

**Speech by Mr. Villu Reiljan,  
Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Estonia  
UN Commission on Sustainable Development  
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Mr. Chairman, dear colleagues,

Estonia is among the countries who shares concern that commitments taken in Johannesburg concerning water, sanitation and human settlements are not completely on track. Estonia shares common responsibility for dealing with global problems and managing global resources. Flexibility, creativity, openness and sustainability were factors that made up Estonia's development during last ten years and we are willing to share this experience with the world.

Estonia has taken seriously the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and commitments taken in Johannesburg. By 2005, integrated water resource management plan is expected to be ready. Furthermore, considering the different aspects of water management, more detailed plans are being prepared, taking into account special features of different regions. For example, to ensure the protection of coastal waters and to manage the human activities in coastal areas, Estonia has started a process of establishing integrated coastal zone management plans. To ensure the balance in water use and quality of drinking water, action plans will be also established for the areas suffering from high concentrations of nitrogen in groundwater (nitrate vulnerable zones). The action plan for the nitrate vulnerable zone will be established already in 2004.

Estonia has successfully started preparations to establish river basin management plans for river basin districts on Estonian territory. Estonia has also taken steps in strengthening of transboundary river basin management. Based on bilateral agreements and in close collaboration with neighbouring countries, first transboundary river management plan is being prepared.

Estonia has achieved significant progress in the field of water management. More than 75% of the population is connected with drinking water supply network. One of Estonia's priorities is to invest considerable resources in order to ensure the correspondence of drinking water quality to the requirements of the European Union. Implementation plan targeted at meeting the drinking water values for microbiological parameters, was prepared in 2002. The aim of the plan was to ensure drinking water compliance with the EU limit values for microbiological parameters and it was implemented in 2002-2003.

Increase in water/wastewater tariffs, investments and economical-political decisions have lead to the more economical use of water resources as well as upgrading of water pipelines and sanitary installations. Water extraction for domestic, industrial and agricultural use has decreased approximately three times during the last decade.

Pollution load by BOD<sub>7</sub>, P<sub>tot</sub> and N<sub>tot</sub> has decreased by 92%, 73% and 52% respectively during 1992-2002 . Rapid decline of pollution load at the beginning of 90's resulted mainly from the restructuring of industrial production. However, application of targeted environmental policy, promotion of modern production technologies as well as upgrading of wastewater treatment plants have also significantly contributed to decline pollution load during the last decade. Investments for upgrading and expanding water supply and sewerage system and for building new treatment plants have been financed from different sources: state budget, local budgets, private sector, foreign loans and grants.

All this has brought about the decrease of the pressure exerted to aquatic environment. As a consequence, the state of the environment of coastal waters of the Baltic Sea, rivers, lakes and groundwater has been improving considerably.

CSD-12 is a crucial milestone in the whole renewed CSD working cycle. Consensus reached in identifying water, sanitation and human settlements as priorities to be tackled on global level, is very encouraging and rises, therefore, high expectations, We should, therefore, clearly define and agree by the next session of the CSD, on further measurable and goal-

oriented actions leading us towards timely and full implementation of targets taken in Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This requires openness to different approaches, creativity, co-operation and participation of all stakeholders.

I would finally assure you that if positive developments are possible on country level, they might be achievable also in global collaboration. And on the other hand, progress on global level will back national efforts to promote further principles of sustainable development in all sectors.

Thank you for your attention.