

**UGANDA’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGIONAL DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABLE
CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION, MAY 3RD 2010**

The debate on “*sustainable consumption and production*” reminds us of the old debate on the policy of “*protection of infant industries*” as a means of fostering economic development in developing countries.

For decades this debate raged on until the new concept of globalization emerged to render this policy obsolete. Now instead of protectionism, we are advocating economic liberalization and full integration into the global economy – a complete turnaround.

In a similar manner, the new concept of sustainable consumption and production is about development that goes hand-in-hand with environmental protection. By implication this means selective or managed consumption. Not the kind of “free and unrestricted” consumption that enabled developed countries to achieve their current level of industrialization. This inevitably requires developing countries to control, limit or restrict consumption in the interest of environmental sustainability.

Unfortunately, the reality today in the global marketplace (which we are trying to integrate into) is based on increasing consumption. You have to increase consumption as a means of achieving economic growth for poverty reduction. The debate, therefore, is between increasing consumption on the one hand and selectively restricting consumption on the other. Which way for developing countries?

This has become a big policy dilemma for developing countries and indeed poses a great challenge for this implementation cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development. It merits serious consideration of the Commission.