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**Opening Remarks by  
MR. SHA ZUKANG  
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TO THE MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE  
ON IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**New York, 1 February 2010**

Minister Ferraté,  
Director-General Hoogeveen,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am delighted to join you today in this first Multistakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development.

I am very pleased that the Bureau of both CSD-17 and CSD-18 are represented here. Their joint participation goes beyond mere symbolic significance. It sends a strong signal to member States and major group stakeholders that the Commission is taking real steps to ensure that its policy decisions are being implemented.

I applaud the joint commitment of Minister Ferraté and Minister Verburg. This dialogue will benefit from your guidance.

Since the Commission met last May, we have seen an alarming rise in global food insecurity and hunger deteriorating. Smallholder farmers, especially in

Africa, are encountering increasing difficulties as a result of drought and desertification and loss of arable land and water resources. All this is happening in the broader setting of the global financial and economic crisis, and climate change.

Today's dialogue is therefore timely. It can build on the outcome of CSD-17, by generating the momentum and action toward implementing the policy decisions adopted by the Commission on sustainable agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

Minister Ferraté,  
Distinguished Delegates,

The choice of a multi-stakeholder forum to explore the possibilities for strengthening implementation is one more concrete example of CSD's inclusiveness.

The CSD has traditionally provided innovative spaces for the participation of non-governmental actors with the overall purpose of informing the Commission's decision-making processes.

In this regard, the multi-stakeholder dialogues initiated by the CSD have proven to be the most unique and valuable approach for advancing sustainable development in a participatory manner.

It is through the multi-stakeholder process that we aim for accelerated implementation of sustainable development - through fostering new partnerships,

strengthening support for capacity-building, and mobilizing resources from non-traditional partners.

The CSD experience shows that multi-stakeholder participation has been crucial for broadening ownership in development initiatives.

For today's dialogue, we propose to focus on how CSD-17 decisions are being implemented on the ground, and what could be done to accelerate their implementation and to promote a fast-track strategy for the scaling up of successful practices.

The lessons learned can point to the way ahead on how the gains made so far will be sustained in support of the MDGs.

About 70 percent of the MDGs' target group live in rural areas. For the rural poor, agriculture is a critical component in the successful attainment of the MDGs. A more productive and profitable agricultural sector is a key component of any strategy for meeting the MDGs by 2015.

In this regard, CSD-17 has already laid the foundation. Policy measures agreed during CSD-17 provide key elements of a roadmap, showing how to enhance agricultural productivity and food security; how to build social capital; and how to adapt to climate change and realize sustainable green revolution in Africa.

Minister Ferraté,  
Distinguished Delegates,

CSD is also characterized, among other things, by its consistent emphasis on aligning policy implementation with a pragmatic approach to overcoming gaps and obstacles.

As we begin the discussion this morning, let us listen carefully where implementation gaps are.

Let us hear what actions are being taken by governments, development institutions and major groups on the ground.

Let us discuss how we can do more, and how we can better focus our collective efforts through stronger partnerships.

I am pleased to note that, in addition to the representatives of the UN system, we have participants from key international financial and development institutions joining us today.

So let us seize this opportunity to further explore innovative arrangements for partnerships. It is now time for the champions of sustainable development – governments and stakeholders - to step forward and lead implementation.

It is our expectation that from today's dialogue will emerge a clearer picture of implementation. We'll learn how development partners are engaged in implementation of CSD-17 decisions.

We'll find more opportunities to build stronger partnerships among all stakeholders, including development agencies and the UN system. This must be part of a more robust strategy to advance sustainable development and to achieve MDGs.

In short, we hope to see more action.

For our own part, DESA is committed to facilitating the implementation process by ensuring that CSD decisions are communicated to all stakeholders in a timely manner, and by fostering a more coordinated, coherent and consultative approach both within the UN system, and with stakeholders.

Your participation in this multi-stakeholder dialogue is greatly appreciated. I look forward to a fruitful outcome on the basis of which to map our next steps, transforming words to action.

I wish you a very productive dialogue.

Thank you.

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