

EDITORIAL

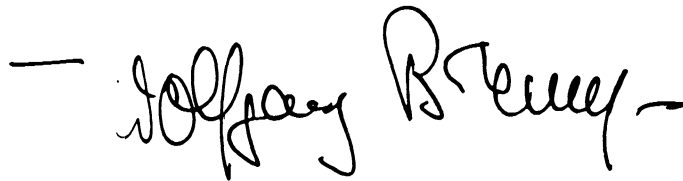
So much has been happening all at once that it is difficult to know what to report on now and what to postpone until later. For example, with regard to the meetings of the UNCED PrepCom, so many things are occurring that it is difficult to keep track: New developments since the last issue, and the next round of the Committee before us in March.

Negotiations on the "Biodiversity" and "Climate" conventions (see also page 5) have also taken place, and discussions are still continuing. We shall have to include these in the next issue. So far, we have not yet reported on the follow-up of the Montevideo Programme for the development and periodic review of environmental law for the decade 1981-1991, or the regional meetings to prepare for the input into UNCED. However, we plan to publish an extensive issue in April on the results of the decisive UNCED PrepCom meeting in New York, especially as it is felt that the results coming from there will be the fundamental basis for the Rio Conference. Any important decisions coming out of the meeting of the UN/ECE Senior Advisers on Environmental Problems will also be covered in that issue.

Another meeting connected with the UNCED preparatory process was the Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council, held from 3-5 February in Nairobi. That meeting gave a fore-taste of how difficult New York could be. The Latin American delegations adopted a blocking tactic in the drafting committee, in particular with regard to the resolution on the State of the Environment Report and on the Report of the Secretary-General. The impression was that they wanted to postpone until Rio all discussion on how the UN system should deal with the environment. Malaysia voiced doubt on the usefulness of going to Rio at all! In addition, many delegations were unhappy that the full State of the Environment Report would not be ready before August, too late for UNCED in June.

On the other hand, Maurice Strong, UNCED Secretary-General, was in our office last week, and he was optimistic with regard to the outlook for Rio. He felt that the problems being encountered were to be expected at this stage.

17 February 1992



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Last minute: We have just heard that the "Biodiversity" negotiations were very difficult, but that a breakthrough has been achieved. Hopefully. Details next time.