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S T A T E M E N T

by

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Mr./MdmePresident, Excellenices, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me firstly congratulate the Government of Brazil and the people of beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro for great hospitality provided for us and excellent organization of this important Conference.

We have gathered here to draw up new, global consensus on how to further implement the principles of sustainable development and to secure the future for next generations.

The growing scarcity and degradation of natural resource coupled with the pressure of world population and economic growth calls for a new paradigm that enables to overcome of existing dichotomies between conservation and development will stimulate global dialogue and lead to consensus for affirmative actions supporting achievements for conservation and development goals.

We want to transfer the whole nations from poverty into welfare, from food and water scarcity to security of supply and resource efficiency. Over the last two decades Poland has certainly gained some relevant experiences in managing similar transitions and I believe we have got a lot to share.

Poland started to pursue the path of sustainable development around 20 years ago after the switch to the market economy and deep, fundamental reforms of the social, economic and environment nature. Over the time, Poland recorded 200% of GDP growth and managed to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 30%. The resource-efficiency factor in the last decade increased by 15%.

Our economy continues to grow fast increasing standard of living of our society and reducing poverty, proving that greening and economic growth at the same time are possible if proper policy framework and tools are put in place.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to share with you some of our experience about creating innovative funding mechanisms and implementing green projects in Poland.

One of the examples is the National Fund of Environmental Protection and Water Management. The mission of the National Fund is to financially support undertakings intended for environmental protection on the basis of the principle of sustainable development.

It is supplied with income from fees and fines for the use of the environment resources, ecosystem services, recycling fees, and many other sources. Its annual average disbursement of funds raised domestically amounts to 250 million USD.

The main form of financing projects are preferential loans which means that the National Fund is a renewable source of funding. Measure of the spectacular achievements of the projects financed by the National Fund is a visible improvement of the environment in Poland, in particular significant increase of investment in environmental infrastructure.

Another example of innovative financial mechanism is the swap-for-environment debts instrument. The history dates back to 1991, when the Paris Club uniting a group of countries that were creditors of Poland decided to reduce the Polish debt by 50%. The Government of Poland proposed further 10% of the debt to be allocated for supporting the most urgent environmental protection undertakings.

Such an initiative was probably the first in the world. The amounts of the debt allocated for the debt-for-environment swap were established in bilateral agreements between the Polish government and governments of donor countries. The EcoFund Foundation was an institution independent from the government and responsible for managing the debt-for-environment swap program by granting subsidies only for investment projects which were in line with the objectives of the international environmental agreements.

Having in mind Poland's experience I can say that mobilisation of domestic financial resources for transformation towards sustainable economy is crucial. External sources of finance, including both from public and private sources and international financial institutions are important, but to large extent will remain additional to the resources that must be mobilized domestically. Thanks to establishment of sound and reliable domestic financing Poland was able to use the financial support from EU funds in an effective way.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Even considering all the Polish initiatives I mentioned, I still have to admit that Poland has a relatively short history on the path of the green growth. However, we have got an excellent record in managing transformation to market-based economy and steady growth and switching to a sustainable mode is just another transformation we are initiating now.

Bearing this in mind, and the fact that our transformation was enabled and facilitated by the Solidarity movement and was always based on a solidarity principle, we are ready to share our experience and knowledge acquired and we hope that some countries will find them helpful on their way towards green and sustainable economy. We strongly believe that we have a strong role to play in this.

All the topics debated during Rio+ 20 based on their relevance to the furthering of sustainable development, focusing on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development poverty eradication and the institutional framework for sustainable development. These challenges call for appropriate actions and participatory approach based on local needs, national priorities and international cooperation.

I am convinced that the exchange of views over the last three days will bear fruits and results in accelerating the political momentum towards identifying concrete proposals for the implementation of actions and measures identified in Rio Declaration. Poland is determined to ensure that Rio+20 will be a success, helping humanity to address some of its most pressing global challenges in the most innovative ways possible.

Thank you for your attention.