmental in nature"[36]. On this occasion, the Delegation obtained the support of the region's governments for the Founex report and for the line of action Brazil was following in the Preparatory Committee.

In the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee in September – despite the Founex Report's good reception – elements still remained in the Secretary-General's Report that could damage the position of Brazil[37] and of other developing countries. Therefore, these countries undertook efforts to draft a Resolution to be submitted to the XXVI United Nations General Assembly. In October, in Lima, the Brazilian Delegation to the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 began negotiations for a pre-draft of the Resolution, entitled "Development and Environment", to be presented by the head of the Group of 77 to the General Assembly.

Brazil's role in the XXVI General Assembly contributed to the approval of Resolution 2849 by eighty-five votes in favor, two against and thirty-four abstentions. This victory proved especially important in

[35] OZÓRIO, Miguel. Speech given at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, New York, September 14th 1971, Ministry of External Relations, United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference, p. 9.
[36] OZÓRIO, Miguel. Speech given at the Regional Latin American Seminar on Development and Environment, 6-11 September, 1971, Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p. 12.
[37]PEDROSA, Vera, op. cit, p.42.

the context of the international media's renewed attention to the ideas of "no growth" due to the publishing of the book "Blueprint for Survival" (examined in the preceding chapter) in the very same month, of January 1972, that the Resolution was approved. The General Assembly also provided an occasion for both the Brazilian Permanent Representative to United Nations, Ambassador Sergio Armando Frazão, and Ambassador Miguel Ozório de Almeida to deliver particularly harsh speeches.

Ambassador Frazão, in referring to the manner in which the environment was being used to create a new code of behavior for developed countries and international financial institutions, warned that the developing countries "are being called upon to share the burden of the preservation of the ecology while the war on poverty is still considered to be '*une petite guerre*'." Frazão also denounced the "malicious trend according to which the old patterns of colonial paternalism are being replaced by a pseudo-scientific outlook to justify non-development"[38].

Miguel Ozório, in his first speech to the II Commission, presents a veritable report in which he explains what the Brazilian Delegation considers to be the legitimate and illegitimate motives for convening the Stockholm Conference. By addressing – among the legitimate motives – the issue of pollution on a global scale, the Brazilian representative lists the ten biggest pollutants, giving a detailed explanation of their utilization and its consequences and concludes that:

[38] FRAZÃO, Sergio Armando. Speech given at the II Commission. XXVI General Assembly, 8th October, 1971, Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p. 6.

> The whole world and, certainly, the underdeveloped countries, are looking at Stockholm as the place and time when the developed countries will commit themselves to taking all necessary steps to reduce or neutralize the emission of pollutants of broad international significance. This commitment should entail all the necessary national measures but also the financing of research in areas of world significance[39].

The more piercing parts of his speech refer to two of the "illegitimate motives": the issues of population control and of "common goods". Concerning the manner in which the subject of population was being addressed in the preparatory process for Stockholm, Miguel Ozório reiterates the arguments he had been presenting in previous meetings and protests against the "Calvinistic" attitude of developed countries, who believed that they had, by their very development, "demonstrated their right to salvation and perpetuation which would require the more numerous underdeveloped peoples to stop breeding and encroaching upon their delicious enjoyment of nature and of other natural resources." Regarding the question of "common goods", he mentions the acceptance of several delegations of a "World Trust" that would take judiciously protect certain natural resources: "If resources are shared, in trust by all peoples, then economic power, industrial productivity and financial control should also be shared. Since the latter is unthinkable to developed countries, the former shall also be unthinkable by underdeveloped countries"[40].

The words of the Brazilian representative provoked a violent reaction from the American representative, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who in his speech accused the Brazilian positions on population, "common

[39] OZÓRIO, Miguel. Speech given at the II Commission. XXVI General Assembly, 29th November, 1971, Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p. 11.
[40] Ibid, p.17 and 22.

goods" and zero growth of being paranoid and superficial, and explains that there was no "Calvinistic" attitude, but, rather, the success of developed countries as a result of "hard work". The Brazilian Representative, in a brilliant response, showed that all the "paranoia" of the Brazilian Delegation was based solidly on documents, from which he proceeded to read the main excerpts and explained to the American delegate that by contesting the "Calvinistic" attitude, he was simply reinforcing it:

> for him [Moynihan] underdevelopment is the result of laziness in the poor corners of the world while wealth is the result of hard work […]. I can assure the distinguished delegate of the United States that there is an inverse correlation between hard work and wealth and that the hardest working people in the world are the poor of the underdeveloped world when they find a job[41].

By the last Session of the Preparatory Committee, Brazil had obtained many significant victories and, above all, had managed to unite the developing world in a reaction against the restrictive vision proposed by the developed countries for a multilateral approach to the issue of the environment. This was, as Miguel Ozório said to Iglesias, a "holy conspiracy"[42]. The Brazilian attitude did not mean blocking the international environmental agenda – as certain delegations were alleging – since it was consistent with an alternative vision integrated into the Founex Report and Resolution 2849.

One issue, however, had not been satisfactorily resolved within the context of the Preparatory Committee: that of Principle 20, regarding the notification of risks outside the jurisdiction of a State. The Working

[41] OZÓRIO, Miguel. Speech proferred in the II Commission. XXVI General Assembly, 2nc 1971, Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p. 16.
[42] Interview with the author, Washington, October 2003.

Group that had negotiated the text of the Declaration obtained the approval of twenty-six of its twenty-seven members. Only Argentina expressed reservations because it was not satisfied with the non-inclusion of the prior notification clause in the text of the Principle, which read as follows:

> Relevant information must be supplied by States on activities or developments within their jurisdiction or under their control whenever they believe, or have reason to believe, that such information is needed to avoid the risk of significant adverse effects on the environment in areas beyond their national jurisdiction[43].

The Argentinean demand, previously submitted to other fora, was that States operating upstream on international rivers had to notify the States downstream as to the nature of their activities and that such information should be provided swiftly enough to permit analysis and possible verifications. For Brazil, who was developing the Itaipu Dam project jointly with Paraguay, such a position was unacceptable[44].

On the eve of the Conference, Argentina circulated a proposal for an additional amendment to Paragraph 20: "This information must also be supplied at the request of any of the parties concerned within appropriate time and with such data as may be available, permitting the above mentioned parties to be informed of and to judge themselves the nature and probable effects of such activities"[45]. This led Brazil to dedicate a great deal of its effort during the Stockholm Conference to countering the Argentinean initiative.

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[43] Appendix E of the Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, with a description of Brazil's role in Stockholm regarding Article 20 of the Declaration is found in Appendix I of this work.
[44] For detailed accounts of the negotiation on Article 20, see Appendix E of the Report, "Article 20 and the Declaration", and PEDROSA, Vera, op cit, p. 47-49 and 60-67.
[45] PEDROSA, Vera, op cit, p. 49.

As the Conference began, the issue of Principle 20 had acquired vital importance: it dealt with one of the projects of greatest political and economic relevance for the Government. At the same time, it involved the traditionally most delicate issue of Brazilian foreign policy: the relationship with Argentina. The greatest challenges of Stockholm had been overcome during the preparatory phase. The success of the Brazilian Delegation, therefore, depended on the opposition to the Argentinean proposal. It is interesting to note that four tactics had been prepared in this regard, and the last one – which highlighted the disagreements between Brazil and Argentina on a much wider scale – proved to be necessary in the end.

According to the Delegation Report, Brazil realized that it was practically isolated and the Argentinean position had gained numerous allies. In view of the fact that, at China's request, an *ad hoc* committee had been prepared to negotiate the Declaration, the Brazilian Delegation's tactic was to propose fourteen amendments to the draft Declaration, generating the sensation either that it could not be negotiated or that it would have to be reduced to a few paragraphs, or that there would have to be a return to the project forwarded by the Preparatory Committee. Brazil also defended the idea that the Declaration had to be approved by consensus, circumventing the possibility that it be approved by vote. At the same time, thanks to "parliamentary maneuvering", the Delegation delayed the start of the *ad hoc* committee's work for three days[46].

Brazil, however, was surprised by the swiftness of the *ad hoc* committee's work, and had to abandon its "delaying tactics"[47] and decided to propose changes in the principles dealing with compensations for damages incurred in a country's territory resulting from operations under

[46]Appendix E of the Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, p. E4 and E5.
[47]Ibid, p. E7 and E8.

the jurisdiction of other Parties; it also introduced an alternative text for Principle 20. Unsuccessful, the Delegation resorted to its last option: "maneuver to withdraw Principle 20 from the Declaration, returning the unresolved issue to the General Assembly"[48]. The subject would be negotiated by the Foreign Ministers of Argentina and Brazil during the XXVII General Assembly, which would result in the joint presentation of a text on cooperation among States in the area of the environment, approved in Resolution 2995[49]. Principle 20, therefore, was not included in the Stockholm Declaration, which did not hinder Argentina from continuing its crusade for mandatory prior consultations in other area.[50]

The success in blocking the approval of the Argentinean proposal had such repercussion, both then and in the collective memory, that other successes of the Brazilian Delegation were underestimated. In 1972, in fact, the priority of avoiding any obstacles to the construction of Itaipu could not compare to what would become the legacy of the Stockholm Conference. The Brazilian Delegation's firm position, especially with regard to Principle 20, provoked negative reactions outside of Brazil. According to the Delegation Report:

> There was […] a noticeable tendency, above all in the press, to attribute to certain countries an inflexible attitude that was endangering the success of the Meeting [...] The Brazilian delegation was considered by some a good target for these opinions, perhaps due to its firm and determined attitude during the preparatory period [….] Besides some of the efforts by a segment of the press to point to Brazil as conducting a negative leadership role in the Conference, some delegations also accused Brazil [...][51]

[48] Ibid, p. E8.
[49] PEDROSA, Vera, op cit, p. 65-66.
[50] Ibid, p. 66-67.
[51] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. 23-24.

The Report refers especially to the Nordic countries, whose attitude regarding the Brazilian positions, according to Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti, were much more negative than those of other developed countries[52]. According to Wade Rowland, "The ambiguous position of these countries [U.S. and Western European Nations] twisted itself into a series of inexplicable, rosily favourable comments on the 'brilliance' and 'hard-working' nature of the Brazilian delegation which were to be a source of continual bafflement for reporters attending press conferences and briefings held by these delegations"[53]. The Brazilian delegation, however, had enabled what Iglesias would later call "the great intellectual reconciliation of Stockholm: development and the environment"[54]. This victory, unquestionable from a diplomatic point of view, contributed to the duality existing in the Ministry of External Relations during the first half of the military regime that was widely revealed in Stockholm: an essentially conservative side, present in the "sovereigntist" position, and another that involved the right to development and the reduction of inequality of wealth among nations– a modern position, viewed with respect and affection even today.

Luiz Felipe Lampreia, former Brazilian Foreign Minister, in his book **Diplomacia Brasileira**, refers to this duality: there was a conservative regime, which was "somewhat softened by a foreign policy that, in the economic sphere, had an aggressively reformist and challenging posture with regard to the international order". The Itamaraty (Ministry of External Relations) had to deal with international pressures in favor of democracy, human rights, and in that particular case, the environment. "We did not know this, but it was, in a certain way, a means of neutralizing and countering the pressures against the Brazil of Castello Branco, of Costa e

[52] Interview with the author, Brasilia, September 2003.
[53] ROWLAND, Wade, op cit, p. 55.
[54] GUIMARÃES, Roberto Pereira. **Ecopolitics in the Third World: an institutional analysis of environmental management in Brazil.** p. 287.

Silva, and Médici". According to Ambassador Lampreia, the Finance Minister at the time, Delfim Netto, "found the positions of the Itamaraty extraordinarily amusing, for they certainly did not represent his view, but did constitute Brazil's discourse in these fora"[55].

At the height of the military regime, Brazil, therefore, defended an agenda that in subsequent years would prove adequate for a democratic country. Some sectors of Brazilian environmentalism point to Brazil's attitude in Stockholm as a historical error: Brazil helped to block the environmental agenda out of fear that instruments would be created to legitimize reduced sovereignty, a fear that was only justified because of the abuses committed by the Government, especially in the area of human rights. This analysis is based on the premise that the agenda proposed by the rich countries was "progressive". In retrospect, however, it is undeniable that the solutions proposed by the rich countries in 1972 turned out to be far more inappropriate and less democratic than those fought for by the developing countries in inserting the environmental agenda within the broader context of development.

Could the Brazilian Delegation have blocked the negotiations and in fact boycotted the Conference, as Strong feared? This was unlikely, for the political price would have been too high: such an attitude would certainly have divided the developing countries and, above all, would have represented a severe blow against one of the pillars of Brazilian diplomacy: the strengthening of multilateralism. Could Brazil have accepted the agenda proposed by the developed countries? Yes, but would this have permitted a "clean" alternative to our development? Would we have avoided mistakes?

Despite having declared that we did not want to repeat the mistakes of rich countries in their development process, we knew that it

[55] LAMPREIA, Luiz Felipe. **Diplomacia Brasileira: palavras, contextos e razões**. p.86-87.

was difficult to avoid them. What alternatives did the rich countries offer us in 1972? The conservation of natural resources and population control, which meant, in other words, that in order to grow, we had to pollute. The original agenda followed, in a certain manner, reasoning comparable to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in the sense that it aimed to keep the *status quo*, strengthening those that had already developed nuclear weapons arsenals and prohibiting the entrance of new "members", who would threaten the stability of the others. In the case of the environment, however, those who possess the arsenals – in this case, natural resources – are the developing countries.

The Brazilian position of not accepting the multilateral approach to environmental issues in an isolated manner, and to associate it with economic development, represented a constructive alternative and proved to be the correct political position, remembering that until this day, environmental negotiations are conducted from this perspective. Brazilian interventions should be highlighted, not only for their political appropriateness, but also for their quality, particularly those of Miguel Osório. In reading his speeches, a sense of his profound knowledge of the subject comes across, as does his absolute conviction that he was defending the interests of his country.

The Itamaraty emerged strengthened from the Stockholm Conference for having demonstrated that it knew both how to meet its Government's priorities –in this case, Itaipu –and that it could exert an international leadership role, thanks to the positions conceived "in House". Multilateralism also came out stronger due to the instruments it provided developing countries.

For Marcel Merle, "International Organizations are agents of transformation of international society to the extent that […] they offer a tribunal for the masses of disinherited peoples. Even if this still has not

brought about a change in the distribution of the means of power, it has affected the balance of power, which is not all material".[56] The Brazilian Delegation knew how to use the tribunal and non-material power and managed to take an important step towards the transformation of international society.

B) BRAZIL AT THE RIO CONFERENCE

Brazil, by accepting to organize the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, made a decision with important repercussions in both the domestic and foreign policy of the country. "Brazil, in environmental terms, was never the same after the Rio Conference", asserts sociologist Samyra Crespo, who conducted the important research project "What do Brazilians think about the environment and sustainable development?"[57] Without intending to be able to summarize in a few lines the history of the country in the two decades since Stockholm, a brief analysis of the period seems necessary in order to explain what led Brazil to offer itself as the host-country of the Conference.

From the economic point of view, the so-called "Brazilian miracle" had been challenged and finally defeated by two oil crises, the foreign debt crisis and inflation. The Brazilian development model, despite its positive aspects, was not adapted to changes in the international context and, worse, the country had to witness the growth of economies considered to be far less promising than its own. The blame cannot be laid simply on the world economy and on the developed countries for the decline of the economic situation. On the contrary, there is great irony in the fact that the greatest challenge to our model of development-the oil

[56] MERLE, Marcel. Sociologia das Relações Internacionais. p. 271.
[57] CRESPO, Samyra. "Uma visão sobre a evolução da consciência ambiental no Brasil nos anos 1990" In: TRIGUEIRO, André. **Meio Ambiente no Século 21: 21 especialistas falam da questão ambiental nas suas áreas de conhecimento**. p.63.

crisis-was initiated – voluntarily – by developing countries. Brazil would suffer other crises caused by developing countries – all of which, however, would result from internal crises of these countries and not from political planning, as was the case of the OPEC member-countries.

From the political point of view, the "political opening" and the end of the military regime enabled profound changes and challenges but, above all, greater participation of civil society and the strengthening of local governments to the prejudice of the traditional centralized model. Thanks to this, institutions gained force and there could be a direct focus on the major social issues, which showed that the country's problems were far from being over just by the return to democracy. The known consequences of poor income distribution, however, were especially aggravated in the cities. Crime – the most visible face of social injustice – became one of the major concerns of urban life and the registered trademark of the country abroad, replacing the human rights abuses committed by the State during the military period.

In the environmental area, the Brazilian circumstances led to the increasing interest of public opinion for the issue, but they also fueled the frustration with which the country was witnessing the unnecessary destruction of some of its natural resources – symbolized by the burnings in the Amazon– and the disrespect for the well-being of the population, the striking example being the fire caused by a leak in the oil pipelines in Cubatão, in February 1984.

With the return to democracy, Brazilian society began to express its dissatisfaction with the deterioration of environmental conditions, which repeated, step by step, albeit in a belated but accelerated pace, the same process observed in developed countries in the period from the fifties to the seventies. The urban middle class, besides living with the degradation of its neighborhoods, started to notice – with the increase in domestic

tourism— the destruction of the landscapes and the poor maintenance of parks, lakes and beaches. This similarity with the process that occurred in developed countries, recalls Professor Goldemberg[58], was also seen in the creation of environmental NGOs in the country and in the greater participation by the scientific community, whose original demands were linked to the opposition to the construction of nuclear power plants.

