



I T A L Y

**Thirteenth Session of the United Nations Commission for Sustainable
Development**

**Statement to the High Level Segment
by
H.E. Ambassador Aldo Mantovani
Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy to the UN**

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Mr. President, Hon. Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement made by Luxembourg as President of the European Union. I just wish to make a few additional remarks.

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation for the work that you have carried out as President of CSD 13 and for your strong commitment to the task of identifying and developing policy decisions on practical measures and options to be approved at the thirteenth session of the Commission for Sustainable Development.

Italy is fully engaged in the "water implementation cycle" of the Johannesburg Plan, and is supporting a number of related initiatives and programmes. In fact, Italy is financing multi- and bilateral sustainable development programmes that specifically address the water crisis. A side event we organized during this session presented two of these programmes carried out in India and in the Sahel countries. In addition, Italy actively promotes the development of Type II partnership initiatives. On the one hand we will continue to support the organization of international conferences for discussing and exchanging information and lessons learned on Partnerships, building on those held in Rome in 2004 and Marrakech in 2005. On the other hand, we sponsor programmes that are implemented in collaboration with international agencies and individual countries, such as the New Eden Project in Iraq and the Water Programme for Africa and the Dry Lands. We are presenting the main results of these two initiatives during two side events organized at this session.

We also hold the view that we should continue emphasizing the relevant role of water resource management and protection in the global political agenda, also beyond CSD13. In this regard, I wish to express my appreciation to the UN WATER for its valuable coordination activities. I also wish to highlight the excellent results achieved through substantial initiatives, such as the developing EU Water Initiative and public-private partnerships that are aimed at solutions relevant to citizens and users needs. Italy in particular is carrying out the leading role in the monitoring component of the EU Water Initiative.

Partnerships involving the private sector and other relevant actors, as well as alternative financial instruments, such as tax incentives and micro-credit, are complementary tools to traditional ODA schemes to be further evaluated on the basis of the positive

experience attained since the Johannesburg Summit. We are also convinced that ODA should be a catalyst to attract additional financing for sustainable development.

Mr. President,

The CSD13 must also provide an occasion for sending a clear message on water issues to the departments, agencies and programmes of the United Nations, such as among others UNDESA, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO, as well as for reaffirming their role in relation to these issues.

Regarding sanitation, we consider that this is an issue strictly linked to the efficient management of water resources. Efforts must be focused on providing a range of affordable solutions suitable to actual cases, allowing the widest access to sanitation services, and defining educational programmes aimed at increasing awareness at all levels.

With regards to human settlements, we should adopt an integrated approach to policy planning and management to address and solve problems linked to continuous and rapidly increasing urbanisation, particularly in Developing Countries. To this end, the improvement of the quality of life in rural settlements is key to decreasing the migration pressure on urban areas. Such an integrated approach could ensure that core issues of human settlements, either urban or rural, are taken into account in the decision making process related to land use, transport, housing, sanitation and social services, sustainable tourism and education.

Furthermore, Italy considers that cross-cutting strategies and policies for poverty eradication, the promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns, the right to education and equal opportunities are priorities for the achievement of sustainable development objectives. The protection and the sustainable management of natural resources represent an opportunity for growth and social and economic development in both Developed and Developing Countries. They remain therefore a common basis for enhancing international co-operation.

Mr. President,

In September this year Heads of State will gather in New York for the Millennium Review Summit. The CSD contribution to this major event, particularly the identification of the necessary policy decisions concerning water, sanitation and human settlements, will be a key element of the discussion. Our task will be to ensure that the outcome of the Summit is to lead to an integrated global approach to the achievement of the Development Goals established in the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and other international conferences and summits.

I thank You, Mr. President.