

OFFICIAL STATEMENT UN CSD-13

Water, Tuesday, 12 April 2005

- **IWRM**
- **Access to basic water services**

Intervention of the Business and Industry Major Group

Delivered by Robert Martin, World Business Council for Sustainable Development

Thank you Madame Chair.

The business community shares the concerns about the scale of the challenge of meeting goals and targets for water, and recognizes that progress requires the engagement of all sectors of society.

The commitment of the business community has been shown by the actions of many individual companies and can be seen in the initiatives of numerous business organizations acting at the global, regional and local levels.

Examples of what businesses can do to support sustainable water management can be found in the case studies available here at the UN CSD through Business Action for Water. They reflect actions for which businesses can take the lead in their operations, products and services, for which businesses must work primarily with civil society and for which they can best work in responsible interaction with governments.

Many businesses are directly concerned with issues in IWRM. They are essential actors in economic development with significant direct and indirect impacts on the use of water resources and the quality of the aquatic environment. They face growing risks that include decreasing availability and reliability of water supply, declining water quality, supply chain interruptions and loss of license to operate where business use of water competes with meeting the basic needs of local communities.

The business community largely supports the principle of IWRM that can help to provide a framework to reduce these risks.

What can businesses do? Water management plans for their own operations, measuring the efficiency of water use, evaluating environmental impacts and reducing pollution at the source are some areas where businesses can take the lead.

We would like to emphasize, however, that technology and innovation are areas where businesses can make a substantial contribution for all sectors and, in agreement with the views expressed yesterday by the G77, we believe that this deserves greater emphasis in the Chair's text.

Thank you for your attention.