



**58º PERIODO ORDINARIO DE SESIONES DE LA  
ASAMBLEA GENERAL**

**SEGUNDA COMISIÓN**

**Intervención del Uruguay en nombre del MERCOSUR, Bolivia y Chile**

**Tema 95 del programa: “Ejecución del Programa 21, del Plan para su ulterior ejecución  
y aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas en la Cumbre Mundial sobre el Desarrollo  
Sostenible”**

---

**SECOND COMITEE**

**Statement by the delegation of Uruguay to the United Nations  
On behalf of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile**

**Agenda item 95: “Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for Further  
Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable  
Development”**

**New York, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member countries of Mercosur, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay and the associated countries Bolivia and Chile on agenda item 95, entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21".

The member countries of Mercosur are firmly committed to the protection of the environment, the implementation of Agenda 21 and adherence to and implementation of the international instruments adopted at the various international summits.

As developing countries with limited economic and technical resources, we consider that we have made tremendous strides in defence of sustainable development and implementation of Agenda 21. A development of which we are proud, especially as this is the International Year of Freshwater, and one that we believe should be held up as an example of joint management of subterranean aquifer reserves, is the establishment in Uruguay of a subregional commission for the joint management by our countries of the Guarani aquifer system, the second largest freshwater reserve in the world.

The commission is responsible for regulating the exploitation, research and management of the aquifer and is eloquent testimony to the possibility of achieving cooperation in water-related matters as opposed to the tendency towards conflict over water.

Our countries recognize that, while water is a natural resource in the service of mankind, States, or in this case the regions where these water resources are located, are responsible for their care and management.

Mr. Chairman,

The countries of Mercosur share a concern which we wish to bring to the attention of Member States on the subject of deforestation, since this is a concept closely associated with the very implementation of Agenda 21.

We have noted the emergence of a negative image of deforestation at various non-governmental meetings that seek to form opinions, without having enough representativeness. This image is an inventory of deforestation that focuses on only one recent aspect of the issue by taking into account only recent data and seeking to absolve from responsibility those countries that for decades have abused their forestry resources.

We do not believe in this trend, which ignores the agreed principles of historical responsibility and the responsibility of leadership, and we believe that the concept should be defined in a more balanced manner.

On the question of chemical safety and organic pollutants, we wish to draw attention to the commitment of the countries of Mercosur to the Bale, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and to reaffirm our willingness to promote the principles of safe management of chemical substances by working together to achieve the objectives of Rio + 10. In this regard, we wish to note that once the Protocol to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants comes into force, the Mercosur countries are in agreement that the first conference of the parties should be held in Uruguay.

We wish to reiterate, Mr. Chairman, our readiness to work within the framework of the cooperation that is needed to achieve the implementation of Agenda 21.

Thank you very much.