Brazilian society, however, had not resolved the basic problems of its population, such as health care, education and food, considered the preconditions for a society to prioritize the environment. Because of this factor, the issue of the environment entered into a long roster of social debts and was placed, with new elements, in the context described by Brazilian historian José Augusto Pádua as "the coexistence in Brazil of this double movement: a rich history of cultural affection for and laudatory praising of nature, on the one hand, and on the other, a history of continuous aggression against [nature's] major expressions".[59] The "affection" for the ecological issue spread throughout the country, NGOs gained strength in the fight against the aggression to environmental assets[60], but the undeniable progress in environmental legislation did not ensure that the Federal, State, and Municipal Governments had the capacity and means to effectively combat environmental abuses; not even the fact that that the protection of the environment had been included in the 1988 Constitution among the nine general principles of economic activity or that there was an entire chapter in that charter on the environment (Article 225) in Title VIII, "The Social Order". As Montesquieu states, in **De l'Esprit des Lois**: "Quand je vais dans un pays, je n'examine pas s'il y a des bonnes lois, mais si on exécute celles qui y sont, car il y a des bonnes

[58] Interview with the author, Brasilia, September 2003.
[59] GIL, Gilberto. "Algumas notas sobre cultura e ambiente" In: TRIGUEIRO, André.**Meio Ambiente no Século 21: 21 especialistas falam da questão ambiental nas** suas áreas de conhecimento. Cited p. 56-57.
[60] Law 7347, 27th July 1985.

lois partout"[61]. (When I visit a country, I do not observe if it has good laws, but if the ones that exist are enforced, because good laws are everywhere.) The great leap of local and community environmentalism towards a contemporary perspective of the economic, political and scientific implications of the environmental issue in Brazil occurs, undeniably, with the preparation and holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the country. "The over-exposure that the issue received here before, during and after the Conference", according to Samyra Crespo:

> definitively removed, for Brazilians, the ecological or environmental problem from that provincial mold that placed environmentalism into a "counterculture" slot, and rapidly, both among the informed elite and the general population (through the media), the environment started to be related to a series of dramatic events that emerged in the agenda of so-called global problems.[62].

What led the Government of President José Sarney, in December 1988, to propose Brazil as the host of the second largest United Nations Conferences on environmental issues? Certainly because politically, and in terms of image, the country had more to gain than to lose by making this high-risk decision.

A series of events in 1988, led Brazil to become the main focus of the international environmental debate – "the second wave of the environment", as Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares refers to it – unleashed to a great extent by the broad dissemination of the Brundtland Report, which brought with it an *aggiornata* agenda that reflected the environmental concerns of a new generation in developed countries[63]. It

[61] LE PRESTRE, Philippe. **Ecopolítica Internacional**. Cited p. 82.
[62] CRESPO, Samyra,, op cit, p. 62.
[63] Interview with the author, November 2003.

was no longer pollution – which had been satisfactorily overcome in rich countries– that dominated public opinion: among the new concerns were climate change and the loss of biological diversity. The increase in forest burnings in the Amazon according to new data – regardless of whether they were reliable – received special emphasis in the international media, as well as its consequences for the climate and biological diversity.

Some articles in the international press had great impact, especially one published by **The New York Times**, on 12th August 1988, entitled "Vast Amazon Fires, Man Made, linked to Global Warming", and an editorial in that same paper "Who is burning the Amazon?". In fact, the summer of 1988 in the Northern Hemisphere is remembered by ecologists as the "summer of the endangered Earth", for it generated so much negative news in the environmental area that **Time Magazine**, in 1989, selected – instead of its traditional "Man of the Year" – the Earth, as "Planet of the Year"[64].

The American and European summer heat wave convinced public opinion that the greenhouse effect was not just theory, and the news of droughts in China and the Soviet Union, of floods in Bangladesh and hurricanes in the Caribbean confirmed that the problem was global. The burnings in the Amazon were given special emphasis: it was, in principle, a local phenomenon, but with global consequences due to its effects on climate change and the destruction of its biological diversity. In addition, it was probably the only phenomenon over which some control could be imagined: after all, the burnings were caused mostly by human activity and adequate measures could be taken to halt them. Hurricanes, droughts, floods and heat waves could not be eliminated from one year to the next, but burnings could.

[64] SALE, Kirkpatrick. **The Green Revolution: the environmental movement 1962-1992**. p. 72.

Public opinion both in Brazil and abroad received information that mixed scientifically proven data with uncontested myths, such as that the Amazon was the "world's lungs". The recourse to public opinion feelings sometimes reached truly preposterous levels, as in the case of **Time Magazine** when it published "This year the Earth spoke, like God warning Noah of the deluge. Its message was loud and clear, and suddenly people began to listen, to ponder what portents the message held"[65].

The Government of President José Sarney, despite being focused on numerous domestic problems in the midst of its National Constitutional Assembly and going through one of the worst economic moments in the country's history, had to take measures that communicated – both internally and externally – the importance attributed by Brazil to the issue of the environment. The President launched, in October 1988, the same month that the new Constitution was adopted, the *Programa Nossa Natureza* (Our Nature Program), involving seven Ministries and whose goals were : a) to contain predatory actions on the environment and renewable natural resources; b) to strengthen the system of environmental protection in the Amazon region; c) to develop a process of environmental education and public awareness for the conservation of the environment; d) to control the occupation and sound use of the Legal Amazon, based on territorial planning; e) to regenerate the complex of ecosystems affected by human action; and f) to protect indigenous communities and the populations involved in extractivist processes[66]. The Government also announced the suspension of tax incentives to agricultural projects in areas of dense rainforest.

On 6th December 1988, in a speech delivered by Ambassador Paulo Nogueira Batista, the Brazilian Permanent Representative to the

[65] Ibid, p. 72.
[66] MESQUITA, Fernando César de Moreira. **Políticas de Meio Ambiente no Brasil**. p.15 and 16.

United Nations in the Second Commission of the General Assembly, Brazil presented its candidacy to host "the envisaged 1992 conference on environmental matters". The Conference still had no official title due to the disagreements of the Commission concerning its content and focus.

Fifteen days later, Chico Mendes was assassinated in Acre. The Government was surprised by the international repercussion of the death of a rubber tapper, mostly known in environmentalist circles in Brazil – despite having already received one of the most prestigious environmental awards, the Global 500, given by UNEP[67]. This death confirmed all of the worst aspects of Brazilian society in the view of the international press and could be approached from varied angles: violence, environment, human rights, rural workers, landowners, union activism, impunity, etc. Moreover, it directly challenged the *Programa Nossa Natureza*, especially with regard to the goal of "protecting […] populations involved in extractivist processes".

A few months after, in order to complement the measures announced by the Government, a decision was made to create the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA), which would assume the functions of four institutions that were to be dismantled: the Brazilian Forestry Institute (IBDF), the Special Secretariat for the Environment (SEMA), and the Superintendence for the Development of Fishing and the Superintendence of Rubber Tree Development. The Presidential Spokesperson at the time, Fernando César de Mesquita, was designated to preside over IBAMA; he had direct access to President Sarney, another indication of the priority of the environmental issue for the Government.

The process through which the idea of hosting the Conference in Brazil passed in the Ministry of External Affairs is worth noting.

[67] VENTURA, Zuenir. **Chico Mendes, Crime e Castigo**. p.10.

Itamaraty was following the worsening of the country's image abroad with concern, especially in its European and American embassies and consulates, where Brazil had become a major target for environmentalist groups and the press. Environmental issues, allied to the financial difficulties and the slowing down of the economy, were important barriers to the international recognition of the more positive aspects of Brazilian society, such as the return to democracy and the process of drafting a new Constitution. Despite its reputation for being an institution averse to bold decisions, it was the Itamaraty that suggested the idea of hosting the 1992 Conference in Brazil.

There was little enthusiasm in the Itamaraty for expanding the discussion on various environmental issues to the global level in the seventies and eighties, but as Everton Vargas, states, "the Itamaraty is the only Government body that has followed the evolution of environmental issues from a political point of view for over thirty years".[68] As aforementioned, the Ministry of External Relations repeated in the environmental field the forerunner role the Brazilian Government had with respect to economic development. The Itamaraty – despite being seen by some critics as an institution that knows how to justify the unjustifiable in a talented way– has had, according to Ambassador Roberto Abdenur, the ability "to consolidate the notion that the insertion of the country into the external arena is always one more source of opportunities for national development".[69] Some diplomats saw that at that moment of crisis the issue of the environment could represent an opportunity.

A group of countries, led by the Nordic countries and Canada, consulted Brazil during the XLIV United Nations General Assembly in October 1988 about the possibility of co-sponsoring a draft Resolution

[68] Interview with the author, Brasilia, November 2003.
[69] AMORIM, Celso. **Política Externa. Democracia. Desenvolvimento**. Introduction by Roberto Abdenur. p. 11.

which would convene a "world conference on environmental matters, under the auspices of the United Nations". These countries had not forgotten the firm Brazilian action in Stockholm and its capacity to bring other developing countries around to its points of view. The text, recalls Everton Vargas – at that time in charge of environmental issues in the New York Mission – did not manage to obtain the support of the Group of 77, for various countries of that Group viewed the initiative as a means of generating support for the propositions of the Brundtland Report. Nevertheless, Paulo Nogueira Batista immediately proposed that Brazil host the probable conference without prejudice to suggesting a series of changes to the draft Resolution[70].

In Brasilia, the Vice-Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima, discussed the idea of hosting the Conference in Brazil with the Under-Secretary-General for Multilateral Affairs, Ambassador Bernardo Pericás Neto. According to Flecha de Lima, "the focus of the issue of the environment was on Brazil", but in reality, the rich countries were the ones most responsible for the global threats to the environment and Brazil's problems, in comparison to those of other developing countries or of the Eastern-European countries, did not need to be concealed. "There was no reason to fear the debate", for this attitude would only aggravate the situation, which tended to worsen with the prospect of three years of preparation for the conference that was about to be convened. Ambassador Flecha de Lima, at that moment interim Minister, took the proposal to host the Conference to President Sarney, "who immediately accepted the idea"[71].

The other candidates to host the 1992 Conference were Sweden and Canada. Brazil, who wanted to avoid being worn down by a campaign

[70] Interview granted by Everton Vargas to the author, Brasilia, November 2003.
[71] Interview granted by Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima to the author, Brasilia, November 2003.

for the candidacy, decided to negotiate Canada's support immediately. Ambassador Flecha de Lima travelled to Ottawa, obtained Canadian support and agreed to give Brazil's approval to the designation of Maurice Strong as Secretary-General of the Conference[72].

Ambassadors Flecha de Lima and Nogueira Batista in no way wanted to assume – with the decision to host the Conference—a position of alignment with the priorities of the developed countries. The changes in the Brazilian position occurred much more as a result of domestic circumstances, due to the return of democracy and the new Constitution. Brazil could admit to its civil society the problems connected to the environment and the difficulty of tackling them, but the country would continue to defend that its economic development was the best way to deal with environmental problems and that sovereignty over its natural resources was unquestionable.

At the end of the eighties and the early nineties, the almost ideological threat of the Club of Rome was absent, but new ideas were gaining ground with regard to "*global commons*", whose definition was still vague and subject to broad variations. Since the publication of the book **The Tragedy of the Commons** in 1968 by biologist Garret Hardin, alternatives were emerging as to the use and preservation of common goods, which normally referred to air and sea. Scientific progress started

[72] Miguel Ozório had officially manifested his appreciation of the Brazilian government for Strong's role in the preparation of Stockholm: "I would like to put on record the appreciation of the Brazilian Government for the efforts he (Strong) has done to ensure that the interests of the developing countries are adequately taken care of" (Speech given at the XXVI General Assembly, 2nd December 1971). No one could imagine that, twenty years later, the second United Nations conference on the environment would take place in Brazil. Miguel Ozório, weakened by a long illness, could not participate in the Rio Conference. According to Brazilian economist Lucas Assunção (interview with the author, December 2003), Strong's assistant at the time, Strong insisted on visiting Miguel Ozório in his home in 1992. On leaving the meeting, Strong reiterated his profound admiration for the role of the Brazilian delegate in Stockholm.

to justify that the concept of "common goods" could extend, for example, to tropical forests. The forests, traditionally cherished for their beauty, their Indians and their animals, began to be even more valued for the "noble" function of acting as a sink for greenhouse gases and for their biological diversity, whose utilization through adequate technology could ensure extraordinary progress in medicine, agriculture, etc. Their destruction became, on the other hand, a more serious issue, for logging and burning could "release" troubling levels of emissions and the loss of biological diversity would be irreversible. The "incompetence" of countries that harbored these forests in preserving them would therefore justify foreign intervention to generally protect mankind.

This idea, which was even more attractive to the developed countries if the preservation of tropical forests allowed them to preserve their patterns of production and consumption, presented several obvious problems, mainly the disregard for the principle of a State's sovereignty over its natural resources that was clearly established in the Stockholm Declaration and the scientific inaccuracy that there can be a quantitative comparison between the emissions of rich countries and the capacity of forests as sinks.

The international pressure expressed itself in many ways and, at that time, there could be no meeting with an authority of a developed country in which the subject of the environment did not come up. A typical example was the trip to Brazil by influential members of the American Congress, in early 1989, among which were Representative John Bryant and Senators Tim Wirth, Jack Heinz and Al Gore – who would later become Vice-President – in a mission whose main goal was to gain better knowledge of the environmental situation in the country. The original agenda of the trip, organized in advance by biologist Tom Lovejoy of the Smithsonian Institution, included a visit to Chico Mendes. The group met with politicians – including the President - as well as executives and

representatives of civil society, but Chico Mendes had already been assassinated.

The idea of extending the "droit d'ingérence" (right to intervene), or "devoir d'ingérence" (duty to intervene) to environmental issues was also gaining ground. The concept had been developed in 1987 to deal with humanitarian issues by French politician Bernard Kouchner, creator of the Doctors without Borders – an entity that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999[73]. In the context of the end of the Cold War, with the global strengthening of values such as democracy and respect for human rights, it seemed inadmissible to Kouchner that in the subtext of legal documents it could be "licite, quoique inélégant, de massacrer sa propre population" (legal, although inelegant, to massacre one's own population). This new "doctrine", which openly challenged the concept of sovereignty, would impose the "devoir d'assistance à peuple en danger" (duty to assist peoples in danger)[74]. In the following year, in view of the media focus on the environment, voices emerged that defended the development of this "doctrine" for "environmental massacres."

The "right to intervene" was immediately criticized by numerous jurists who did not accept the simplification that its defenders made of International Law nor the omissions of existing legal recourse to condemn and act in cases of repeated human rights abuses in a country[75]. Even so, the idea of intervention – or limiting a country's sovereignty – gained supporters in cases where the country was not capable of defending its population or preserving its environment.

[73] The concept was developed by Kouchner and Mario Bettati, Professor of Public International Law at the University of Paris II, stemming from the original idea of Jean-François Revel. Kouchner was, later, administrator of the United Nations in Kosovo. Kouchner is now France's Foreign Minister.

[74] CORTEN, Olivier. "Les Ambigüités du Droit d'Ingérence Humanitaire" In : **Courrier de l'UNESCO**, June 1999.

[75] Ibidem.

In the meeting on protection of the atmosphere in the Hague, in March 1989, to which twenty-four countries were invited at the level of Heads of State and Government, the then Vice-Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima – who represented President José Sarney, heard directly from the Prime-Minister of France, Michel Rocard, that Brazil was not capable of taking care of the Amazon[76]. At the end of the meeting, a declaration was approved that "was received, by some analysts, as a demonstration of the willingness of States to renounce their sovereignty regarding policies that affect the global environment"[77]. This misinterpretation strengthened, specially after the French Government published in the country's major newspapers notices alleging that the Sarney Government was willing renounce part of its national sovereignty to enable the action of a supranational organization in defense of the environment. The Brazilian Government officially expressed its "perplexity and displeasure" regarding the incident, which took on considerable proportions.[78]

Brazil sought to coordinate regional positions in two important meetings that took place in the country, still in the period in which Brazil was only a candidate to host the 1992 Conference: the IV Ministerial Meeting on the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean in March 1989, in Brasilia, and the I Meeting of the Presidents of the Amazonian Countries, in Manaus, in May of the same year. In both meetings, the importance of discussing the environment within the context of development was reiterated, as was the need to improve the social conditions of populations. The three pillars of sustainable development were thus strengthened as the legitimate aspirations of the region – three years before the consolidation of the concept in Rio.

[76] Interview with the author, Brasilia, November 2003.
[77] VARGAS, Everton. **Parceria Global? As alterações climáticas e a questão do** desenvolvimento. p. 61.
[78] DAUNAY, Ivo. **Financial Times**, 7th April 1989.

