

**Comments of Mr. Andrei Metelitsa, Counsellor of Belarus Mission to the UN at the CSD-16 interactive regional discussion on Europe
6 May 2008, 3-4:30 pm.**

I would like to thank you panelists for interesting presentations.

Ms. Elisabeth Gauffin, Vice President, IFAP Development Cooperation Committee, emphasized the need to adopt a comprehensive approach to the issue of agriculture and address social, economic and other aspects.

In Belarus we adopted a comprehensive state programme for 2005-2010 to support agricultural sector with the budget of around \$35 billions. It already has positive outcomes: the production of agricultural products has increased significantly, the well-being of farmers improved, more than 600 modern agro-settlements were built with good infrastructure and conditions for living.

The second aspect is the income of farmers. It was mentioned that increased prices for agricultural products will benefit farmers. In many countries farmers have lesser income compare to other sectors of economy, such as banking, industry etc. Do you think that recent increase in prices for agricultural products can improve the situation and equalize the incomes of farmers with those in industry, banking and other sectors? I would also appreciate if you share the experience of your countries in improving well-being of farmers?