

Youth Statement for CSD 13 High Level Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

April 21, 2005

Fellow human beings,

We are sure that you have not forgotten youth as we are **half of the world population**, but it seems that not everyone has heard our voices.

Basic services by themselves **are not** sustainable development. We **must** learn from each other in order to implement sustainable solutions such as composting toilets, rainwater harvesting, rope hand-pumps, or fog harvesting, for example. We must **change** our unsustainable production and consumption patterns to eradicate poverty and reduce our ecological footprints.

We have **the right** to live in a world where green jobs are available and there are **equitable and fair** terms of trade that allow youth access to education, services and **freedom** from child labor. Trade liberalization **without** the removal of unfair subsidies and taxes that encourage unsustainable technologies, **increases** inequalities and **impedes** sustainable development for all.

Please **raise your hand** if you used water today. Thank you

We already agreed that we **have the right to life** when we ratified the Declaration on the rights of the child. We were right. Don't we agree that we **need** water, sanitation and adequate human settlements to survive? A rights based approach **must be used** and can provide equal access to these needs while **first** recognizing the ecological right.

Great things can happen without money, but **even greater** things can happen with money. International financial institutions and governments **must provide youth** with job creation and housing subsidies programs. They must ensure that youth entrepreneurs and organizations **have access** to micro-credit programs, loans and grants. Governments must ensure that financial programs are **complemented** by capacity building programs.

How do we **change** unsustainable lifestyles? Through investing in youth. How do youth **learn best**? From other youth and formally in schools. Governments **must support** peer to peer education and mentorship programs through **grassroots** youth organizations and practical, sustainable life-skills curricula in schools.

Youth organizations are innovative, resourceful, and are cost efficient means of reaching communities. It is often said that youth are the future but **we are also here now**.

Governments and other relevant actors must use a **transparent and participatory approach** involving all youth and other stakeholders. This **must** be done while ensuring good communication and coordination among

all actors so that the solutions implemented address that real needs of communities.

We would like to present awards to the following countries for coming through on their promise to have youth representatives on every delegation; **Germany, Sweden, UK, Netherlands, Canada, and Peru.**

For the second year running we would like to commend Sweden for sponsoring a youth representative from the developing world. We also thank Germany and the Netherlands for their progressive mentorship program. We challenge **all** governments to include youth on their official delegations along with following Sweden's lead in funding youth from the Global South. For example, if everyone on a government delegation donated the cost of **their tie or scarf** to funding youth from developing countries, 10 additional youth would be here today, greatly enhancing our representation from the Global South.

Last CSD we asked Jeffrey Sachs how youth can help in reaching the MDGs, he replied "**you tell us**". Our report, *Youth and the Millennium Development Goals* is our answer. This report draws on the experience of youth organizations working around the world and provides **practical** examples and **real policy options** for engaging youth in making the MDGs a reality. Youth are a **force** that we challenge **you** to use.

Thank you