

TWELFTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
STATEMENT BY THE BRAZILIAN DELEGATION

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation wishes to associate itself to the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77/China.

Brazil has adopted its National Agenda 21, as a result of extensive consultations that involved all interested stakeholders at the national, state and municipal levels. Besides providing a complete diagnosis of the prevailing situation, the Brazilian Agenda 21 points at priority action to be undertaken in each thematic area, and it has, to a large extent, inspired the Government's multi-year Plan for 2004-2007.

Brazil attaches great importance to the issues selected for discussion at this meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development. On the one hand, an estimated 12 per cent of the world's freshwater are found in Brazil. However, the geographical distribution of those resources is uneven and the most populated areas often lack adequate provision of freshwater. Sanitation is also a matter of serious consideration, especially in regard to low-income urban areas. We also face daunting challenges in relation to inadequate conditions of a great number of human settlements, especially in low-income neighborhoods around metropolises, in relation to basic infra-structure services, transportation and employment. Much still needs to be done in regard to providing homes with access to piped water, connection of sewer systems to public networks and treatment of sewage. Therefore, the issues that integrate the cluster of themes selected for this 12th meeting of CSD are of utmost importance for Brazil, in our quest for economic development with social justice and environmental sustainability.

The national Agenda 21 proposes that actions related to the protection of the environment be considered as cross-cutting issues in Government planning. In relation to freshwater, it establishes an important link with health issues. One of the priorities of a national program for health surveillance is, indeed, the maintenance of the quality water destined for human consumption. A national system of management of water

resources was enacted in 1997. In 2001, the National Water Agency was established. In Brazil, the riverbasins are considered as the basic units for the purpose of planning and implementation. In order to further decentralized and participative management, riverbasins committees have been established, with decision making-powers, gathering representatives of national, state (or provincial) and municipal Governments, alongside representatives of civil society and local communities. Besides, the principle of multiple uses and the acknowledgment of economic value of water have been enshrined. An innovative practice that has been recently introduced refers to the pricing of water from one of Brazil's largest rivers.

As regards sanitation, I would like to stress the Brazilian experience with decentralized sewage collection and treatment systems through condominial sewers, as indicated in the Secretary-General's document. It must also be highlighted the Brazilian Government's endeavor to obtain better conditions for decision-making in sanitation, especially with regard to the quality of information. The Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE) recently published an Atlas dedicated to Sanitation issues, including data collected from a national research on basic sanitation. This document does not only contain information on geographical distribution and network efficiency, but also seeks to establish a correlation between basic sanitation, on the one hand, and the preservation of the environment and the quality of life, on the other. It also innovates by presenting and analyzing its results in relation to each riverbasin, which is a fundamental step to allow for a correct understanding of the impact of different forms of occupation and land use on the water resources.

Agenda 21 makes a case for basic sanitation by using economic considerations. One of its most interesting conclusions is that each monetary unit invested in basic sanitation allows for an economy of five monetary units that would, otherwise, be spent with medical assistance.

As regards human settlements, I also wish to acknowledge the important references that are made in the Secretary-General's report in regard to the Brazilian Government's efforts aimed at slum upgrading. It must also be stressed the efforts that the Brazilian Government is undertaking in order to reduce rural-to-urban migration by improving

rural living conditions and promoting rural development. Implementation of the national program for settlement of rural populations is, indeed, one of the main tasks of one full-fledged Ministry (the Ministry for Land Development).

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil remains firmly committed to the implementation of the goals and targets set in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Let me also spell out Brazil's commitment to the implementation of Agenda Habitat and the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements. The political commitment of the Brazilian Government to these ends is unequivocal. In this context, governance is being reinforced and the involvement of stakeholders is being increasingly sought.

However, as I have indicated before, the challenges are overwhelming and the amount and complexity of the corresponding tasks will require investments estimated at U\$ 20 billion annually, in order to meet the agreed goals and targets related to freshwater and sanitation alone. Therefore, I could not overemphasize the importance of international cooperation, through the provision of new and additional resources, on a grant or concessional basis and through the transfer of appropriate technologies. As pointed out in the Secretary-General's documents, the achievement of the goals and targets related to water, sanitation and human settlements is critical for overcoming poverty and creating conditions for sustainable development.

My delegation hopes that the decisions to be adopted by CSD-13 will effectively assist developing countries in this regard, on the basis of the discussion to be held at this session, and taking into account the common but differentiated responsibilities of countries towards the creation of an enabling environment that will allow developing countries to obtain the resources needed for sustainable development. We look forward to working constructively with all Parties during this Session.

Thank you.