

Statement by Mr. Osuga, Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan
At the 2nd meeting of the CSD-17, May 4, 2009

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you, Mme. Chair, as well as the Secretariat for the extraordinary preparatory work done to date.

Last year, Japan hosted TICAD IV in May and chaired the G8 Summit in July. In these summit meetings, my Government focused on the same themes as those we will discuss in the CSD-17, namely agriculture, rural development, Africa and issues related to climate change.

Our initiatives echoed those taken under the UN framework, including the Secretary General's High Level Taskforce and High-Level Meetings on food security and Africa's development. The G8 continues to follow-up on the food and agriculture issues and the G8 Agriculture Ministers' meeting was held just 2 weeks ago in Italy.

The Chair's draft negotiating document captures well the international debate we've had to date, including in those meetings I've just mentioned. I would like to commend the Secretariat for its good work.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to raise two points that we deem important pertaining to the themes of this year's CSD.

First, Japan is a major donor in the agriculture sector and contributes approximately one third of the total ODA of the OECD/DAC countries in this sector. In extending its aid to support agriculture and rural development, my Government applies the human security approach. It means that in working with our partners to increase the staple food production and its productivity, we will always have people-centered, down to the ground vision and methods.

In more concrete terms, Government of Japan will fully respect traditional agriculture as well as eating habits in different parts of the world, promote the production of the crop that fits most suitably to the land and support sustainable food production that doesn't harm in any way the environment. Management of both land and water resources is equally important.

We welcome the emphasis made in the draft negotiating document on capacity building and the empowerment of individuals and communities, as well as the bottom-up approaches involving all the local stakeholders.

Second, in order for the CSD to display its added value vis-a-vis other forums within and outside of the UN system, we should concentrate our debate in the CSD on those issues directly linked to the themes on the agenda.

In other words, the CSD should not weaken its unique role of harmonizing environmental agenda with the social and economic development agenda by debating on subjects that can be dealt with in other forums and organizations with a clearer mandate, such as

international debt and trade. Such an attempt would lead to an unnecessary and excessively politicized debate at the sacrifice of more productive and constructive discussions on substantial issues relevant to CSD.