Fabio Feldmann, a Federal Congressman who had organized a group of parliamentarians that managed to give special emphasis to the environment in the new Constitution, recalls that, despite the willingness of members of the Sarney Government to alter the Brazilian discourse, the defensive and "sovereigntist" attitude reemerged as the Brazilian capacity to face the challenge of protecting its environmental assets was called into question[79]. This is seen, for example, in speeches such as the one delivered by Paulo Nogueira Batista, one year after Brazil offered to host the Conference: "Environmental degradation in the developing world is essentially a problem of local dimension. Seldom can we speak in this regard of transboundary environmental effects, especially of a global nature[80]".

Less than a year later, nevertheless, the then Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek would state in a speech in Mexico:

> We do not intend, and let this be very clear, to avoid our responsibilities regarding the maintenance of the global environmental equilibrium. We are willing, to this end, to work intensely with countries of all other regions in the search for solutions to the big problems that affect the global environment.[81]

It became impossible to continue to deny the difficulties that the Government faced concerning the issues that most provoked the world's interest in Brazil. The external pressures exerted strong influence, but it was the reaction of Brazilian civil society to the transparency that the Government helped to promote that would force it to change its discourse. The disdain for the environment ended up being associated with the evils of the military period, and the issue acquired an important political

[79]Interview with the author, Brasilia, October 2003.
[80] BATISTA, Paulo Nogueira. Speech in the United Nations General Assembly, 23rd October 1989.
[81] REZEK, Francisco. Speech in the Preparatory Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean, México City, 5th March 1991.

dimension that would be strengthened in the Government of President Fernando Collor de Mello.

On assuming the Presidency in March 1990, Fernando Collor announced that the environment would be one of his priorities. Aware that he would preside the largest international conference of all times in the middle of his mandate, the President, with his considerable sensibility to the importance of political marketing, placed the respected ecologist José Lutzemberger in the Secretariat for the Environment of the Presidency of the Republic and adopted a discourse that managed to please – at least initially – the skeptical American professor Warren Dean, author of **With Broadax and Firebrand** and a great specialist on the Atlantic Forest[82].

On occasion of the official announcement that the Conference would take place in Rio, in August 1990, the President proclaimed himself as the world leader of the environmental cause :

> I lead with conviction and firmness the fight for the protection of the environment and for the strengthening of ecological awareness in Brazil and all over the world. My active engagement in this cause comes from very deep personal feelings that have nothing to do with considerations of another nature. I belong to a generation that placed the ecological issue as a central problem of the international agenda. I have a commitment to my generation, and to my time.[83]

The responsibility for the organization of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would be placed on the Itamaraty and on the diplomats working in the Presidency. A Division of

[82] DEAN, Warren. A Ferro e Fogo: a história e a devastação da mata atlântica brasileira. p. 355. (With Broadax and Firebrand, Brazilian edition)
[83] COLLOR, Fernando. Speech given during a visit to the Tijuca National Park, Rio de Janeiro, 11th August 1990.

the Environment (DEMA) was created, directly linked to the Vice-Minister's Office, headed by Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, who also assumed the functions of the Executive Secretary of the Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (CIMA). The operational aspects of the organization of the Conference were worked out by the National Working Group (GTN), whose President was Carlos Moreira Garcia, who had as Executive Secretary Flávio Miragaia Perri, with a staff of more than twenty diplomats and others.

A broad reevaluation of the Brazilian positions began in DEMA. According to Macedo Soares, this reevaluation had already partially occurred at the beginning of the eighties, but in a "very subtle and barely perceptible" manner. In fact, the conclusions of the thesis submitted by Vera Pedrosa, in 1984[84], suggested that the moment had arrived for certain changes in the Brazilian positions:

> The characteristics of the world situation in 1982 [...] removed from the environmental effort some of the motivations so well understood in 1972 by those responsible for Brazilian foreign policy. […] Both the continuation of the study of the issue of the interrelations (between populations, resources and environment) as well as the drafting of a prospective document for the year 2000 would lead to a profound revision of certain aspects of the Brazilian positions established in 1970/72. [….] the 1980s proved favorable for a change in Brazil's perspective in relation to the previous decade with regard to international cooperation in matters of the environment. […] As a result of verified developments, the Brazilian stance in the environmental forum can today be considerably more flexible than in the past.[85]

[84] Vera Pedrosa had worked with Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares in the United Nations Division until 1983.
[85] PEDROSA, Vera, op cit, p. 150 a 152.

According to Macedo Soares, however, until the end of the 1980s the basic guidelines persisted concerning non-discussion of these issues. As of 1990, there was no intention of changing for change's sake, as if there was something to be corrected: the change would simply be to begin discussing the issues. "We had to put an end to the tendency of not speaking about issues: when we were asked about the Amazon, we responded about sovereignty, and so forth"[86]. One of the first concerns was gathering of information and using, in a dynamic manner, the various bodies of the Federal, State and Municipal Governments and the scientific and academic communities, to demonstrate that there was solid foundation on which to enhance the protection of the environment in Brazil. The study on deforestation undertaken by the National Institute of Space Research (INPE) and by the National Institute for Amazon Research (INPA) – based on satellite information obtained in August, 1989 and published in August, 1990[87] – was an exemplary case, particularly because it demonstrated the national capacity to challenge numbers obtained with less precision from external sources. The Government, consistent with its intention of broadly opening up the economy, was more open to foreign collaboration in the area of the environment but still desired to strengthen its own institutions.

The interaction of the DEMA with the Brazilian society was conducted through CIMA and constituted a new experience for the Itamaraty in the environmental field, in terms of the drawing up of instructions for the Brazilian Delegation. It brought together staff from several governmental bodies and representatives of class entities and NGOs as observers. CIMA met for the first time in June 1990, when only the First Session of the Preparatory Committee had taken place, whose objective was organizational and not substantial. Until the Conference, CIMA met another thirteen times, contributing to the development of

[86] Interview with the author, Brasilia, November 2003.
[87] FEARNSIDE, Philip, TARDIN, Antonio Tebaldi and MEIRA FILHO, Luiz Gylvan. **Deforastation Rate in Brazilian Amazonia**.

Brazilian positions as well as to the National Report presented to the Conference.

During the preparatory period of the Conference, Brazil adopted a very different leadership posture than that of Stockholm: the Rio Conference had been convened in the spirit of the main principles for which Brazil had fought in Stockholm. The title of the Conference itself paid tribute in a way to Founex [88]. However, for Brazil, as for Sweden in 1972, the success of the Conference was essential. Brazil's positions would have to be firm, but its role would have to take into account the need to seek consensus.

At the Preparatory Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Mexico, in March 1991, Brazil contributed to unite all of the common positions of the region's countries into a single document– the Tlatelolco Platform on Environment and Development. Two meetings were organized with the intention of further strengthening Brazil's regional leadership – and that of the President –: the Meeting of the Member Countries of the Amazonian Cooperation Treaty, in Manaus, and the Meeting of Member Countries of the Mercosul, including Bolivia and Chile, in Canela, Rio Grande do Sul. Both meetings occurred at the presidential level in February 1992.

As the Conference drew closer, the eyes of the world were turned on Rio de Janeiro, a place that – as President Collor stated in the speech that formalized its designation as host-city – was chosen "despite […] numerous objections, […] arguments that discouraged this choice for various motives, including lack of security and the supposed decay of the city"[89]. The Federal Government, through the

[88] As seen in chapter 1, the title of the Report was "Development and Environment".
[89] COLLOR, Fernando. Speech proferred on a visit to the Tijuca National Park in Rio de Janeiro, 11th August 1990.

National Working Group (GTN) and in close collaboration with the State and City Governments of Rio de Janeiro – despite the political differences between President Collor, Governor Leonel Brizola and Mayor Marcelo Alencar –promoted a huge organizational effort that ensured, with the support of the city residents, an excellent atmosphere for the thousands of Conference delegates, special guests, members of NGOs and, in the last three days, for the biggest gathering of Heads of State and Government in one city in the Twentieth Century. When President Collor arrived in Rio for what should have been his pinnacle, however, the erosion of his Government due to accusations of corruption was immense and he only had three months left in the Presidency.

The Brazilian Delegation to the Conference reflected the political importance and the attention given by the media to the largest international event ever to take place in Brazil: one hundred and fifty official members from Federal, State and Municipal Governments, as well as Parliamentarians. There were, however, only eight representatives from non-governmental entities. As the Conference began, the Brazilian Presidency divided the work into eight negotiating contact groups. The four groups where the toughest negotiations were expected were the Finance Group, presided by Ambassador Rubens Ricupero; the Technology Transfer Group, under the responsibility of Ambassador Celso Amorim; the Declaration on Forests Group, with Ambassador Bernardo Pericás Neto in charge; and the Biological Diversity Group, under the responsibility of Ambassador Luiz Felipe Teixeira Soares. Ambassador Marcos Azambuja was designated Special Representative for the Coordination of Brazilian Positions, Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg was in charge of the contacts of the Delegation with regional groups and the higher authorities of United Nations, and Ambassador Luiz Augusto Saint-Brisson de Araújo Castro was the Spokesperson for the Delegation, which had another five ambassadors who directly assisted

the President and the Minister and another twenty-two diplomats exclusively for the negotiation efforts[90].

Brazil participated actively in the preparatory process – and in the Conference itself – as well as in the negotiations of the five documents to be signed in Rio, in which the Country had profound interests at stake due to its exceptional circumstance of representing the entire environmental agenda: pollution, forests, fishing, population, poverty, biodiversity, desertification and drought, soil resources, water resources, toxic waste, emissions—all of these issues were important to the country. Regarding the Framework Convention on Climate Change, Brazil led the movement to remove the negotiations from UNEP, and place them under the General Assembly with the goal of making them less technical and scientific and reinforce its political nature. Brazil also sought to avoid measures that emphasized the role of forests as CO_2 sinks, which removed the focus from those truly responsible for emissions: the industrialized countries.

At the Convention on Biological Diversity, Brazil had to prevent above all else the notion that biological resources represented a "common heritage of mankind". On the contrary, Brazil achieved the recognition of sovereignty over natural resources: this would happen for the first time in a Convention— an important step, for it legalized a Principle of the Stockholm Declaration. The other main concerns were focused on gaining recognition for the economic value of compensating local and indigenous communities for the utilization of their traditional knowledge. Brazil found itself simultaneously as a country possessing biotechnology, with jurisdiction over the largest share of biological and genetic resources of the planet, and as a *demandeur* of more resources and the transfer of

[90]MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development**. p. 65-66.

new technologies. Therefore, the decidedly valuable role of conciliator fit the country well in assuring a swift end to the Convention in time for the Rio Conference.

The Declaration on Forests was certainly the most important consensual document signed up to that moment on the issue, but it was also the result of firm opposition by Brazil and other developing countries, especially Malaysia, to the negotiation of a convention on forests. Brazil, in coordination with the other developing countries, managed to have the document emphasize the importance of international cooperation rather than oversight and to include austral, boreal, sub-temperate, temperate and sub-tropical as well as tropical forests. Brazil played a determining role in getting the Declaration also to recognize the importance of the populations living in the forests and their right to social and economic development on a sustainable basis. Finally, the developing countries, with Brazil's effort, managed to avoid the mention of a future convention on forests and to reduce the emphasis on the role of the forests as carbon sinks, as in the Convention on Climate.

As seen in Chapter 1, both Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration had numerous contributions by the Brazilian Delegation. The awareness that the environmental agenda permeated all of the multilateral issues, with ever increasing intensity, led Brazil to take advantage of a new opening for cooperation and "to control it to the extent possible, transforming it into constructive ground for development"[91]. The Brazilian Delegation expected Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration to become a conceptual resource that could guide future stages of international cooperation. Both documents, in fact, did become required references, but met with the difficulty of implementing Agenda 21 in view of the rich countries not

[91] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto. "O Tratamento Multilateral do Meio Ambiente: ensaio de um novo espaço ideológico" In: **Caderno do IPRI**, n. 18, p. 32.

honoring the commitments made in Rio. However, as Rubens Ricupero recalls in his book **Visões do Brasil**, the internal dimensions of implementation are also very important: in order to apply the objectives of the Conference, Brazil would need to "make a serious internal effort in order to demonstrate that we are capable of efficiently implementing a national environmental policy that would make us creditors of international credibility"[92] .

In the description of the opening ceremony of the Rio Conference in his book of memoirs, **Where on Earth are We Going?**, Strong says that the speech by President Collor "was something of a surprise, so candid was he about Brazil's environmental problems, including those affecting the Amazon. At the same time he strongly articulated the position of the developing countries on the issue of new and additional financial resources".[93] Few foreigners would be more apt to understand the changes in the Brazilian discourse than the Secretary-General of the Stockholm and Rio Conferences. Brazil, as the Delegation Report points out, managed to defend in the Rio Conference (with special efforts to ensure that the negotiations flowed in the best possible manner) carefully developed positions and fulfilled its functions as a host-country without "running from the transparent acknowledgement of the problems and difficulties that still clearly characterize Brazilian society", so that it was "the country who epitomized the Conference"[94].

The Brazilian discourse, as was seen, was altered as a result of internal changes in the country: the issue of sovereignty went from a mechanism that guaranteed the Government the legitimacy to act as it willed within the national territory to a principle that should be utilized

[92]RICUPERO, Rubens. Visões do Brasil: ensaios sobre a história e a inserção do Brasil. p. 148.
[93]STRONG, Maurice. Where on Earth are We Going? p. 226.
[94]MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, op cit, p. 11.

when a democratic regime faced situations considered threatening. Brazil began to admit that what happened within its territory could be of interest to other countries, but would continue to be its sole responsibility.

Brazil was no longer the country that had to accept part of the environmental agenda as an imposition by industrialized countries. The evils that befell the American and European middle classes in the sixties were affecting their Brazilian counterparts in the eighties: polluted cities like Pittsburgh or Birmingham in the sixties, environmental accidents – Cubatão was the Brazilian Minamata. Brazil went through the traumas that brought about and justified the growth of the environmental movement in the United States and Europe. The major environmental problems of the rich countries legitimately became ours. At the same time, the country continued to be one of the largest reserves of natural resources on the planet.

As Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro recalls in his memoirs, foreign policy is the "the first line of defense of the country"[95]. In 1992, the emergence of new lines of defense could be detected, resulting from the strengthening of institutions and legislation, but, above all, from the greater participation of many actors that would add, in the following years, a new dimension to the environmental debate in the country.

C) BRAZIL AT THE JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT

In the ten years that separate the Rio Conference from the Johannesburg Summit, Brazil's international position with regard to the environment changed significantly. On the one hand, the focus of the greatest criticism by contemporary environmentalism was on globalization,

[95] GUERREIRO, Ramiro Saraiva. **Lembranças de um empregado do Itamaraty**. p. 201.

of which developing countries like Brazil are perceived as victims, or as having little power to change the process. On the other hand, Brazil is internationally recognized as one of the developing countries with the most progress in the environmental area in the last few years. The growing internal awareness of the scientific complexity and the social and economic implications of the environmental issue led to unique dynamics, in which the Federal Government interacts with numerous other actors: the most significant demonstration of this was the careful drafting of the Brazilian Agenda 21 presented at Johannesburg, resulting from five years of work and consultations with forty-thousand people.

Brazil, for all of its economic difficulties, inequality, injustice, and environmental abuse, could arrive in Johannesburg with a delegation of two-hundred and thirty people, among which were one hundred and seventy members of NGOs. According to Fabio Feldmann, Special Representative of the President for the Participation of Brazilian Society in the World Summit on Sustainable Development and Executive Secretary of the Brazilian Forum on Climate Change, Johannesburg was the only of the three large United Nations Conferences on the environment to which Brazil "arrived with its head held up high"[96].

The strengthening of civil society was perhaps the greatest legacy of the period that witnessed the impeachment of President Collor, the launching of the Real Plan in the Presidency of Itamar Franco and the long period of economic stability, unknown in the second half of the twentieth century, under President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. With over eight years without significant inflation, the Brazilian economy did not "take off" as expected, but civil society did so instead. Brazil, thanks to its strong identity, with its idiosyncrasies and capacity to absorb what is new, did not fail in its attempt to be another country other than the one it can realistically be.

[96]Interview with the author, Brasilia, October 2003.

After the Rio Conference, "the main internal factor that contributed to the conceptual modernization of environmental management and the progressive strength of the issue in the public agenda", asserts Samyra Crespo, "was the extension of and increase in the involvement in democratic political life. It was also, and this is not a positive factor, the increase and aggravation of environmental problems afflicting our population." The increase in involvement in democratic political life, in fact, added another dynamic to the utilization of mechanisms of environmental protection that already existed in the country. The National Environmental Policy, for example, had been created in 1981, establishing, as former Minister of the Environment José Carlos Carvalho recalls, in **A vocação democrática da gestão ambiental brasileira e o papel do Poder**, "mechanisms for collaborative and participatory management, through the creation of the National Environment Council (CONAMA), a collaborative body of a deliberative nature, which already at that time ensured the participation of civil society[97]".

In the National Congress, evolution was also seen in the approach to the issue: "Gradually, parliamentarians are getting used to addressing ecology where it apparently shouldn't be", says Federal Congressman Fernando Gabeira, "If the first stage of this parliamentary saga was aimed at a defensive tactic, trying to avoid the worst and contain the process of destruction, at a later moment, the task may be to redirect the country towards sustainability".[98] Congress had begun to react in the last few years much more to internal demands than to situations resulting from international pressures.

