

---

**Speaking Notes for the Honourable David Anderson, P.C., M.P Minister of the Environment**

**At the occasion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development**

**Creating an Enabling Environment – Policies, Governance and Finance**

**UN Headquarters, New York, USA**

**28 April 2004**

*Check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman, fellow Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it is a privilege to be addressing you today.

Firstly, allow me to thank the Chair, for his summary of the officials' proceedings of the session.

When you prepare your final summary of this meeting of Ministers, I would suggest that you emphasize the following three points: the importance of science and monitoring, governance, and translating our commitments into action.

First, let me touch on the importance of science and monitoring.

In order to effectively manage water resources for people and biodiversity we need good information – based on sound science by which we can measure progress against our collective targets. Canada is the proud host of the UNEP/GEMS Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Programme. GEMS/Water relies on the active participation of countries to produce a comprehensive assessment of water quality regionally and globally. Currently, there are 70 countries contributing to GEMS/Water and receiving in return a detailed picture of their water resources. Let me issue a challenge to 35 additional countries to participate in the program to make our coverage that much more complete. There are no financial contributions expected – countries that participate do so by submitting data. One of the gaps, however, lies in many developing countries capacity to provide this data. So, on this front, I challenge my donor colleagues to contribute to the GEMS/Water Trust Fund.

This brings me to my second issue: leadership in the multilateral system.

To integrate the three pillars of sustainable development, we need strong institutions for each one. As many of you know, Canada along with other nations has been working diligently to advance the international environmental governance agenda.

Although we have made progress, we need to continue to press ahead and I look forward to our ongoing deliberations within UNEP and the UN General Assembly.

At this meeting we need to address the governance of water. CSD-12 is unique. Its momentum must and hopefully will be sustained through CSD-13. But what will happen afterward? Will we revert to discussing water issues through the more than twenty windows within the UN system? This is a key issue that I think should be an important element of our discussion leading to and at CSD-13.

The effort to coordinate is impressive and I do not want to take anything away from the real commitment to work together on water. Part of the answer may lie in enhanced transparency to member states of the work achieved through interagency cooperation, and their monitoring and reporting on these issues.

In addition, we need to examine other existing conventions such as Ramsar to explore how best to deliver elements of the water program such as integrated water resource management. Ramsar is evolving from a convention on wetlands for waterfowl, to water for people. I am sure we can all agree that we want to put to best use our existing conventions and arrangements.

Now, turning to my third and final area, translating our commitments into action.

Today, we need to focus on tangible action, and that begins at home.

The key is to solidifying political will and Canada is committed to doing its part at home. For developing countries, it means translating this discussion into the domestic vision and statement of priorities needed to attract resources to deal with water-related issues. Donors like Canada stand ready to help meet the challenge. Before this however, issues like water, sanitation and human settlements need to be included into national development plans, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, IWRM Strategies and National Sustainable Development Strategies.

To attain this goal, much of the challenge lies with getting all key decision makers, in the same place, at the same time.

Officials in Agriculture, Health, Trade, Finance and Planning Ministries, and many more, need to know that the social costs of waterborne diseases and other threats represent significant economic and social losses and pose a major hurdle to achieving poverty alleviation. They need to recognize that water is essential to achieving food security and reducing the burden of disease – other critical targets of the Millennium Development Goals .

I believe that we could achieve this shared agenda for priority setting through collaboration across ministries within national governments. This needs to be a priority in both the North and the South.

I do have a few more ideas but will raise them tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.