

Statement by Farmers' Major Group by Sarala Gopalan

At Opening Session

CSD-19 May 2, 2011

On behalf of farmers, Mister Chairman, we would like to thank you, your Bureau, and secretariat for your efforts to create a sound negotiating text. In particular, we are very pleased to see the references to poverty eradication and the continued commitment to the social, economic, and environmental pillars that underpin sustainable development.

We have two specific concerns as negotiations move into their final phase.

In particular, the existing text omits one half of Millennium Development Goal number 1. Farmers believe both **hunger** and poverty eradication must be mentioned in this text. Hunger, malnutrition, and poverty deny people their proper development - physically, mentally, and socially.

Related to this, and consistent with our submissions throughout this cycle, is the issue of **food waste**. Over 40% of harvests are lost in some countries due to the lack of storage and rural roads. Farmers welcome the strong call for rural infrastructure in the current draft. Still, more must be done to reduce post-harvest losses and also to look further down the supply chain to reduce the similarly vast levels of waste that occur in the consumer stream. This pressing issue is not addressed adequately in the waste or sustainable consumption and production section, despite the helpful addition of items related to agricultural waste.

Indeed, ironically under SCP, the reference is to "food security" rather than "sustainable food systems". The hungry do face an unsustainable situation, but their plight is not about wasteful consumption. There are substantial opportunities for reductions in energy, water, and packaging in food and beverage processing. These are entirely overlooked in the current text. Of course there are opportunities to improve agricultural production, but the breadth of the agri-food system should certainly be captured in the final document.

Mr. Chairman, the need for food is fundamental. We hope, sir, CSD-19 will consider including reference to hunger eradication along with poverty as well as capturing the opportunities that exist to improve the breadth of the food system. We offer our best wishes for a successful negotiation.