[97] CARVALHO, José Carlos. "A vocação democrática da gestão ambiental brasileira e o papel do Poder Executivo" In: TRIGUEIRO, André. **Meio Ambiente no Século 21: 21 especialistas falam da questão ambiental nas suas áreas de conhecimento**. p. 261.

[98] GABEIRA, Fernando, "Congresso e Meio Ambiente" In: TRIGUEIRO, André, op cit, p. 281 and 283.

A broad study, based on surveys conducted in 1992, 1997 and 2002, shows a notable increase in interest by Brazilian civil society for the environmental issue, but also reveals (and this worried the authors of the study) the persistence of certain prejudices that characterize the initial phase of environmental awareness. "Regardless of social class, education, race, sex, or religion, Brazilians consider the environment to be synonymous to flora and fauna. To be an environmentalist is to defend 'nature'." When asked to state the greatest environmental problem in Brazil and in the world, the response of more than half of those interviewed was deforestation. On the other hand, similarly to what is observed in richer countries, the majority of interviewees showed concern for "nature that is distant […] unrelated to their immediate sensory experience". The study shows that "for those living in the Southeast, the priority was the protection of the Amazon […]; for Northeasterners, priorities for protection should be the Amazon and Atlantic Forests"[99].

The difficulties linked to urban life may not be acknowledged by most of the population as an environmental problem, but this does not prevent the research from demonstrating that an increasing number of Brazilians believe that problems in their towns and communities should be solved at the local level, not through central and state governments. In this sense, Samyra Crespo points out, "the growing number of democratic mechanisms for political participation, for formulation of public policy and for management of community programs has been contributing […] to the more active engagement by the population in the solution of identified problems"[100].

Environmental awareness in a developing country – whose concerns are more naturally linked to unemployment, health, education,

[99] CRESPO, Samyra, op cit, p. 59 a 73.
[100] Ibid, p. 72.

public safety, among others – evolves more smoothly when molded within the concept of sustainable development While in rich countries, the majority of the population is afraid of having to change their patterns of consumption, which has reached a very high level of comfort and services, in Brazil, where the social debt is still very great, social progress can be achieved by respecting the principles of sustainable development. As Fernando Gabeira points out, "the interface between social and environmental issues may be the way to go".[101]

Brazil is a country of immense contrasts, complexities and contradictions—in the environment as well as in many other areas. "Talking about Brazil is easy", as Ambassador Marcos Azambuja once commented: "Everything you say about the country is true"[102]. In the environmental field, this is indeed true: there are exemplary projects for the sustainable management of forests; at the same time, until 1997, half of the deforestation of the Amazon was the result of land reform.[103] Brazil has centers of advanced study in biotechnology – it is true – but only 7% of the Atlantic Forest has survived and only 7% of the *cerrado* is preserved from intensive or extensive exploitation.[104] Brazilian cities have an alarming level of pollution – it is true – but Curitiba is portrayed by the United Nations as a model city in terms of environmental management . Chico Mendes was assassinated by landowners used to uncontested power in Acre – it is true – but less than fifteen years after the occurrence, the Minister of the Environment, the Governor of Acre and the state's Senator are among Chico Mendes' closest friends. [105]

[101] GABEIRA, Fernando, op cit, p. 283.
[102] Entrevista ao autor, Brasília, 2002.
[103] BEZERRA, Maria do Carmo de Lima, FACCHINA, Marcia Maria and RIBAS, Otto. **Agenda 21 Brasileira, Resultado da Consulta Nacional.** p. 46.
[104] BEZERRA, Maria do Carmo de Lima, FACCHINA, Marcia Maria and RIBAS, Otto. **Agenda 21 Brasileira, Ações Prioritárias.** p. 62.
[105] VENTURA, Zuenir, op cit, p. 234.

Brazil's interests to be defended at the Johannesburg Summit reflected these contrasts as well as the profound internal debate involved in the discussions at the heart of the Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of the Participation of Brazil in the Summit on Sustainable development, created in March 2001. The Commission also benefitted from the support of the Commission of Policies on Sustainable Development, coordinated by the Minister of the Environment, who conducted a broad process of public consultation for the development of the Brazilian Agenda 21. The contributions made by civil society, the academic and scientific communities, trade unions and business entities through their representatives in the Commission gave a more practical and precise orientation to the approach to the paradigm shift involved in sustainable development.

The first meeting of the Interministerial Commission, which took place on October 3rd, enabled Brazil to prepare its participation in the Preparatory Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Rio de Janeiro, on October 23rd and 24th, an occasion in which the Regional Platform was approved and forwarded to the Preparatory Committee of the Conference containing the region's priorities regarding sustainable development. The Commission met again in November 2001 and January 2002 to prepare for the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee in that same month of January, the first meeting in which issues of substance for the Conference would be addressed. The Commission met another four times and the last meeting included the presence of the President and the Ministers of External Relations, Science and Technology, and the Environment.

At the UNEP meeting, in Cartagena, Colombia, in February 2002, the Minister of the Environment, José Carlos Carvalho – who had just succeeded José Sarney Filho – showed concern over the fact

that the Summit was increasingly focused on issues involving Africa and poverty. With the objective of giving greater visibility to the priorities of Brazil and the region, the Brazilian Government decided to propose a Latin American and Caribbean initiative, more incisive and objective than the Platform adopted in Rio in October. The proposal for joint action by the region was taken to the VII Meeting of the Intersessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in São Paulo, in May 2002. By unanimous decision of the delegations present, the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) was approved and incorporated into the Brazilian Energy Proposal, developed and presented at the São Paulo Meeting by Professor José Goldemberg, Secretary for the Environment of the State of São Paulo. The proposal contained the regional goal of adopting an energy supply mix composed of at least 10% renewable energies by 2010. After obtaining regional support, Brazil would continue to exert a leadership role in the area of renewable energies at the Johannesburg Summit and – later, in 2003 – with the organization of the Regional Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean on Renewable Energies in Brasilia.

By initiative of Congressman Fabio Feldmann and with the objective of emphasizing Brazilian leadership on a global level, the international seminar Rio+10 took place in Rio de Janeiro from June 23rd-25th, 2002, and had more than one thousand two hundred participants, including the Secretary-General of the Stockholm and Rio Conferences, Maurice Strong, and the Secretary-General of the Johannesburg Summit, Nitim Desai. The goal of the Seminar was, in the first place, to bring together personalities and specialists to discuss the obstacles that had been verified in the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, reasserting the importance of the "Rio legacy" and identifying the results that could be expected in Johannesburg.

On the 25th, a series of events were organized with the presence of Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, and the Prime Minister of Sweden, Göran Persson, among other political personalities, that culminated in a symbolic ceremony in which the status of host-country was "passed on" from one President to the other. The meeting of the three leaders sought to communicate to world public opinion the commitment to sustainable development by the three "host-countries" of the United Nations environmental conferences and their confidence in the success of the Johannesburg Summit, despite the skepticism of the media and the uncertainties regarding results just two months before the event.

According to Minister Marina Silva, from the beginning of the preparatory period Brazil "adopted a firm protagonist position" and "distinguished itself in the efforts to overcome the regional and international obstacles that hindered the progress of the negotiations"[106]. Contributing to this a role was the designation, in January 2001, of Professor Celso Lafer as Minister of External Relations, a position he had occupied in the Collor Government, exactly during the period of the Rio Conference. The personal involvement of the Foreign Minister in the WTO negotiations[107] reinforced the perception of the need for strengthening the links among the various important negotiating processes of trade, finance and sustainable development. In a speech during the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, the Minister emphasized the importance of the process initiated in the Doha and Monterrey Meetings – a process in which the fundamental role of the Johannesburg Summit would be to maintain the "Rio Legacy", reaffirming the principles that had made sustainable development into a global paradigm

[106] World Summit on Sustainable Development. **Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation Plan** Introduction by Marina Silva. p. 5.
[107] Celso Lafer was Permanent Representative in Geneva from 1995—1998 and Minister of Development, Industry and Commerce in 1999.

and contributing to overcome the deadlocks and obstacles to the implementation of Agenda 21.

The Delegation took part in the sessions of the Preparatory Committee and the Summit, following the format that determined that members of the Group of 77 and China would make decisions based on consensus in internal meetings. In general meetings, the delegations could accompany and advise the Representative of Venezuela, President of the G77and China, the only one with a voice in the negotiations. In the Working Groups, due to the limited number in the Venezuelan delegation, delegates from other countries were designated as spokespeople for the Group of 77 and China.

Besides proposing alterations in the text of the Plan of Implementation with a view to following its instructions, the Brazilian Delegation played a decisive role in the inclusion of the ILAC in the Plan. As seen in Chapter 1, of the ten sections of the Plan of Implementation, one was dedicated to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and another, to Africa. When Brazil presented to the G77 and China the proposal for insertion of a reference to ILAC in the Plan of Implementation there was, as expected, strong resistance from the SIDS and the African countries. With the support of Asian countries, who likewise showed their interest in including a direct reference to their region in the document, the Group of 77 and China ended up supporting the proposal, which would be added on as a new section referring to the conditions of countries with economies in transition. Therefore, the results of the meetings organized by the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions were appreciated, whose objectives were precisely to develop proposals that could be sent to the Preparatory Committee in order to draft an Action Plan and to stimulate – at the regional level – the participation of non-governmental actors.

The issue of renewable energies, discussed in the context of changes in consumption and production patterns (section 3), divided the developed countries as well as the Group of 77 and China. The European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean, led by the Brazilian Delegation, with the presence of Professor José Goldemberg, one of the most respected energy specialists in the world, began a veritable campaign in Johannesburg to incorporate into the Plan of Implementation a goal to increase the percentage of renewable energy sources in the total world energy supply. This effort was not able to overcome the obstacles of the major oil producing countries and the United States, but left these countries sufficiently worn out to accept the inclusion in the final text of several paragraphs on the changes needed in the energy field, ranging from the elimination of subsidies for energies harmful to the environment to the recommendation for "urgently and substantially increasing the global participation of renewable sources of energy"[108]. This may be one of the most significant advancements in relation to Rio, where oil-producing countries had managed to block references to greater incentives for renewable energies. Venezuela's support for the goal of renewables deserves note, both at the regional level in its support of ILAC, and in Johannesburg, in its role as President of the G77 and China, despite the inflexibility of the other OPEC members.

Another important result for Brazil was the introduction of an international negotiating instrument for sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity. As seen above, Brazil had been instrumental in including benefit-sharing as one of the three pillars of the Convention, opened for signature in Rio. In Johannesburg, Brazil – spokesperson for the Group 77 and China in the section on protection and management of the natural resource base (section 4) – acted according to the proposal developed at

[108] WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, op cit, p. 27.

the center of the Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries, whose fifteen members (South Africa, Brazil, Bolivia, China, Costa Rica, Columbia, Ecuador, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela) are responsible for more than 70% of the world's biological diversity.

In the sections on globalization (section 5) and means of implementation (section 10), Brazil also acted as the spokesperson for the G77 and China. In the first section, it ensured that the references to globalization would not be limited to a group of paragraphs in section 10 but would constitute an independent section reflecting the importance of the phenomenon and the opportunities and challenges it presents to sustainable development. A paragraph on corporate responsibility and accountability (p.62), which the United States resisted until the very last moment–and which ended up being approved based on the Brazilian argument – was acclaimed by NGOs as one of the most stunning victories of the Summit; this was mainly due to their disappointment, in Rio, with the bland reference to the responsibilities of transnational corporations in Agenda 21, as mentioned above.

The section on the means of implementation reflected the position of the developed countries, especially that of the European Union, in seeking to include elements that – in the name of "advancements" – in reality relativized the gains of Doha and Monterrey for developing countries. This position evolved to "nothing to concede after Monterrey [...] and nothing to add to Doha"[109], provided that the developing countries would also give up on their desire to "go beyond" Doha and Monterrey. The deadlock verified in these two sections was overcome thanks to an alternative text drafted by South Africa and Brazil, which was used as the basis for a difficult consensus.

[109] Telegram 1159 of the New York Mission, dated 06.12.2002.

The section of the Summit in which the Plenary was open for statements by Heads of State and Government provided significant visibility for the event in the world press and enabled President Fernando Henrique Cardoso to reassert Brazil's priorities. The President mentioned the 10% target in the Brazilian Energy Proposal and the creation of Tumucumaque National Park, "the largest protected rain forest area in the world". With these two examples, Brazil showed it was undertaking efforts to "deter the global warming process" and to avoid being a "passive witness to the destruction of complex ecosystems on which the Earth depends". The President affirmed that "development will not be sustainable if it is unfair. Nor will it be sustainable if it is constrained by the difficulties of asymmetrical globalization […]. I like the concept of 'planetary citizenship'. It is up to us to go beyond a merely national perspective, even if legitimate"[110].

The Brazilian Delegation was generally recognized as one of the most active at the Johannesburg Summit: it had coordinated the Group of 77 and China in several negotiations and led the effort to establish a target for renewable energies in the world energy supply. Moreover, as Gelson Fonseca Jr. reported evaluating the Summit, South Africa "resorted constantly to the Brazilian Delegation for advice in the conduction of the work and in the solution to the obstacles occurring throughout the conference"[111].

In the opinion of the UNEP Director in New York, Adnan Amin, the Brazilian Delegation in Johannesburg showed great consistency and some flexibility. But this did not mask positions that were still conservative and the fact that the most "propositive" attitude—such as, according to him, the renewable energies initiative –

[110] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. Report of the Brazilian Delegation: World Summit on Sustainable Development. p. 57-58.
[111] Telegram 608 of the New York Mission, dated 28th March 2002.

was not put forward because of a principle, but due to the fact that Brazil felt comfortable in this field given its exceptionally clean energy supply mix, thanks to hydropower[112]. Amin, as well as JoAnn Disano[113] – Head of the Division for Sustainable Development of the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs – expressed that the developing countries expected more proposals from Brazil and—above all – more leadership in Johannesburg, especially with regard to the country's potential role in generating more flexibility in the area of governance.

The same opinion was expressed by Brazilian NGOs who understood, the limitations imposed on Brazil, as it had to act in the context of the Group of 77 and China, where the resistance to good governance is much greater. Brazil's role at the center of the Group of 77 and China is, in this sense, criticized by NGOs, for it forces Brazil to align its positions with those of a group that includes several countries with authoritarian governments and that views the world mainly from a North-South perspective. Nonetheless, as Ronaldo Sardenberg points out, in the United Nations it is essential to act within a group[114].

The advantages of belonging to the Group of 77 and China were widely demonstrated in Johannesburg, not just by the support that Brazil received from that Group in priority areas, but also in the example of Mexico, who was outside of the Group and whose isolated positions never had any repercussions. That country´s main success was in the area of biological diversity, for having led the Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries, where it was particularly active. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that this success was only due to the support of the Group

[112]Interview with the author, New York, September 2003.
[113]Interview with the author, New York, September 2003.
[114]Interview with the author, New York, September 2003. . According to Sardenberg: in the United Nations, "there is no Greta Garbo option (I want to be alone)".

of 77 and China: of the fifteen megadiverse countries, only Mexico is not a member of the latter.

The issue of good governance, however, deserves special attention. Many of the most significant advancements in Brazil in recent years have been in the area of governance. Brazil naturally has restrictions to supporting an agenda that already is, and can be even more, manipulated by developed countries. At the same time, few developing countries have managed to put together such favorable internal conditions for international cooperation: modern legislation, democracy, decentralization, the presence of NGOs, the participation of women and minority groups. In sum, all of the issues that constitute a governance agenda are part of the country's domestic agenda. Our main obstacles in this area involve enforcement, in part because of structural problems – broadly debated in the Brazilian Agenda 21 – whose solutions are difficult in the short and medium term, and also problems related to the lack of financial resources and to the need for capacity building of human resources as well as scientific, technological and technical cooperation. Greater international cooperation in these areas represents more of an opportunity than a threat in today's Brazil.

CHAPTER 3

THE BRAZILIAN DISCOURSE AT THE THREE CONFERENCES: THE EVOLUTION OF THE EXPRESSION OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES

3. The Brazilian Discourse at the Three Conferences: The Evolution of the Expression of National Priorities

In order to examine the evolution of the Brazilian discourse, it is necessary to recall how it was developed. As seen above, the independence of the Itamaraty in 1972 was absolute and uncontested: it enabled Ambassador Miguel Ozório de Almeida, at that time Special Assistant to the Minister, to have control over the technical, political and economic aspects of the negotiating process. In 1992, a great number of new elements – which ranged from the return of democracy to the growing technical complexities of the issues discussed–demanded greater involvement by various Government sectors. The Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (CIMA) had an important role, especially from the technical point of view: under the command of Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, Head of the Division on the Environment, political priorities were set forth with considerable autonomy but not without tensions, due to the participation of different government bodies in the Rio Conference, as well as the interest within the Itamaraty itself, which led to the direct involvement by several "Elders of the House" in its preparation and execution. According to Rubens Ricupero, Macedo Soares was "indisputably the person who, in adverse circumstances, most contributed to develop substantive Brazilian positions at the conference with intelligence and integrity".[1]

With regard to the Johannesburg Summit, the Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of Brazil's Participation in the Summit

[1] RICUPERO, Rubens. **Visões do Brasil: ensaios sobre a história e a inserção do Brasil**. p. 132.

on Sustainable Development contributed significantly to both technical and political issues. It was from its members that initiatives were launched such as the Brazilian Energy Proposal, ILAC and the Rio+10 Conference, in Rio de Janeiro. The proposals took their final form, were negotiated and gained projection under the coordination of Everton Vargas, Head of the Department for the Environment. The significant participation of other Ministries – mainly those of the Environment and of Science and Technology, whose Minister was Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg – and of other bodies and non-governmental organizations certainly contributed to the greater effectiveness of the Brazilian role. The Commission also enabled the role of the Itamaraty to be better understood – its function in coordinating Brazilian positions and the role of its staff in the negotiations – by the other actors involved.

