



EUROPEAN UNION
Delegation of the European Commission
to the United Nations

Intervention by Stavros Dimas

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at

CSD 13

High Level Panel discussion

**Meeting the Millennium Development Goals related to water,
sanitation and human settlements targets**

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Check against delivery

Thank you for this most interesting and challenging presentation. Let me try and react to some of the points made.

The debates here at CSD 13, and those that are taking place in the run up to the Millennium Review Summit, have shown that MDGs cannot be taken in isolation and that a sustainably managed environment is not a luxury for the rich to enjoy, but the very basis for the livelihoods of the poorest.

MDG 7 on environmental sustainability is one of the MDGs where progress has been the slowest.

Yet, it is crucial to meet MDG 7 if we want to meet the other MDGs:

- Addressing hunger and poverty cannot happen if water is not sustainably used in agriculture and land degradation addressed
- Child mortality won't go down and women's health won't improve without access to safe water sources
- Gender equality will remain a dream if women and young girls need to dedicate hours each day to get water from far away sources
- Lack of sanitation in schools will continue to deter girls from attending.
- The poorest will continue to *suffer* most from the deterioration of our ecosystems on which their livelihoods depend.

Jeffrey Sachs has been arguing that the MDGs can be met in 2015. MDG 7 can also be met. (see background)

We know how. The work done under both the Finance Working Group of the EU Water Initiative, the Millennium Project and by the World Panel of Financing Water for All, has shown **that the present level of funding is not sufficient for meeting the investment needs to comply with the MDGs and WSSD targets** for access to drinking water and basic sanitation.

New, **innovative and flexible mechanisms are urgently required** to use the maximum leverage effect of ODA and attract more resources from a large range of stakeholders.

The EU is contributing to the MDGs, and MDG 7 in particular.

- **First, we are on the way to meeting our official development assistance (ODA) targets.**
 - In the EU our original commitments on the way to Monterrey, concerning ODA volume, coordination of policies and harmonisation of procedures, untying of aid, Trade Related Assistance and debt relief could be reached in 2006.
 - The European Commission thinks it might therefore be timely to consider new concrete commitments for the time thereafter, and we have put on the table a number of proposals in order to step up EU efforts. They include
 - ~ the need to renew our commitments on official development assistance (ODA) with a possible new interim target for increased ODA volumes in the EU by 2010 as a major step towards the

UN-target of 0.7 % of Gross National Income (GNI) for ODA by 2015.

- Developing our thinking on innovative finance sources, with the objective to mobilise additional and stable sources of finance. We are for instance considering a UK proposal to "Front Load" pledged aid increases through the International Finance Facility (IFF) as well as a range of proposals for international taxation contained in the French "Landau Report" and the work of the "Lula Group".
 - ways to address the remaining debt problems of low income countries. The EU is well on track in its support to the implementation of the extended HIPC (Highly indebted poor countries) initiative, and is fully delivering on its commitments. Most Member States are committed to go beyond. We are now looking at how to develop forward looking strategies to help indebted countries.
 - a re-definition of the EU commitment on global public goods which of course include protection of the global environment.
 - better coordination and harmonisation of aid through a credible implementation of the recently agreed EU framework and concrete steps forward on complementarity in the aid delivery.
 - Strengthening the International Finance System.
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- **These are ideas currently being discussed. But we have already done a lot.**
 - The European Union and the 25 EU Member States provide collectively around **€1.4 billion annually to water and sanitation in developing countries**. Collectively the European Union is the **largest provider of development assistance** and the **largest donor in water and sanitation**.
 - **Through its bilateral co-operation**, the European Commission is implementing for example rural hydraulic programmes aiming at: improving access to drinkable water in the rural sector and reinforcing national policies in the water sector. Concretely, these programmes are translated at the ground level, by small infrastructures investments and institutional support to reinforce national administrations.
 - The **European Union Water Initiative** is an expression of the collective will of the European Union to work in an innovative manner to focus on water and sanitation. The EU Water initiative's pioneering partnership approach aims at bringing together EU institutions and Member States, developing country government agencies, civil society, financial institutions, as well as the expertise and investment potential of the private sector.
 - **The EU has also been innovative in finding new ways to deliver its assistance**. The ACP EU Water Facility is a fund that will create the conditions to attract funding from sources other than official
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development assistance (ODA) and it will bring funding to the local level, working directly with those most affected by shortages of water and the absence of sanitation.

- **Let me add a point on the quick wins** suggested in the Millennium Project Report: they will not work unless they are sustainable. Their economic, social and environmental consequences must be carefully studied.
- **Our next big appointment with the MDGs is at the Millennium Review Summit this year.** CSD 13 has the responsibility to bring to it the following clear and strong messages that sustainable development is the way out of the poverty trap, and that the management of our natural resources stands on the road to peace and security. The UN of the 21st century will need to be able to deal with this specific challenge in its organisation, policies and governing system.