

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

8 May 2008, Afternoon Session on Africa, Conference Room 4

Statement by Norway

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Norway would like to start by commending the entire panel for extremely relevant and informative presentations. We shall make a brief statement followed by a question to the panel.

Norway's support to agricultural development is firmly rooted in key parliamentary and government policies and action plans, our own and those of our African partners.

We believe that small-holder farms are driven by women and men with economic motives such as more income, increased food security and improved livelihood security. This approach has great potential for widespread poverty reduction in environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient ways. Through public-private partnerships we are linking this to markets - local, national and international. As IFPRI, the GDPRD and your panel have emphasized, the present challenge for small-holders, economic growth and poverty reduction is how to overcome low productivity and market failure with respect to technology, credit, inputs and outputs. Special for African agriculture are also the climatic and environmental challenges it faces.

"Farm-to-Fork" value chain development and access by small-holders to new technology and reliable markets characterize our cooperation with African agriculture. A renaissance for African agriculture requires complementary investments in public goods such as roads, education, research, extension and health together with policies and institutions that encourage strong independent farmer organizations and vibrant local business communities. If one link is weak or missing, the entire value chain can snap.

In other words, Norway is in agreement with what the panel has presented. Nonetheless, we have a question to the excellent presentation by DESA. If agriculture has not kept up with the 5% plus per annum economic growth in the 10 non-oil exporting African counties you referred to, where has this growth come from?

Thank you very much.

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