In order to examine, below, the evolution of the Brazilian positions regarding some of the major issues of the international environmental agenda, seven themes have been selected. In part A, four thematic areas will be analyzed that were already considered priorities in 1972 and that later came to receive special attention in subsequent conferences: natural resources, pollution, population and development. At the end of part A, some of the most important principles established by the Stockholm and Rio Declarations will be examined from the Brazilian perspective. Part B will address three thematic areas that gained special dimension at the Rio Conference and the Johannesburg Summit: climate change, biological diversity and governance.

A) TREATMENT OF THE ORIGINAL THEMES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA IN THE THREE CONFERENCES

One of the environmental issues of greatest interest to public opinion at the end of the sixties was the preservation of endangered species. Brazil saw no problems with the broadening of international efforts

in this area and the Brazilian Delegation was instructed to support the Project for a Convention on the Export, Import, and Transfer of Natural Specimens in Stockholm if it was compatible with the two legal instruments that regulated the issue in the country: the 1941 Convention for the Protection of Flora, Fauna and Natural Scenic Beauty in the Countries of the Americas, ratified in 1965, and the IBDF Directive, which contained the 1968 "Official Brazilian List of Endangered Species of Plants and Animals".

The international environmental agenda, as seen in Chapter 1, in fact prioritized, issues of pollution, population growth, and access to natural resources. Brazilian concerns in these areas were focused, in Stockholm, on demonstrating that pollution was a problem of rich countries and that the solutions proposed by these counties to the question of the scarcity of natural resources were incompatible with development and sovereignty. The rich countries alleged that the right path was population control and rational use of natural resources – which Brazil understood as representing less autonomy regarding the exploitation and use of its natural resources in order to preserve them for the needs of richer countries. The best solution, according to developing countries, was economic development with the cooperation of rich countries concerning financial resources and technology transfer. Four themes–four chapters, in effect – each covering several issues, ended up dominating the environmental agenda in 1972: natural resources, pollution, population and development. These themes will be examined below, and there will be an analysis of the principles established and strengthened by the three conferences.

NATURAL RESOURCES

In 1972, there was real concern for the scarcity of natural resources based on information and projections available at the time,. The major issue for Brazil in Stockholm was to ensure the principle that countries had

the sovereign right of using their natural resources according to their priorities. This would become the issue of most concern for Brazil, as seen in Chapter 2, because of the impasse statement regarding Principle 20 and its possible consequences for the utilization of the hydropower potential of the Paraná River. According to the Delegation Report, "in the area of utilization of natural resources, Brazil's interests in terms of economics and security were such that any formula that imposed—under an ecological pretext – a consulting mechanism for development projects was simply unacceptable." The position, however, was not merely to create obstacles: "On the other hand, we had to bear in mind the need to maintain a constructive dialogue and the fact that. by their very nature, environmental problems – through their permeability – represent a real challenge to political boundaries. Moreover, our position could not be defined simply within the context of the Plata Basin"[2]. As Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti recalls, Brazil had to maintain an ambiguous position since the waters of the Amazon Basin were downstream[3].

In Rio, Brazil's concern with natural resources focused on the issue of forests, a subject that was addressed both in the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as in the Declaration on Forests and Agenda 21. Distinctions emerged between "aspects of the forest as a carbon sink, that is to say, its role in climate change issues […], the forest viewed as a place with highest concentration of biodiversity [….], the forest as a habitat (for indigenous or transplanted human communities) and as a reservoir of natural resources"[4]. In reinforcing the principle of sovereignty in the utilization of natural resources, Brazil admitted, however, that it did have responsibilities to the international community.: "Brazil will know how to conduct the protection of its sovereignty, through a positive and consequently non-defensive attitude, facing a

[2] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment** p. 10.

[3] Interview with the author, Brasilia, December 2003.

[4] Ministry of External Relations, **Brazilian Positions on Environment and Development**, p.45.

problem whose dimension affects the destiny of the Planet and, therefore, the human race"[5].

According to Marcos Azambuja, "in the field of foreign affairs, Brazil ended the practice of hiding environmental abuse under the cloak of sovereignty. We started to advocate a mature relationship with out partners, no longer based on the Manichaeism of unilateral accusations but on the willingness to cooperate."[6]. " A path was opened for the greater direct participation of governments, international bodies and foreign entities in sustainable development projects in Brazil: "in partnership with the private sector and with international financial assistance, the Government will promote the implementation of a network of pilot-projects in forest management".[7]

The prime example of this is The Pilot Program to Conserve the Brazilian Rain Forests – known as PPG7 –officially instituted in 1992. More than 280 million dollars were mobilized for this program by 2002, of which 230 million came from donations by G7 member-countries (mainly Germany) and the European Union (and 50 million as a counterpart by the Brazilian Government), mainly through the Rainforest Trust Fund, administered by the World Bank for the implementation of sustainable development projects and reduction of deforestation levels in the Amazon and the Atlantic Forest. The Pilot Program was coordinated by the Federal Government with the participation of State governments and groups representing civil society, such as the Amazon Working Group (GTA) and the Atlantic Forest Network (RMA)[8].

[5] Ibid, p. 8.
[6] Ibid, p. 8.
[7] Ibid, p. 43.
[8] MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. **Pilot Program to conserve the Brazilian Rain Forests** 2002.

In Johannesburg, the issue of natural resources, for Brazil, involved mainly Biological Diversity, which will be analyzed in part B. With regard to forests, Brazil not only announced the creation of the largest rain forest protected area in the world – the Tumucumaque National Park – but also promoted the dissemination of ARPA (Amazon Region Protected Areas Programme) as an example of cooperation between government, civil society and international institutions. The cooperation of the Brazilian government, in ARPA, with the World Bank, GEF and the non-governmental organization WWF demonstrated that Brazil had come a long way with regard to the conditionalities demanded by the World Bank, GEF's focus on global issues, and the role of non-governmental organizations. The advances obtained in the convergence of objectives and methods are due, on the one hand, to the change of focus by the Government and, on the other, to the evolution of the attitude of the World Bank, GEF and WWF regarding the concerns presented by the Brazilian Government, as well as by the acknowledgement that the country did in fact have adequate institutions, but they required greater support. Brazil, at that time the second largest beneficiary of GEF resources (today it is the third), has an efficient and consolidated institutional and functional basis for dealing with GEF issues, especially when compared to most other developing countries[9].

Still regarding natural resources, it is worth reiterating the insistence of developed countries in depicting some of these resources as "common goods" which, as seen in Chapters 1 and 2, occurred in the three conferences. Brazil, facing the first attempts in this regard in Stockholm, fought to strengthen the sovereign right of countries to the use of their natural resources. In 1992, the principle was reinforced in the Rio Declaration, in answer to renewed pressures by developing countries, which in Brazil were specially directed at forests. In

[9] Telegram of the Washington Embassy 3045, Confidential, 19th December 2002.

Johannesburg, the idea of "common goods" reemerges under a new guise, as in the idea of establishing a United Nations Economic and Social Security Council to deal with, among other things, "global public goods", as proposed by French President, Jacques Chirac. According to Ambassador Sardenberg, however, today Brazil enjoys "international credibility and internal capacity" to circumvent efforts at turning the Amazon into a "common good"[10].

POLLUTION

The Brazilian position in Stockholm was clear: "the greater burden for cleaning controlling pollution falls on developed countries, those most responsible for the deterioration of the environment"[11] Pollution was not yet a problem for developing countries, asserted Miguel Ozório: "the effluents of affluence, […] [are] eluding us much more than crushing us".[12] Brazil defends:

> the relative (not absolute) aspect of pollution is that primary industries will not pollute initially, due to the capacity of the environment of underdeveloped countries to eliminate this effect. By the time the environment begins to be saturated with pollutants, the necessary resources for corrective actions will have been generated. [13].

Regarding the installation of polluting industries in developing countries, Miguel Ozório asserts that:

[10] Interview with the author, New York, October 2003.
[11] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. 24.
[12] OZÓRIO, Miguel. Speech in the Regional Latin American Seminar on Development and Environment, Ministry of External Relations, **United Nations Conference on Human Environment: Brazil and the preparation for the Stockholm Conference**. p.9.
[13] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. B-12.

> in relative terms the industries that are polluting in Japan or France, because of the low carrying capacity of their densely saturated environment, are not polluting in Central Brazil or Southern Argentina or in any area where the environment still presents ample restorative capabilities.[14].

According to the Head of the Brazilian Delegation in Stockholm, the Minister of the Interior, Costa Cavalcanti:

> Unlike what generally occurs in industrialized countries, this degradation (the pollution of poverty or underdevelopment) tends to diminish as a result of economic development itself, [...] we should trust that solutions will come in the time required to avoid dangers in a very distant future. A sensible and objective attitude would keep us from seriously believing in threats to humanity, presented in an exaggerated and emotional manner.[15]

The sum of Brazilian arguments regarding the low relevance of the pollution issue for developing countries may be the position that – thirty years later – seems to have been the least correct of all. The predictions of the Club of Rome, as seen above, were even further from reality than the Brazilian position, but it is surprising that there was no anticipation of the negative consequences of rapid industrialization and growth of urban population on the environment–-phenomena very similar to those occurring in Europe after the Second World War—even if factors such as Brazil's larger territory and lower population density are taken into account.

As Maurice Strong predicted, in 1972, "[t]he eco-catastrophes of which we hear so much are much more likely to occur in the developing world than in the wealthier countries that have the resources to deal with these problems"[16]. Two factors which the most optimistic analysts of the

[14] Ibid, p.10.
[15] Ibid, C3 and C4.
[16] ROWLAND, Wade. **The Plot to save the World**, p. 66.

country's growth perhaps did not take into account – and that certainly had accentuated the speed with which environmental problems began affecting Brazil– were the worsening of income distribution in the country and the time it took for civil society to be able to participate because of more than a decade of military regime after Stockholm.

In Rio, Brazil could no longer deny that it was facing severe pollution problems – similar to the ones faced by developed countries in the 1970s –without possessing, however, these countries' resources to overcome them in the short term. Preventing, in Stockholm, the limitation of the economic growth of developing countries was not enough: the rapid industrialization of countries like Brazil is viewed by many as process resulting in a vicious circle in which environmental problems aggravate poverty problems and vice-versa. According to Ambassador Marcos Azambuja, in a speech delivered in Nairobi, on occasion of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee of the Rio Conference:

> the problems addressed for the first time on a global scale eighteen years ago [in Stockholm] are still very present in our agenda. Some, on the other hand, have been substantially overcome or controlled, always and whenever the necessary technology and financial resources were available and there was no lack of essential political will. However, in other parts of the world, some problems appear to have been aggravated, resulting in large measure from industrial, agricultural or urban processes conducted without access to these technologies and additional financial resources.[17]

This speech began to admit the gravity of pollution, but the word itself was practically not used in Rio, given that the terminology for different types of pollution had become more precise. At the same time,

[17] SOARES, Guido Fernando Silva. A Proteção Internacional do Meio Ambiente: antecedentes, de Estocolmo à ECO/92. p. 71.

as more general expressions came to be used, such as "environmental degradation" for cases in which different elements are at play (population, sanitation, industry etc.), the word "pollution" also began to be considered as restrictive. A good example of the use of the word "pollution" is found in the following phrase by Marcos Azambuja regarding the relation between poverty and pollution:

> it would be naive to suppose that, at the current levels of economic activity in developing countries, there could be a neutralization or reversal of the processes that disturb the ecological balance. On the contrary, maintaining current levels of activity would aggravate the damage to the environment due to the pressures placed on it by poverty and its accompanying conditions.[18]

The direct association between poverty and pollution is carefully approached by Brazil in order to avoid its distortion by developed countries with the goal of transferring to developing countries the responsibility for global environmental problems. The priority remains the need for reinforcing international cooperation mechanisms in the economic, technological and environmental areas, taking into account that not enough resources could be generated to address environmental problems, as imagined in 1972. According to President Fernando Collor, "preferential and differentiated approaches, mobilization of additional resources as well as new technologies [...] are *sine qua non* conditions for the gradual adaptation of production activities to the stricter environmental standards"[19].

As will be seen later, the issue of pollution gradually moved into other areas and, in Johannesburg, is integrated into the context of climate

[18] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, op cit, p. 20.
[19] Ibid, p. 31.

change and patterns of production and consumption. Brazil, in these areas, had to take into account at the same time the challenges of sustainable development, stemming simultaneously from problems of affluence– Brazil's chemical industry ranked 9th in the world, for example – of poverty and the utilization of its natural resources.

POPULATION

Rich countries were convinced, in 1972, that birth control in poor countries was imperative for the world to become a viable place since, according to studies published at the time, the world population would reach 14 billion by 2050 before it stabilized. Brazil reacted to this assertion, stating that population policy was "entirely under national responsibility"[20]. The real problem was not population growth, but poverty: the best way of confronting the environmental challenges of developing countries was by fighting poverty through economic growth:

> There is an assertion that the so-called population bomb could be more fatal and devastating than the nuclear bomb itself, and a tendency is seen to approach the problem on uniformly universal basis, forgetting that the problem, which falls under the exclusive competence of each individual State, in the exercise of its full sovereignty, must take into account facts and circumstances that are eminently national"[21] .

In Rio, projections were less pessimistic, but the concern of developed countries was still great[22]. Brazil reasserted its position: "The environmental interdependence of the world will not be served by narrowing the approach to the global ecological threat we appear to be faced with to the control of the economic development and demographic

[20] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. 24.
[21] **Araújo Castro** quoted in AMADO, Rodrigo. p. 182.
[22] THE ECONOMIST : "The question Rio forgets", editorial mentioned in chapter 1.

growth of developing countries[23]." The growth of Third World cities and its social consequences led the population issue to be increasingly directed to the context of human rights, sanitation and infrastructure. Poverty, on the other hand, began increasingly to be viewed as a cause of environmental damage, to which Brazil responded by alleging that, more than the cause of environmental destruction, poverty is the consequence of such destruction. Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro – unlike in Stockholm – felt comfortable in discussing various subjects related to social issues.

In Johannesburg, the more recent studies made available by the United Nations indicated that the world population would reach 9 billion people by the middle of the twenty-first century. Once the danger of the "population bomb" had been set aside, the new "danger" represented for the world by the population of developing countries, would be the impact of poverty on the environment. As seen in the previous two chapters, several developing countries, mainly in Africa, accepted poverty eradication as one of the priorities of the Johannesburg Summit. "Poverty is not the major cause of environmental degradation", as Celso Lafer stated in Rio de Janeiro, in October 2001[24], placing the issue within the context of changes in patterns of production and consumption in the developed countries.

Poverty must be seen in a broad, not individualized, context. International cooperation, when the Johannesburg Summit was being held, must be, for Celso Lafer, "centered on the constructive interdependence of sovereignties, and [...] nurtured by the heuristic nature of sustainable development, which associates the concern for the environment with poverty eradication"[25]. Due to the excessive attention given to the issue of

[23] BATISTA, Paulo Nogueira. Speech in the United Nations General Assembly, 23rd October 1989.
[24] LAFER, Celso. Mudam-se os Tempos: diplomacia brasileira, 2001-2002. p. 80.
[25] Ibid, p.75.

poverty in Africa, Brazil's reaction was to insist on different regional priorities. If the needs of Africa seemed to demand a return to policies of assistance, countries like Brazil insisted that the important factor – as Argentinean economist Raúl Prebisch used to say – is "trade, not aid". [26]

DEVELOPMENT

Brazil was instrumental in ensuring that the themes of the Stockholm Conference be discussed within the context of economic development. The specific references to the need for obtaining new and additional financial resources, for transferring technology and for avoiding the development of new barriers to trade are three important elements of the Brazilian discourse in the three conferences. The terminology used in the Report of the Delegation to the Stockholm Conference could still be used today: Brazil should, on the one hand,

> prevent the measures and decisions to be taken […] from encouraging the adoption of patterns of consumption that could result in obstacles to the exports of developing countries, such as an ecological alternative to the customs barriers already in place. There was, on the other hand, the convenience that the new measures and decisions […] could ease the access of developing countries, not only to scientific knowledge, but to new technologies that could be developed in the environmental field, seeking to dissociate technology transfer mechanism in the environmental area from the traditional systems of patents and royalties […] [and] prevent as far as possible that the resources available for international, technical and financial assistance, for development per se, be channeled by donor countries to the environmental sphere, whose needs should always be met by additional resources. [27]

[26] Telegram 608 of the New York Mission, dated 28th March 2002.
[27] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, op cit, p. 9.

In Rio de Janeiro and in Johannesburg, these three areas – trade, finance and technology transfer – required special attention from the Brazilian delegation.

