

**17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**  
**4 May 2009**

**Statement by the Australian Delegation**

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Madam Chair,

Australia would like to begin by recognising the work of the bureau and your leadership in preparing the draft negotiating text before us.

Our brief remarks will focus on three elements of the draft text.

First, on food security. Australia believes the continuing challenge of global food insecurity and the importance of implementing appropriate measures that address market, policy and information failures should be recognised. The 2007-08 global price spike for food commodities and agricultural inputs, and continuing high prices in many developing countries, combined with the impact of the global economic downturn could undermine much of the gains in reducing poverty and malnutrition that have occurred in the last decade. Also, climate change has the potential to adversely affect agricultural production in many countries, not least small island states highly reliant on agriculture, forestry and fisheries as a primary source of food and livelihood. Improving the openness and efficiency of global markets for agriculture and food; cutting subsidies and removing other measures that distort agricultural trade; and enhancing productivity through increased investment in agricultural research and information services for farmers, stand out as important contributors to improving global food security.

Second, we believe that the document should recognise the role of sound governance structures, action at the national and sub-national level and practical partnerships as key enabling factors of sustainable development.

Third, it is important to avoid duplication of related activities underway in other forums. While recognising inter-connections with other processes, the outcome of our deliberations should respect and reflect the Commission on Sustainable Development's mandate to review and assist progress on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

In conclusion, Madam Chair, we consider the draft negotiating text has the potential to strengthen the policies and practices of a broad range of stakeholders engaged in advancing the themes covered in this cycle of the Commission's work program. Australia will work constructively and co-operatively in seeking to reach an agreed text.

Thank you.