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**GENERAL STATEMENT TO THE 14TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-14)**

**DELIVERED BY DR CONALL O'CONNELL
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DEPUTY SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE**

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for the opportunity to make a few broad comments today on the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI).

During CSD14, Australia will emphasise the myriad of practical partnerships across the four themes – including the central role of the private sector – that will be necessary for implementing the JPOI, including improving access to energy services for the over 2 billion people who currently are without sustainable energy services.

However, in this opening session, we have been asked to identify one or two priority issues related to the overall progress in implementing the JPOI. In our view, good governance and liberalised trade are crucial to underpin sustainable economic development and implementation of the JPOI.

On **governance**, Australia views political stability and effective political and institutional governance as essential for attracting investment and achieving sustainable development – and therefore essential for implementing JPOI.

Development assistance programmes will fail to deliver progress on sustainable development if political decision makers in partner countries ignore the broad basic interests of their States.

I note that the World Bank has identified corruption as the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development – diverting up to \$US400 billion each year.

Political governance fails where sectional interests and allegiances, and corruption, are allowed to predominate. In these cases, the actions of a few undermine the prosperity of entire nations.

Last week, Australia released its new policy 'white paper' on development assistance, which underlines our commitment to sustainable development and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In particular, we recognise the challenges for small island states and encourage development partners to work towards implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.



Australia provides assistance to strengthen political governance in our partner governments, but ultimately, all countries must address these issues themselves to ensure the confidence of donors and investors, particularly in the development of energy markets.

Turning to **trade**, it is through genuine, free and open multilateral trade and investment that all countries will be able to attain sustained economic growth and self-sufficiency.

According to World Bank estimates, freeing merchandise trade and abolishing trade-distorting agriculture subsidies has the potential to boost global welfare by up to \$290 billion by 2015.

The successful conclusion of the Doha Round of Trade negotiations could enable 32 million people to be lifted out of poverty by the MDG target year of 2015. This is the equivalent of about 5 per cent of those estimated to be living in poverty.

Australia promotes poverty reduction by providing well-targeted and effective aid, appropriate debt relief, duty-free and quota-free market access to goods from least developed countries.

Integral to our approach is the promotion of liberalised world trade. We hope that others also will recognise the benefits of liberalised trade for global sustainable development and work towards the conclusion of a successful Doha Round.

As I mentioned, while we discuss the practical implementation of the JPOI in the four themes of CSD14, we must not forget these foundation issues, without which we cannot make effective progress on global sustainable development.

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