In Rio, with regard to international trade, the Brazilian criticism of the protectionism of developed countries and its consequences for the environment were very clear: "we should fight protectionist practices that lower world market prices of raw materials exported by developing countries, generating additional pressures on their economies and accelerating the unsound exploitation of natural resources"[28]. The issue of the relationship between environment and trade had not advanced rapidly enough between Stockholm and Rio. As Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho points out, the GATT Working Group on Environmental Measures and International Trade, created in the context of Stockholm in 1972, never met and was only activated in 1991.

It is equally significant that the Uruguay Round, launched in 1986 with an agenda of unprecedented scope—which for the first time identified services, investments and intellectual property as activities subject to regulation within the sphere of international trade—did not address the environment[29].

In Johannesburg, however, trade acquired fundamental importance in the context of globalization and the recent Doha Conference, as seen in Chapter 1.

One of the areas in which the disconnection between rhetoric and action is most evident is international trade. Liberalization is praised but not practiced, in so far as the export sectors of interest to developing

[28] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, op cit, p. 17.
[29] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto. "O Tratamento Multilateral do Meio Ambiente: ensaio de um novo espaço ideológico" In: **Caderno do IPRI** n. 18, p. 22.

countries are far from being subject to the same rules applied to sectors in which developed countries have competitive advantages"[30].

Certain that significant progress had been achieved in Doha, the Brazilian Government defended the compatibility of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation with the Doha decisions and with the approach to the issue of international trade and environment within the context of the WTO. This position had strong influence on the other members of the Group of 77 and China, who ended up accepting the numerous references to Doha and the WTO in the Plan, with the understanding that there was no hierarchical superiority of the WTO relative to other bodies.

The financial question deserved special effort by the Brazilian diplomacy in Rio, as seen in Chapter 2. In 1992, the financial crisis of developing countries dominated concerns and directed the attention of the negotiations to ODA, GEF and the opening of other channels of concessional funding. "It is imperative", says Foreign Minister Rezek, in April, 1991, "to broaden [...]flows and credit for financing environmental initiatives, without deviating resources destined for economic development programs. Resources for environmental protection should therefore be 'new' and 'additional"'. The restrictions regarding the GEF as a "solution" for the issue of international financing in the environmental area were also clearly expressed:

> Brazil believes that specific financial techniques should be included in the legal mechanisms currently under negotiation (on climate change and biodiversity) […] the recent establishment of the "Global Environment Facility" in the World Bank does not eliminate the need for specific financial mechanisms for each international convention.

[30] LAFER, Celso, op cit, Volume 2, p. 61.

With regard to the fact that the GEF was directed toward financing only global impact projects, "the creation of another mechanism" would be necessary, "possibly a Fund, for the occasional financing of additional programs for the environment and environmental components in domestic development projects"[31]. In Johannesburg, the financial issue was linked to the results of the Monterrey Conference on the Financing of Development and the Millennium Goals, established in September 2000 by Resolution 55/2 of the United Nations General Assembly. Brazil defended, as in Monterrey, the reform of the architecture of the international financial system and its greater transparency. The structural reform of GEF, although it did not incorporate all of the demands of developing countries, it enabled progress in transparency and in the participation of developing countries in its decisions. Brazil had received more than 160 million dollars in grants by 2001, when it garnered circa 55 million in co-financing. The announcement in Johannesburg of the third GEF replenishment – of around 2.9 billion dollars, exceeding by almost one billion the amount of the two preceding phases – was well received, but the need to significantly increase the flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries was reiterated.

With regard to technology transfer, Brazil continued to defend, in Rio de Janeiro:

> the need for establishing mechanisms to ensure access of developing countries, in favorable terms, to environmentally sound technologies when available in industrialized countries. Access to these technologies should not be based on purely commercial or market conditions. [32]

According to President Collor in a speech delivered in June 1990, on Earth Day, "…there is no justification for the existence of monopolies

[31] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, op cit, p. 34.
[32] Ibid, p. 36.

on knowledge, preventing access to the mechanisms required for the common task of protecting nature".

In Johannesburg, efforts in this area were focused on the reiteration of the Brazilian position that the commitments by rich countries must be fulfilled in the sense of providing greater access to technologies in preferential and concessional terms. Brazil was opposed to the arguments of certain developed countries, such as the United States, that most environmentally sound technologies, because they were private property, should be transferred by means of direct foreign investment. In the Brazilian opinion, the richest countries should utilize their regulatory power to ease the transfer of private technologies, and not to obstruct this process. Brazil supported the references to the "digital divide", which stresses the differences between rich and poor countries, and agreed to the need for instruments that democratized the access to new information technologies.

PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED AND STRENGTHENED BY THE THREE CONFERENCES

The Declaration of the Stockholm Conference, whose copy is found in Appendix I, lists twenty-six principles that established the basis for negotiations in the area of environment for two decades. The verbs "conserve", "safeguard", "protect", "maintain" appear several times in relation to "fauna", "flora", "nature", "natural resources" and "environment", reflecting the positions originally proposed by the developed countries. As a result of the positions defended by Brazil, however, "development" is mentioned in ten of the principles.

Brazil's main objectives are included in Principle 9 – "environmental deficiencies generated by the conditions of underdevelopment [...] pose grave problems and can best be remedied by accelerated development […]"; in Principle 11 – "the environmental

policies of all States should be enhance and not adversely affect the present or future development potential of developing countries [...]"; in Principle 17 – "appropriate national institutions must be entrusted with the task of planning, managing or controlling the environmental resources of States […]"; in Principle 21 – "States have ……the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies […]"; and in Principle 23 –"[….] it will be essential in all cases to consider the systems of values prevailing in each county, and the extent of the applicability of standards that are valid for the most advanced countries, but which may be inappropriate and of unwarranted social cost social cost for developing countries".

In the Rio Declaration, which contains twenty-seven principles, the interests of developing countries are reflected more clearly and objectively than in Stockholm. For example, the principle of the "sovereign right (of States) to exploit their own resources", mentioned in Principle 2 (whereas in Stockholm it was found in Principle 21), and the cooperation of all States in the "essential task of eradicating poverty […] in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living", which is included in Principle 5. The largest conceptual gains for Brazil were the references to "right to development", in Principle 3; to "common but differentiated responsibilities", in Principle 7[33]; to the reduction and elimination of "unsustainable patterns of production and consumption", in Principle 8; and to the trade policy measures for environmental purposes such as "disguised restriction on international trade", in Principle 12.

The concept of sustainable development, mentioned in Principle 1 and present in the entire Rio Declaration (the complete text is found in

[33] This permitted the strengthening of Principle 24 of Stockholm, whose text on responsibilities of countries was dubious: "All countries, big and small, should approach international issues regarding environmental protection and improvement in a cooperative and egalitarian spirit."

Appendix II) is a more precise replacement for the idea expressed in Principle 14 of the Stockholm Declaration, which states that "rational planning constitutes an essential tool for reconciling any conflict between the needs of development and the need to protect and improve the environment."

In the Johannesburg Summit, lengthy negotiations were necessary to preserve the "Rio Legacy" and strengthen Principles 7 and 15 of the Declaration: the developing countries tried to strengthen the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" (Principle 7) and the developed countries desired to broaden the scope of the precautionary principle (Principle 15), whose legitimacy, according to Celso Lafer, "depends on its judicious application"[34]. According to Gelson Fonseca Jr., the European position sought to extend the application of the precautionary principle "in a manner as to create conditions that could eventually legitimize the imposition of import restrictions on the grounds of protection of the environment and human health"[35]. At the end of the Conference, the number of times that principles were mentioned in the Plan of Implementation was regarded as a criterion of victory by developing countries. In fact, the principle of "responsibilities..." was mentioned more times and, more importantly, is included in the introduction of the document, which confers it a crosscutting quality—unlike the precautionary principle[36].

[34] LAFER, Celso, op cit, p. 77.

[35] Telegram 1772 of the New York Mission, 11th September 2002.

[36] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, **Report of the Brazilian Delegation: World Summit on Sustainable Development**, p.30. The Delegation Report refers to "focus on precaution", reflecting the intention of the Delegation to reduce its importance in the context of the environment. The Chancellor, on the other hand, refers to the "principle of precaution", for example, in a speech to the Regional Preparatory Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean for the Johannesburg Summit (LAFER, Celso, op. cit. p. 77). Na interesting discussion on the importance of the principle of precaution developed countries is found in Mongin Philippe, "Le développment durable contre le príncipe de précaution?", in **Esprit**, Août-septembre 2003. In this article, the author admits that "le seul principe qui fasse l'objet d'une réaffirmation solenelle et répétée (à

B) TREATMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA ISSUES DERIVED FROM THE ORIGINAL THEMES

The evolution of the environmental agenda resulted in the inclusion of many new issues, some of which of which were embedded in the chapters, or original themes, mentioned above. There was also a considerable shift in the importance attributed to certain themes due to the progress in scientific knowledge, the attitude of civil society in various countries and also to the economic dimension that these issues achieved – such as a broader notion of the costs of combating various environmental problems. The theory that economic development is the best solution to environmental problems of underdeveloped countries, defended by Brazil, underwent natural evolution in the post-Stockholm period. As Vera Pedrosa points out:

> various concepts of development that differed from those proposed by Brazil were gaining ground in the preparatory stage of the conference. The theories expressed in Founex, in the ECLAC regional seminar and, later, in the meeting organized by UNEP/UNCTAD in Cocoyoc, Mexico, in 1974, started to inform the activities developed by UNEP in relation to the study of the environmental consequences of development.[37]

Despite Brazil's resistence[38], continues Vera Pedrosa, the "formulation of the 'poverty pollution' received new overtones [...], a

Johannesburg) concerne 'les responsabilités communes mais différenciées' [...] il constitue une sauvegarde aux yeux du tiers monde et surtout des États in phase de décollage, comme la Chine, l'Inde ou le Brésil, qui ont été les plus actifs dans la négotiation" (p. 166).

[37] PEDROSA, Vera. O Meio Ambiente Dez Anos Após Estocolmo: a perspectiva brasileira. p. 147.

[38] Ibid, p. 108 and 109. According to Vera Pedrosa, "[e]mbora já tivesse sido definitivamente incorporada [...] a noção da necessidade de coordenação do desenvolvimento com a conservação de recursos naturais [...], a Delegação foi instruída a 'ter presente que as opções de desenvolvimento decorrem das peculiaridades nacional e culturais e que o poder decisório na matéria cabe aos Governos'."

consensus having been created in the sense that development was not solely characterized by high levels of growth, but that it required overcoming of internal social inequalities"[39].

According to Ignacy Sachs, ""[i]n the intellectual journey which started with the Founex Seminar on Environment and Development in 1971 and led in 1972 to the Stockholm Conference on Human Development (*sic*) up to the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the Cocoyoc Symposium has a very special place" . The Cocoyoc Declaration – "a strongly worded manifesto for a human-centered and need-oriented development" – was adapted by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation for publication in 1975 as "What now?" According to Sachs, Founex and Cocoyoc were instrumental for the development of concepts such as "ecodevelopment", "another development" and "Third System" [40].

The social dimension of the environmental issue was seen initially with misgivings by developing countries, and these countries had an initial negative reaction to the Brundtland Report in 1987, in which the concept of sustainable development is strengthened in its economic, social and environmental pillars. But this position is speedily reevaluated for, according to Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho, the Report:

> constituted a central item for the broadening of the restricted scope intended by developed countries [...] and would represent a more immediate source of inspiration for the exercise, promoted by the Group of 77, of the change in perspective on the issue of environment, identifying it, in the negotiations of Resolution 44/228, with the main aspirations of the South and with the very agenda for development.[41]

[39] Ibid, p. 147.
[40] SACHS, Ignacy. "Social Sustainability and Whole Development: Exploring the Dimensions of Sustainable Development" In: BECKER, Egon & JAHN, Thomas. **Sustainability and the Social Sciences**. p. 34.
[41] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto, op cit, p. 25.

Resolution 44/228, whose final text owes much to Brazilian diplomats, used elements of the Brundtland Report[42] in a favorable manner for developing countries, similarly to what had happened in the preparatory process of Stockholm, when Resolution 2849 (XXVI) was negotiated to incorporate the major elements of interest to developing countries from the Founex Report.

The analysis of the environmental issue in the context of sustainable development becomes even more complex due to the crosscutting nature of many themes: an issue like forest destruction has consequences for biological diversity, climate change, soil use, local populations, etc. The most recent program of the Ministry of the Environment connected to deforestation– the Plan of Action for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon, for example, involves fourteen Ministries. But the "crosscutting issues" enable analysis from very different angles and are open to considerable manipulation.

The concept of sustainable development, in turn, became a paradigm in the environmental field, but it has yet to be fully assimilated by those most responsible for social and economic areas – the other two pillars of the concept. In most countries– including the most advanced nations –it is difficult to observe the reference to sustainable development outside of the environmental context. The creation of ministries of the environment isolated the issue and hindered the "crosscutting" effect, which occurs very slowly. It is significant that the Minister of the Environment, Marina Silva, refers to the feeling that her Ministry resembles an NGO

[42] According to the testimony of Everton Vargas, several elements were used in the document "Environmental perspective for the year 2000 and beyond", forwarded to the United Nations General Assembly by the Administrative Council of UNEP, which was the object of Resolution 42/186. The Brundtland Report, examined in the same General Assembly and object of Resolution 42/187, had greater dissemination and reduced the impact of the first document.

within the Government: "sustainable development will gain adequate room when it is defended not just by environment ministers but by finance ministers [as well][43].

The following issues of the environmental agenda will be examined regarding the Brazilian priorities of the Rio Conference and the Johannesburg Summit: climate change, biological diversity and governance.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The issue of climate change, starting in the late eighties, gave renewed prominence to the environment in the international agenda and highlighted the global consequences of certain human activities. The political challenges of the implementation of effective greenhouse effect mitigating measures became even more acute due to the "differing power between nations and the resistance of industrialized countries to agree to genuine cooperation in changing existing patterns of economic relations among affluent societies of the North and the nations of the South"[44]. In this context, the inclusion of "common but differentiated responsibilities" acquires special importance in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the most important document on the most wide-ranging issue of the international environmental agenda. The Kyoto Protocol, negotiated in 1997, strengthened that principle even further by establishing targets for both developed countries and countries with economies in transition, exempting developing countries from these targets.

Brazil defended, in Rio, as Celso Lafer states, a dialogue that would place "North-South relations under the sign of cooperation"[45].

[43] SILVA, Marina. Lecture at the Instituto Rio Branco, Brasilia, March 2003.
[44] VARGAS, Everton. Lecture proferred at the International Seminar on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, Macapá, 3rd November 2003, p. 30.
[45] LAFER, Celso, op cit, p.77.

The "preservation of the environment" is no longer viewed by Brazil as a threat and the major issues of the environmental agenda begin to be identified by the consequences of the trend of freezing the inequalities between developed and developing countries. This trend is seen, for example, in the efforts by developed countries to "minimize the effects caused by their greenhouse emissions due to their production and consumption patterns" and to defend the theory that "the problems produced by the probable warming of the atmosphere result from the activity of mankind as a whole, and therefore their mitigation requires equal participation of all nations"[46]. Most emissions undoubtedly came from industrialized countries, begun many decades before developing countries started their own emissions.

The issue of changes in production and consumption patterns by rich countries– the "overdeveloped or misdeveloped countries", as José Lutzenberger[47], the Secretary for the Environment, used to say in 1990, was addressed with great emphasis by Brazil. President Collor, in June 1990, states that "sustainable development means that, in the final analysis, those that have little must achieve higher standards of living, and those who have much must control the voraciousness of their consumption"[48], and Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek, in April, 1991, declares that "We shall work towards a commitment that will lead to a society that is less stratified than the current one, and that will configure a collective farewell to a life style that is enjoyed by some, desired by others, and equally disastrous for all"[49].

[46] VARGAS, Everton, op cit, p. 30.

[47] The speeches given by the then Secretary of the Environment, according to an interview with Fabio Feldmann granted to the author, generated surprise and enthusiasm for multilateral meetings, for they mainly highlighted ethical and philosophical issues. In some sections of his speeches, Lutzenberger defended positions that approached "no growth", but his more radical comments were understood as personal and, therefore, were not interpreted as the literal positions of the Brazilian government. The fact that the President chose him as Secretary for the Environment, however, was understood as a clear indication that the Brazilian discourse had changed.

[48] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, Brazilian Positions on Environment and Development, p. 6.

[49] Ibid, p. 6.

In Johannesburg, the Brazilian position is one of reiterating that the issue of changing production and consumption patterns of rich countries is becoming increasingly serious due to the lack of progress in the area of climate change, marked by the fact that the Kyoto Protocol had not come into force and the financial and technological resources had not been directed to developing countries under preferential conditions. Climate change has become the issue of the environmental agenda to attract most public opinion and gained even greater notoriety for having divided the developed countries with respect to the Kyoto Protocol. Despite forcefully supporting the enactment of the Protocol, Brazil has also insisted on the fulfillment of commitments – which do not depend on the Protocol's coming into force – made within the Convention itself by rich countries to lower their emissions and "take the lead" in the fight against climate change.

