

Islamic Republic of
I R A N
Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Statement by:
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To the United Nations
on
"Desertification"
Before
The Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting of CSD-17
in New York, 26,February, 2009

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madame Chair;

At the outset, I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Sudan on behalf of G-77 and China on the theme "Desertification".

It is generally agreed that human activities, particularly excessive resource use and abusive land-use practices, are the primary cause of desertification. Specific activities leading to desertification include clearing and cultivation of low-rainfall areas where such cultivation is not sustainable, overgrazing of rangelands, clearing of woody plant species for fuel wood and building materials, and mismanagement of irrigated cropland leading to the buildup of mineral salts in the soil (salinization).

To reduce the impacts of desertification, policy options and political measures to address the underlying causes of desertification and drought prevention should include short and long-term programs. The short-term policy options and measures to combat desertification which proved to be successful in the Islamic Republic of Iran, are as follows:

1. destocking livestock from forests, and to rectify the condition of forest settlers;
2. Adjusting the number of livestock according to the grazing capacities of the rangelands, by reducing the number of grazing livestock and modification and/or cancellation of the grazing permits;
3. Promoting agro-forestry, deletion of tariffs on wood imports and intensification of the efforts to combat wood smuggling;
4. Expanding the green spaces and reforestation areas, and to control the desertification hot spots;
5. Developing watershed management programmes in all areas;

4. To establish center to collect the desert-biological diversity information and data;
5. To improve cultivation systems and to enhance utilization of land and water resources efficiency;
6. To raise the level of understanding about the positive potentials of deserts including for producing renewable energies, and to strengthen the cooperation with other countries on desertification topics;
7. To raise the level of education and awareness about the significance and means of desertification and its control;
8. To improve the livelihood and economic condition of the local communities by creating jobs and compatible activities;
9. To supply and provide fuel to the villages that are under the threat of desertification;
10. To enhance the participation of local communities in planning, preparation, implementation and supervision of the projects for combating desertification;
11. To strengthen Capacity building to combat desertification and drought, by preparation and implementation of comprehensive and preventive programs;
12. To implement small scale water projects in areas under the threat of desertification;
13. To increase water use efficiency programmes in agricultural lands;
14. To adopt appropriate laws for legal protection of environmental and natural resources preservationists and conservationists;
15. To establish national data center for organizing and enhancing the basic information and statistics about the condition of natural resources in the country;

Madame Chair;