

**Remarks by
Amb. Claude Heller, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the UN
before the High-Level segment of the
16 session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**

May 16th, 2008

Allow me, Mr. President, to express the condolences of Mexico to Myanmar and China for the human and material losses generated by the recent natural disasters suffered in those countries.

The review and discussion of the thematic issues addressed by the Commission at this session are elements of great significance for achieving the goals of the Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Mexico reaffirms its commitment in reaching these objectives of sustainable development.

We join the callings that highlight the need to invest in the land and to strengthen aspects of technological development and research in agriculture. The agricultural sector should take up an integrated approach, using the best and new technologies that respond to local conditions; achieve better performance in production without expanding the agricultural limits, and give an unprecedented impetus to agricultural activities, through its modernization and markets approach.

My country is promoting the agricultural sector in a way that has a profitable and competitive performance, with long-term, sustainable development plans in the social and economic order, and it is committed to the conservation of our natural resources.

We not only propose a development with quality, based on the profitability of competitiveness, but also an inclusive and balanced development aimed to boost a healthy, profitable and economically sustainable agriculture. The real rural development must regain its capacity to formulate initiatives and inventive management, dignifying their players.

Mexico has not been indifferent to the challenges of food security. In this regard, our country has convened a Regional High-level Technical Meeting, to be held later this month in order to analyze and propose concrete solutions for this issue, appropriate for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The proposals for this meeting will be presented before the FAO.

Mr. President,

Mexico is a country with a higher urbanization rate, where 70% of our population lives in cities, but most of our poor live in rural areas.

Bearing this fact in mind, we presented last month the strategy called "Living Better", focused on the 300 poorest municipalities in the country, integrating into a single plan actions and programmes of social policy, with the purpose of fostering sustainable production projects, and as provide them with basic services.

Also, we have taken cross-cutting measures for ecosystems, investing during 2008 over one billion dollars in programs for soil, water, productive reconversion, modernization of irrigation and reforestation, inter-alia.

Mr. President,

The clear threats from climate change, drought and desertification have result, in Mexico, that the sustainable forest development, which is oriented to poverty eradication and to the protection and restoration of natural resources, to be located within the priority programs of the national agenda.

Over the past 8 years, financial resources for this activity have increased by 2 thousand 400 percent, and this year they reached 670 million dollars. The "ProTree" programme (*ProÁrbol*), together with other initiatives for the rural sector, has helped to start the process of restoration on 3.8 million hectares with degraded soils and to incorporate, under the "payment for environmental services" programme 1.3 million hectares of forest land, which together with programmes for nature-tourism, reforestation, prevention and combat of forest fires, and control of deforestation, contributes in a comprehensive manner to improve the living conditions of 13 million people inhabiting in forested areas of our country.

It is with these concrete actions that Mexico reiterates its commitment to the achievement of sustainable development and, in particular, with the topics of this biennial cycle of the Commission. My delegation hopes that the CSD take this opportunity to strengthen its work, including reaching consensus during its next session. You can count with the cooperation and dedication of Mexico in this endeavour.

I thank you.