By asserting, in 2001, that "special attention should be conferred on the adoption of patterns of production and consumption that do not deepen the imbalance between rich and poor at the national, regional and international levels"[50], Foreign Minister Celso Lafer made it clear that, despite the fact that Brazil did not have to meet emissions reduction targets and that its priority was development, it would not stop combating internal inequalities and looking for alternatives for its sustainable development. In this sense, the issue of renewable energies gained special relevance for Brazil at the Johannesburg Summit. As seen in Chapter 2, this was an area in which Brazil had shown leadership, enabling the opening of a new sphere of important cooperation in the context of climate change, while the Kyoto question remained in a stalemate, pending ratification by Russia or the remote possibility of a change in the position of the United States. Brazil demonstrated through this position that there is a considerable opening for a more proactive role. Once the principle of common but

[50] LAFER, Celso, op cit, p. 80.

differentiated responsibilities had been consolidated, the developing countries could demonstrate their willingness and capacity to face climate change.

The support for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)[51] in the Kyoto Protocol was also an important element of Brazil's actions. There is a great expectation in the country involving the benefits that could be derived from the Mechanism. On the one hand, the projects to be executed under the CDM would represent a source of financial resources for sustainable development projects; on the other hand, these projects could stimulate greater scientific and technological knowledge. Brazil is convinced that the greater knowledge resulting from these projects will enable the dissemination of the limits of the contributions of CO_2 sinks and will increasingly underscore the need for rich countries to change their patterns of production and consumption in order for the struggle against global warming to be effective.[52]

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The issue of biodiversity involves several aspects ranging from conservation of natural resources to the protection of intellectual property. José Lutzenberger, in August 1990, at the I Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Rio Conference, described the difficulty of estimating the value of biological diversity:

[51] CDM, one of the flexibility mechanisms created in the context of the Kyoto Protocol that enable countries with emissions reduction targets (countries listed in Annex 1 of the Protocol) to fulfill part of their commitments by acquiring carbon credits certified by the CDM Executive Board that result from projects undertaken in developing countries—in areas such as energy, reforestation, afforestation, etc– to complement internal mitigation actions. Therefore, developing countries would receive financial support for sustainable development projects that could also contribute to greater scientific knowledge, technology transfer and technical qualification.

[52] It is worth recalling, as well, the studies that are being developed within the context of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, of the "Brazilian Proposal".

> Suppose a valuable work of art is being auctioned, but only ignorant people with no knowledge of art are bidding, or the auctioneer has no idea of the preciousness of the work, it will go for a ridiculously low price. […] future generations cannot bid [...]. A cattle rancher in the rainforest sees a negative value in the forest he clears to make way for pasture.[53]

In this sense, President Collor, on signing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), on 5th June 1992, asserted that "We are establishing new, truly sound, foundations for use and value of biological resources and, by assigning them value, defining the best means for their conservation"[54].

The Brazilian discourse in the area of biological diversity reveals the importance given to the CBD, not just because the country harbors about 20% to 25% of the planet's biological and genetic resources, but due to the strategic value of the so-called "geo-economy". The biological revolution of recent decades – whose milestone has been the deciphering of the genetic code and its practical applications – and the new techniques of manipulation associated with biotechnology would enable a better understanding of the importance of the diversity of these resources, especially for the production of pharmaceuticals and food. These techniques, according to Everton Vargas:

> often benefit from knowledge of local communities that utilized biological resources in a homegrown manner for therapeutic purposes, for food, or just for personal image. That is the importance of the clear and indisputable recognition, by the Convention, of the sovereignty of States over their natural resources is relevant.[55]

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[53] LUTZENBERGER, José. Speech given in the "International Meeting of Parliamentarians", Washington, 30th April 1990.
[54] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development** p. 81.
[55] VARGAS, Everton, op cit, p. 3.

Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares clearly described the Brazilian interests in the area of biological diversity in March 1991, during II Session of the Preparatory Committee:

> The developing countries should benefit from the research and development based on biological sources taken from their territories. The costs of preserving biological diversity incurred by the countries that own these resources should be compensated [....] The advancements obtained in terms of biotechnology and economic potential for the exploitation of biological diversity render necessary an international agreement that establishes transparent mechanisms. These mechanisms should be subject to the express consent of the country that owns the original genetic resource, and should lead to the controlled access to these resources, with the objective of their commercial use and scientific utilization. Such mechanisms should also contain explicit provisions for the equitable distribution of the benefits resulting from these uses[56].

At the Johannesburg Summit, Brazil defended the strengthening of the CBD in similar terms and attributed special attention to the need to clarify the relation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the WTO TRIPS (Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement. As seen in Chapter 2, the truly important advance in this area, to which Brazil greatly contributed thanks to its role in the Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries, was the launch of negotiations for an international regime to ensure the sharing of benefits arising from biological diversity. Since this negotiation involved the adequate protection of the rights of local and indigenous communities over their traditional knowledge associated to the use of genetic resources, it will require, as Celso Lafer states, "a different and

[56]MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. Brazilian Positions on the Environment and Development p. 42.

more open focus on intellectual property rights. The system that has been applied until now is directed at individual rights, while traditional knowledge requires a *sui generis* system that safeguards the collective rights of local and indigenous communities"[57]. The relevance of these negotiations, and their consequences for Brazil in political, economic, commercial. scientific and technological terms should not be underestimated. Their evolution, therefore, deserves priority attention of the country's foreign policy.

GOVERNANCE

The issue of governance involves, on the one hand, supporting countries to improve their institutions, capacity building of their staff and the development of human resources for disseminating information, etc., and, on the other hand, creating, at the global level, an international legal framework and the establishment of mechanisms and institutions that ensure and guide international cooperation.

"Global governance", according to sociologist Aspásia Camargo, would consist of the definition of the agenda, the mechanisms and the institutions that "should make up a new international order legitimately accepted by all and coordinated by the United Nations". Progress in this direction can be measured by the numerous international conventions related to diverse aspects of the environment and by the creation of UNEP, after Stockholm, and the CDS, as a consequence of the Rio Conference. The national dimensions of governance, on the other hand, became necessary, according to Aspásia Camargo, in order to "search for a new model of cooperation and partnership between government and society, leaving behind the bureaucratic, patrimonial and corporatism State, and absorbing new management structures with new information

[57] LAFER, Celso, op cit, Volume 2, p. 65.

technologies, capable of lending more transparency to government decisions"[58].

The issue had been barely addressed in Stockholm[59] as "Institutional Consequences" and was included in the Action Plan as "Institutional and Financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation" and basically referred to the creation of UNEP. In Rio de Janeiro, the issue was addressed as "Legal Instruments and Institutions" and encompassed three chapters in Agenda 21: "National Mechanisms and International Cooperation for the Capacity-building in Developing countries" (Chapter 37), "International Institutional Arrangements" (Chapter 38) and "International Legal Instruments and Mechanisms" (Chapter 39). Brazil, ever since the Rio Conference, has been more open to the discussion of issues concerning governance than most of the members of the Group of 77 and China. The internal circumstances of Brazil, thanks to democracy and the greater participation by civil society, have become favorable for the broadening of the debate on strengthening of institutions and the need for international cooperation, while taking into account the economic and financial difficulties of the country.

In Johannesburg, the enhanced discussions on governance, which in recent years has been referred to as 'good governance' in multilateral negotiations, resulted not only from Agenda 21, but from the emphasis given by the Rio Declaration to the greater participation of civil society, particularly the role of women, youths, indigenous populations and local communities. The issue also drew greater attention in the CDS agenda and was especially emphasized in Monterrey: according to Gelson Fonseca Jr., "one of the results of the conference was undoubtedly the strengthening of the concept of good governance"[60].

[58] CAMARGO, Aspásia, op cit, p. 309 and 310.
[59] MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR op cit, p. 48 a 50.
[60] Telegram 608 of the New York Mission, 28th March 2002.

The agenda proposed by the developed countries tends to focus on the need to strengthen institutions in developing countries – respect for human rights, promotion of democracy, labor standards, etc.–, in order to address the demands of these countries. Of what use is the financial and technological aid of rich countries to countries that will not know how to use it properly? How to explain to civil societies of rich countries that their tax money is being used on projects with inadequate monitoring, every time that the governments and institutions of developing countries come into play? In order to confront the paternalism of developed countries – considered by many as neocolonialism–many poor countries still use sovereignty as a counter-argument.

Brazil defended the idea that "the issues pertaining to good domestic governance should be accompanied by those of good international governance, as two sides of the same issue. […] good international governance – including economic, financial and commercial governance as well as the strengthening of the United Nations and multilateralism – is essential to achieve sustainable development."[61] Priority should be placed on the reform of international institutions and organizations, to render them more agile and capable of providing greater support to developing countries.

The discussion stimulated by the developed countries, on the other hand, barely hides the desire to justify the reduction of international cooperation, or, at least, the strengthening of selective agendas: the tendency to limit the commitment to international cooperation leads to favoring certain projects, in certain countries, under certain conditions. Selective cooperation is viewed by the developed world as a stimulus to good governance. The definition of good governance varies, but tends to include

[61] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Report of the Brazilian Delegation: World Summit on Sustainable Development** p. 41.

all or some of the following elements: participation; respect for laws; transparency; search for consensus; inclusion and equity; effectiveness and efficiency; and accountability. Brazil defends all of these elements domestically, but does not want good governance to be used as an instrument to impose the criteria favored by rich countries, rather than represent an incentive for cooperation projects based on priorities defined by the developing countries themselves.

The analysis of these seven themes, of particular importance to Brazil in the environmental agenda, reveals the coherence of the Brazilian discourse in the three conferences. Regardless of the consequences of changes in the international context and the domestic circumstances of the country, examined in previous chapters, the evolution of the Brazilian role and positions can be perceived as follows, The role of Brazil in Stockholm was one of confrontation– since the Brazilian proposition was contrary to the original proposal for the Conference – and the country's positions were defensive. In Rio de Janeiro, the role was cooperative, since Brazil had no proposition to oppose sustainable development and the country had a stake in the success of the Conference, but its positions, although more open, were still perceived as defensive. In Johannesburg, Brazil's role was again cooperative, but this time its positions were less defensive and, for the first time, proactive.

As Ronaldo Sardenberg says, Brazil resisted the environmental agenda in 1972, associated itself with it in 1992 and took a leading role in relation to most of the other countries in 2002[62].

[62] Interview with the author, New York, October 2003.

CONCLUSIONS

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On examining the Brazilian role in the three conferences, one should consider that the internal changes in Brazil and the changes in the roles of the actors in the context of the international environmental agenda usually follow parallel and independent paths. The analysis of the three meetings in which these paths intersected (in the previous chapters) demonstrates to what extent the environmental issue was created and shaped according to the interests of industrialized countries and how, gradually, the developing countries – thanks in great part to the Brazilian discourse – began to guide it in directions that strengthened some of their main demands. The balance was established as a result of the concept of sustainable development that, undoubtedly, sprang from the insistence of developing countries that environmental, social and economic issues be integrated.

The discussion of the environmental issue in a much broader and complex context emerges, therefore, from the "distortion" the developing countries effect on the original Stockholm intentions—intentions whose goal was to involve these countries in a new agenda in finding solutions to problems of direct consequence foe industrialized countries, such as pollution and the threat of the scarcity of natural resources. The developing countries, at that moment, sought to transform the issue of the environment into a new dimension of the development agenda, intending to strengthen international cooperation. Rich countries, however – especially in Rio, ironically – hijacked the concept of international cooperation, removing it from the context of development and placing it under "global issues".

Because of this, the only projects deserving support – especially financing and technology transfer – were those that, once again, had an impact or reflected on the developed countries: since Rio, "the rich cling to the notion that international attention should only be paid to environmental activities that have global impact [one might question according to which criteria]"[1]. "Local" problems of developing countries tended to be reduced to issues of governance – as in the promotion of democracy, greater participation by civil society, strengthening of institutions, combating corruption, which should all be tackled according to "universal" standards.

Because of the critical reaction of developing countries concerning the barely palpable results after the Rio Conference–especially due to the strengthening of selective agendas, the focus by the industrialized countries on global issues, and, consequently, the minimal progress concerning new and additional financial resources and technology transfer –the developed countries started to stimulate greater participation by the private sector as an important alternative in addressing local issues in poor countries. The strengthening of partnerships between governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector is presented by the developed countries as one of the main advancements of the environmental agenda in Johannesburg.

This evolution can be seen, according to Professor Eduardo Viola, as resulting from a broader phenomenon:

> in the same way as in the 70s there was a special role for the States and in the 80s this prominent role moved to civil society, in the 90s the axis of governability gradually moved to markets and their actors […] it would

[1] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto. "O Tratamento Multilateral do Meio Ambiente: ensaio de um novo espaço ideológico". In: **Caderno do IPRI** n. 18, p. 30.

be an anachronism to project to the present a role that the States had in the 70s and civil society had in the 80s.[2]

Others see the same phenomenon in a more critical manner, as Everton Vargas, for whom the three conferences primarily furthered the agendas of developed countries. This forced a developing country like Brazil – on the three occasions– to adjust its discourse in order to react to the pressures and defend itself from the efforts of using environmental issues as a new instrument in the "the 'freezing' of the current standards of living in different countries" according to then President Collor[3], or as "just another 'good business deal' for those who traditionally have been the beneficiaries of an economic system detrimental to the perennially disfavored others", according to Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares[4].

It is difficult to deny the analysis, in 1994, by Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho that "in a process that certainly pre-supposes radical changes in perception, in which the East is substituted by the South as the source of threats to the well-being and the (standards of) living of the First World, the multilateral agenda was gradually adapted to the new proposed power game".[5] In a certain way, rich countries view the growing gap between rich and poor countries is the result of incompetence, corruption, and the lack of political will by "elites" of developing countries.

The reasoning and the ethical principles that caused shock and indignation in rich countries for the indifference of the "elites" of developing countries with their own poverty and injustice, however, are

[2] VIOLA, Eduardo. "As complexas negociações internacionais para atenuar as mudanças climáticas". In: TRIGUEIRO, André. **Meio Ambiente no Século 21: 21 especialistas falam da questão ambiental nas suas áreas de conhecimento**. p.186.
[3] MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS. **Brazilian Positions on the Environment and Development**. p. 31.
[4] Ibid, p. 32.
[5] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto, op cit, p. 20.

not considered as valid when transferred to the global dimension. The indifference of the global "elite" concerning poverty and injustice in the world should be even more shocking, since this global "elite" has available all the means to change the situation: political and economic means, as often the "elites" of developing countries also have, but above all, the technological and financial means, that only the global "elite" controls.

The relation of the "elites" of developing countries to the poorest sectors of their population, in the view of developed countries, corresponds to the social inequality of the 18th century Europe, exemplified in the relation of the French Aristocracy to the "Tiers État" (Third State). Nothing compares more to this situation, however, than the relation of the developed countries to the developing countries in recent decades, especially with regard to the insistence of the rich on maintaining their standard of living and on seeking to impose new priorities on groups that still do not have the most basic living conditions. It is not a coincidence that the expression "Third World" has been consolidated – having been coined by the French economist Alfred Sauvy in an article in which he established a parallel between the situations of the "Tiers Monde" and the "Tiers État"[6].

"[The] best intentions can cover up special forms of pressure and domination by the stronger and more advanced over the backward", recalls the former Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro, "the colonizing impetus of Iberia also aimed at – and tried to justify itself by – the salvation of souls; in the 19th century, Africa and parts of Asia were partitioned in order to bring the benefits of civilization to people considered savages or barbarians, this was the 'white man's burden', etc. "[7] The environmentalist discourse presented

[6] Sauvy used the expression for the first time in an article published by the French magazine **L'Observateur,** 14th August, 1952. "[...] car enfin, ce Tiers Monde ignoré, exploité, méprisé comme le Tiers Etat, veut lui aussi être quelque chose". Site de Wikipédia, L'Encyclopédie Libre.

[7] GUERREIRO, Ramiro Saraiva. Lembranças de um empregado do Itamaraty. p. 88.

by developed countries in the multilateral arena can be interpreted as another exercise of this type, in which "civilization" aims to save "savages or barbarians".

The destruction of nature would therefore fit into this line of "barbarisms" committed by Brazil, which begins with cannibalism and continues with slavery, non-democratic regimes, human rights abuses, poor distribution of wealth, and so on and so forth. The hypocrisy embedded in these criticisms is evident, above all in view of the horrors committed by "civilized" countries. Already in the 16th century, Montaigne concluded that – with regard to the recently discovered peoples of the Americas – "we can, therefore, qualify these peoples as barbarians, if we only take into account intelligence, but never if we compare them to ourselves, who exceed them in all manner of barbarities"[8].

The truth is that these criticisms reveal moments of inconsistency between the thought and customs of "civilized" countries and the Brazilian reality. On analysis, Brazil's defensive reaction sometimes leads to the justification of situations like slavery: in the second half of the 19th century, the Brazilian Government argued that it should maintain slavery because it represented a comparative economic advantage (to borrow a modern expression) which the country could not do without at that moment. Other cases, however, should be given merit: how many times did the country, on confronting a crisis, resist the temptation to blame other countries or groups and provoke extreme situations, as many other "civilized" countries have done?

