

UNITED NATIONS



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**STATEMENT
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DEVELOPMENT**

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM of CSD-19)

New York, 28 February 2011

Minister Laszlo Borbely,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address you at the opening of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the 19th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those governments and UN entities and Major Groups who have supported the Commission's work by organizing intersessional meetings and events.

We meet at the start of what promises to be a defining year in the work of this Commission.

Challenges presented by a fragile and uneven global economic recovery continue to threaten progress in sustainable development. At the same time, we continue to struggle with the effects of the global energy crisis; the ongoing food crisis and freshwater scarcity; and the overwhelming impact of climate change.

The persistence of these crises is an indication of increasing stress on the resources and ecosystem services provided by our natural environment. There can be no doubt about the urgency to find a sustainable equilibrium between meeting the needs and improving the quality of life of our people, promoting growth and development, while protecting and preserving the environment.

The Commission in this cycle is considering an important set of thematic areas, described as 'materials' or 'resources' cycle. These are: chemicals, waste management, mining, transport and the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns.

Mr. Chairman,

Many of the challenges of this “materials cycle” relate to unsustainable urbanization. Within the next fifty years, many people living in extreme poverty will reside in mega-cities. This will pose a huge challenge for municipal services such as transportation, water and sanitation, and solid waste collection.

In rural areas, a critical challenge remains the lack of access to basic services, such as safe drinking water and improved sanitation. The rural poor also have little or no services in terms of the most basic transport infrastructure and services. With the impact of climate change, natural disasters, like massive floods and prolonged droughts, are putting rural livelihoods at increasing risk.

The Commission at its last session – CSD18 – carried out an in-depth review of these challenges, laying the groundwork for this year’s policy session.

Distinguished Delegates,

We must find ways to do more, and do better with less. But how?

We need an integrated policy approach to address these challenges – one that promotes greater investment in resource efficiency and productivity.

This means introducing or strengthening policies that promote the use of a more balanced energy mix, including renewable energy. It means designing more energy efficient buildings; more efficient transportation infrastructure; investing in low carbon public transport.

It means designing policies that stimulate the development of *cleaner* technologies and manufacturing processes; or introducing market incentives that promote waste prevention and minimization. It means exploring innovative financial mechanisms to support the incorporation of the 3-Rs (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle) into local and national waste management systems.

Distinguished Delegates,

The issues being considered by the Commission are all relevant to the concept of a green economy. And, as you know, the concept of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication will be one of the principal themes to be addressed at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 in Rio.

Our work during this IPM, and at the upcoming session of the Commission, can promote broader understanding of the concept through the consideration of practical actions within a green economy framework. This will be an important contribution to the Conference preparatory process.

At the same time, CSD-19 will be the last Commission’s session before the Rio Conference next year. We therefore meet during this IPM, and at the upcoming session of the CSD, with a renewed awareness of what makes this forum valuable. We reflect, too, on what can be done to make its work and its impact even more meaningful.

I invite you to use this meeting, and the upcoming session, to gain fresh insight on how we might re-shape this forum into a vibrant and action-oriented body, with a focus on implementation.

I am sure you will agree that one of the Commission's most valuable assets is its strong participatory approach that has become central to our deliberations and action. Let us use the upcoming policy session to remind ourselves of what can be achieved when there is broad participation in, and ownership of, the decisions and strategies for action taken here.

We cannot achieve success without the fullest cooperation and participation of the nine Major Groups, our key partners.

The wider international community, including the UN system, development agencies and foundations can play a vital role. Their support to capacity building and institutional development can assist developing countries in overcome barriers and bridging the implementation gaps.

Excellencies,

I look forward to continuing our collaboration for our shared goal of sustainable development.

I urge you to make the most of your deliberation this week, so that you will set a sound foundation for the work of the Commission at its upcoming session, and beyond.

Thank you.

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