

Statement by Farmers' Major Group by Sarala Gopalan

On Transport (Undelivered)

CSD-IPM March 1, 2011

Mister Chairman,

In many developing countries, sustainable practices are difficult to implement due to the lack of financial resources, infrastructure and services. This represents a major constraint on the competitiveness and viability of the agricultural sector.

If handled correctly, transportation offers a number of win-win opportunities for employment, poverty reduction, and reduced environmental impact. Infrastructure investment is needed – particularly in rural roads – to make supplies available to farmers, workers and industry and then to provide access to markets. A corridors approach, such as the efforts in Africa to build from ports inward to the countryside should be a priority.

A priority for development expenditure must also be focused on on-farm storage and processing facilities that reduce post-harvest losses. Reducing production losses and food wastage are key elements for sustainable development. Some estimates of post harvest losses are as high as 40%.

Farmers need to have adequate and appropriate transportation infrastructure, local storage facilities including cold chain storage for food preservation to reduce losses.

Finally, the issue of biofuels has been raised several times today. Farmers need assistance with the right technology for the production of biofuels on their farms. That can include alternate crops and use of biomass which is currently a waste product. We want to contribute to cleaner fuels without damaging national and global food security.