The conceptual gains for developing countries in Stockholm and Rio, as seen above, were considerable, and Johannesburg did not represent

[8] MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE. **Essais**, Book II, Chap. 31, p. 355, cited by Jean Francois Chougnet, "Tupi or not tupi, that is the question" In: **XXIV Bienal de São Paulo: núcleo histórico: antropofagia e histórias de canibalismos**. V.1, p. 90.

the retreat that many feared. There were also real gains for countries like Brazil, such as improvement in the organization of institutions and the monitoring of what is being done in the country – of both the successes and failures – in the environmental area, as well as the growing participation of civil society, the scientific and academic communities and the private sector. International pressure had undoubtedly a major role in the national awareness on the importance of the environmental issue. Before reacting defensively to this assertion, however, it should be emphasized that the Brazilian State and civil society prevented this process from arriving as a "canned" product, and molded it in a manner as to fit in legitimately with national values. The State did its part regarding legislation and the strengthening of institutions—despite the clear deficiencies in implementation and monitoring; civil society played its role as well, by promoting awareness and the debate on community priorities as well as an improved definition of the "national interest".

The maturity of Brazilian society has enabled the country to increasingly enunciate its contradictory, controversial and ambivalent characteristics in a constructive manner. "Only anthropophagy unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically", asserted in 1928 Oswald de Andrade, in his **Manifesto Antropófago**[9]. But this anthropophagy should be viewed as "the thought of a critical devouring of the universal [and] cultural legacy [that has been] developed, not through the submissive and reconciled perspective of the "noble savage", but from the brazen viewpoint of the "bad savage".[10] Or furthermore, as critic Paulo Herkenhoff states, "an anthropophagic country, in the sense of absorption, and no longer in the sense of devouring resources"[11]. A country increasingly capable of viewing its environmental assets, as Pedro Motta Pinto Coelho asserts, "as an extraordinary resource in its favor, not a burden"[12].

[9] HERKENHOFF, Paulo and PEDROSA, Adriano (curadores)). **XXIV Bienal de São** Paulo: núcleo histórico: antropofagia e histórias de canibalismos. V.1, p. 532.
[10] Ibid, p. 561.
[11] Ibid, p. 22.
[12] COELHO, Pedro Motta Pinto, op cit, p. 9.

Rubens Ricupero points out that:

> among the recent changes in the international landscape, one of the few working in our favor has been the sudden emergence of the environmental issue in which Brazil, despite its serious vulnerabilities […] has some precious cards, such as the fact that it detains the greatest reservoir of biodiversity and possesses the largest existing rain forest.[13]

The environmental agenda also represents an occasion for Brazil to adjust itself naturally to modern thought, not in terms of a cynical response to the cynicism of rich countries, but in a thoughtful attitude of a society whose values are, today, decidedly modern.

Brazil has all the conditions to broaden the internal debate on the real manner of realistically adapting its development project to sustainable patterns. It can be argued that this process is easier for developed countries. The latter, however, despite possessing greater resources, face profound political and social difficulties in the attempt to change their patterns of production and consumption. Brazil, as a medium sized power with immense territory, relatively low population density and large social debt, has exceptional conditions for a qualitative leap in several areas. Many examples given by civil society and by the private sector prove that social responsibility can be come together with environmental responsibility.

Environmental thinking already exists in Brazil. It is necessary, even so, to provide greater stimulus to existing institutions for scientific and technological research, more academic debate, and greater participation by civil society. There are still great advances to be made regarding broader

[13] RICUPERO, Rubens. **Visões do Brasil: ensaios sobre a história e a inserção do Brasil**. p. 147.

acceptance of the crosscutting aspect of the environmental issue inside the Federal Government – between and within Ministries as well as State and Municipal Governments. What Brazil accomplished in 1972 – the conceptual unity between environment and development – is being gradually achieved domestically, despite difficulties and due largely to the dynamic quality of Brazilian civil society. Brazil, therefore, could consolidate in a few years a vanguard position in the area of sustainable development.

It is necessary to reiterate that the evolution of the environmental issue opens up unparalleled opportunities for Brazil. A new stage in the role of Brazilian diplomacy in the environmental area begins after Johannesburg: the "Rio Legacy" was preserved and the most important principles in the approach to the issue in the multilateral sphere – from the Brazilian perspective – were strengthened. There is indisputable room for greater international cooperation. The Itamaraty has fulfilled, with talent and seriousness, its function as the "the country's first line of defense"[14] in the three conferences. In addition to exerting its responsibility of developing and coordinating the positions of the Brazilian Government to be defended in international negotiations – in a permanent dialogue with the technical bodies and relevant actors of civil society – Itamaraty also seeks opportunities for cooperation projects and identifies areas where Brazil is qualified to act before other countries. Itamaraty cannot do this without constantly improving its interaction with civil society. Much has already been done in this process of approximation, but there is still a notable lack of knowledge in Brazil of the Itamaraty's participation in the multilateral process in the area of the environment.

Informing national public opinion as to the importance of the Brazilian role in the three United Nations conferences on the environment can be of great value in helping to achieve this much hoped-for interaction.

[14] GUERREIRO, Ramiro Saraiva, op cit, p. 201.

The role of the "Itamaraty employees" – as Ambassador Cyro de Freitas Valle was wont to say to say – is little known, and the dissemination of the contribution of historical figures such as Miguel Ozório de Almeida contributes to enhance the value of the substantive work of diplomats and of the wide range of issues that were – and are– handled by the Ministry of External Relations.

Taking into account the importance and richness attained by the preparatory processes of the major multilateral negotiations in the environmental area – through the growing interaction among the most diverse actors of Brazilian society –the Itamaraty now also seeks to strengthen the process for monitoring of the results of these negotiations. Consequently, it will be possible to consolidate a discourse that transmits not just a reaction to the phenomena that affect the country, but a Brazilian vision of the global environmental issue. This exercise, conducted in the context of the consolidation of the universality that has marked foreign policy, and of the Brazilian interest in a larger and permanent presence on the international scene, could also contribute to the conciliation of the multilateral environmental agenda with the economic, political and social interests of the country.

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APPENDICES

DECLARATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, having met at Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972, having considered the need for a common outlook and for common principles to inspire and guide the peoples of the world in the preservation and enhancement of the human environment,

Proclaims that:

1. Man is both creature and moulder of his environment, which gives him physical sustenance and affords him the opportunity for intellectual, moral, social and spiritual growth. In the long and tortuous evolution of the human race on this planet a stage has been reached when, through the rapid acceleration of science and technology, man has acquired the power to transform his environment in countless ways and on an unprecedented scale. Both aspects of man's environment, the natural and the man-made, are essential to his well-being and to the enjoyment of basic human rights the right to life itself.

2. The protection and improvement of the human environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world; it is the urgent desire of the peoples of the whole world and the duty of all Governments.

3. Man has constantly to sum up experience and go on discovering, inventing, creating and advancing. In our time, man's capability to transform his surroundings, if used wisely, can bring to all peoples the benefits of development and the opportunity to enhance the quality of life. Wrongly or heedlessly applied, the same power can do incalculable harm to human beings and the human environment. We see around us growing evidence of man-made harm in many regions of the earth: dangerous levels of pollution in water, air, earth and living beings; major and undesirable disturbances to the ecological balance of the biosphere; destruction and depletion of irreplaceable resources; and gross deficiencies, harmful to the physical, mental and social health of man, in the man-made environment, particularly in the living and working environment.

4. In the developing countries most of the environmental problems are caused by under-development. Millions continue to live far below the minimum levels required for a decent human existence, deprived of adequate food and clothing, shelter and education, health and sanitation. Therefore, the developing countries must direct their efforts to development, bearing in mind their priorities and the need to safeguard and improve the environment. For the same purpose, the industrialized countries should make efforts to reduce the gap themselves and the developing countries. In the industrialized countries, environmental problems are generally related to industrialization and technological development.

5. The natural growth of population continuously presents problems for the preservation of the environment, and adequate policies and measures should be adopted, as appropriate, to face these problems. Of all things in the world, people are the most precious. It is the people that propel social progress, create social wealth, develop science and technology and, through their hard work, continuously transform the human environment. Along with social progress and the advance of production, science and

technology, the capability of man to improve the environment increases with each passing day.

6. A point has been reached in history when we must shape our actions throughout the world with a more prudent care for their environmental consequences. Through ignorance or indifference we can do massive and irreversible harm to the earthly environment on which our life and well being depend. Conversely, through fuller knowledge and wiser action, we can achieve for ourselves and our posterity a better life in an environment more in keeping with human needs and hopes. There are broad vistas for the enhancement of environmental quality and the creation of a good life. What is needed is an enthusiastic but calm state of mind and intense but orderly work. For the purpose of attaining freedom in the world of nature, man must use knowledge to build, in collaboration with nature, a better environment. To defend and improve the human environment for present and future generations has become an imperative goal for mankind- a goal to be pursued together with, and in harmony with, the established and fundamental goals of peace and of worldwide economic and social development.

7. To achieve this environmental goal will demand the acceptance of responsibility by citizens and communities and by enterprises and institutions at every level, all sharing equitably in common efforts. Individuals in all walks of life as well as organizations in many fields, by their values and the sum of their actions, will shape the world environment of the future. Local and national governments will bear the greatest burden for large-scale environmental policy and action within their jurisdictions. International cooperation is also needed in order to raise resources to support the developing countries in carrying out their responsibilities in this field. A growing class of environmental problems, because they are regional or global in extent or because they affect the common international realm, will require extensive cooperation among nations and action by international

organizations in the common interest. The Conference calls upon Governments and peoples to exert common efforts for the preservation and improvement of the human environment, for the benefit of all the people and for their posterity.

PRINCIPLES

STATES THE COMMON CONVICTION THAT:

Principle 1

Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stand condemned and must be eliminated.

Principle 2

The natural resources of the earth, including the air, water, land, flora and fauna and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems, must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management, as appropriate.

Principle 3

The capacity of the earth to produce vital renewable resources must be maintained and, wherever practicable, restored or improved.

Principle 4

Man has a special responsibility to safeguard and wisely manage the heritage of wildlife and its habitat, which are now gravely imperilled by a combination of adverse factors. Nature conservation, including wildlife, must therefore receive importance in planning for economic development.

Principle 5

The non-renewable resources of the earth must be employed in such a way as to guard against the danger of their future exhaustion and to ensure that benefits from such employment are shared by all mankind.

Principle 6

The discharge of toxic substances or of other substances and the release of heat, in such quantities or concentrations as to exceed the capacity of the environment to render them harmless, must be halted in order to ensure that serious or irreversible damage is not inflicted upon ecosystems. The just struggle of the peoples of ill countries against pollution should be supported.

Principle 7

States shall take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas by substances that are liable to create hazards to human health, to harm living resources and marine life, to damage amenities or to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

Principle 8

Economic and social development is essential for ensuring a favorable living and working environment for man and for creating conditions on earth that are necessary for the improvement of the quality of life.

Principle 9

Environmental deficiencies generated by the conditions of under-development and natural disasters pose grave problems and can best be remedied by accelerated development through the transfer of substantial quantities of financial and technological assistance as a supplement to the domestic effort of the developing countries and such timely assistance as may be required.

Principle 10

For the developing countries, stability of prices and adequate earnings for primary commodities and raw materials are essential to environmental management, since economic factors as well as ecological processes must be taken into account.

Principle 11

The environmental policies of all States should enhance and not adversely affect the present or future development potential of developing countries, nor should they hamper the attainment of better living conditions for all, and appropriate steps should be taken by States and international organizations with a view to reaching agreement on meeting the possible national and international economic consequences resulting from the application of environmental measures.

Principle 12

Resources should be made available to preserve and improve the environment, taking into account the circumstances and particular requirements of developing countries and any costs which may emanate- from their incorporating environmental safeguards into their development planning and the need for making available to them, upon their request, additional international technical and financial assistance for this purpose.

Principle 13

In order to achieve a more rational management of resources and thus to improve the environment, States should adopt an integrated and coordinated approach to their development planning so as to ensure that development is compatible with the need to protect and improve environment for the benefit of their population.

Principle 14

Rational planning constitutes an essential tool for reconciling any conflict between the needs of development and the need to protect and improve the environment.

Principle 15

Planning must be applied to human settlements and urbanization with a view to avoiding adverse effects on the environment and obtaining maximum social, economic and environmental benefits for all. In this respect projects which arc designed for colonialist and racist domination must be abandoned.

Principle 16

Demographic policies which are without prejudice to basic human rights and which are deemed appropriate by Governments concerned should be applied in those regions where the rate of population growth or excessive population concentrations are likely to have adverse effects on the environment of the human environment and impede development.

Principle 17

Appropriate national institutions must be entrusted with the task of planning, managing or controlling the 9 environmental resources of States with a view to enhancing environmental quality.

Principle 18

Science and technology, as part of their contribution to economic and social development, must be applied to the identification, avoidance and control of environmental risks and the solution of environmental problems and for the common good of mankind.

Principle 19

Education in environmental matters, for the younger generation as well as adults, giving due consideration to the underprivileged, is essential in order

to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension. It is also essential that mass media of communications avoid contributing to the deterioration of the environment, but, on the contrary, disseminates information of an educational nature on the need to project and improve the environment in order to enable mal to develop in every respect.

Principle 20

Scientific research and development in the context of environmental problems, both national and multinational, must be promoted in all countries, especially the developing countries. In this connection, the free flow of up-to-date scientific information and transfer of experience must be supported and assisted, to facilitate the solution of environmental problems; environmental technologies should be made available to developing countries on terms which would encourage their wide dissemination without constituting an economic burden on the developing countries.

Principle 21

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

Principle 22

States shall cooperate to develop further the international law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage caused by activities within the jurisdiction or control of such States to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

Principle 23

Without prejudice to such criteria as may be agreed upon by the international community, or to standards which will have to be determined nationally, it will be essential in all cases to consider the systems of values prevailing in each country, and the extent of the applicability of standards which are valid for the most advanced countries but which may be inappropriate and of unwarranted social cost for the developing countries.

Principle 24

International matters concerning the protection and improvement of the environment should be handled in a cooperative spirit by all countries, big and small, on an equal footing.

Cooperation through multilateral or bilateral arrangements or other appropriate means is essential to effectively control, prevent, reduce and eliminate adverse environmental effects resulting from activities conducted in all spheres, in such a way that due account is taken of the sovereignty and interests of all States.

Principle 25

States shall ensure that international organizations play a coordinated, efficient and dynamic role for the protection and improvement of the environment.

Principle 26

Man and his environment must be spared the effects of nuclear weapons and all other means of mass destruction. States must strive to reach prompt agreement, in the relevant international organs, on the elimination and complete destruction of such weapons.

RIO DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,
Having met at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992

Reaffirming the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972, and seeking to build upon it,

With the goal of establishing a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among States, key sectors of societies and people,

Working towards international agreements which respect the interests of all and protect the integrity of the global environmental and developmental system,

Recognizing the integral and interdependent nature of the Earth, our home,
Proclaims that:

Principle 1
Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

Principle 2

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

Principle 3

The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations.

Principle 4

In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it.

Principle 5

All States and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world.

Principle 6

The special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the least developed and those most environmentally vulnerable, shall be given special priority. International actions in the field of environment and development should also address the interests and needs of all countries.

Principle 7

States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of

the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit to sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.

Principle 8

To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies.

Principle 9

States should cooperate to strengthen endogenous capacity-building for sustainable development by improving scientific understanding through exchanges of scientific and technological knowledge, and by enhancing the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new and innovative technologies.

Principle 10

Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

Principle 11

States shall enact effective environmental legislation. Environmental standards, management objectives and priorities should reflect the environmental and development context to which they apply. Standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries.

Principle 12

States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, to better address the problems of environmental degradation. Trade policy measures for environmental purposes should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade.

Unilateral actions to deal with environmental challenges outside the jurisdiction of the importing country should be avoided. Environmental measures addressing transboundary or global environmental problems should, as far as possible, be based on an international consensus.

Principle 13

States shall develop national law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage. States shall also cooperate in an expeditious and more determined manner to develop further international law regarding liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

Principle 14

States should effectively cooperate to discourage or prevent the relocation and transfer to other States of any activities and substances that cause severe environmental degradation or are found to be harmful to human health.

Principle 15

In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

Principle 16

National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment.

Principle 17

Environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.

Principle 18

States shall immediately notify other States of any natural disasters or other emergencies that are likely to produce sudden harmful effects on the environment of those States. Every effort shall be made by the international community to help States so afflicted.

Principle 19

States shall provide prior and timely notification and relevant information to potentially affected States on activities that may have a significant adverse transboundary environmental effect and shall consult with those States at an early stage and in good faith.

Principle 20

Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.

Principle 21

The creativity, ideals and courage of the youth of the world should be mobilized to forge a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development and ensure a better future for all.

Principle 22

Indigenous people and their communities and other local communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development.

Principle 23

The environment and natural resources of people under oppression, domination and occupation shall be protected.

Principle 24

Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development. States shall therefore respect international law providing protection for the environment in times of armed conflict and cooperate in its further development, as necessary.

Principle 25

Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible.

Principle 26

States shall resolve all their environmental disputes peacefully and by appropriate means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Principle 27

States and people shall cooperate in good faith and in a spirit of partnership in the fulfilment of the principles embodied in this Declaration and in the further development of international law in the field of sustainable development.

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