



**Fourteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable  
Development  
1-12 May 2006**

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**Ministerial Dialogue  
Thursday, 11 May 2006: 10:00-11:30 hours  
Conference Room 4**

**New York**

**Statement by Mr. Kim Hak-Su  
UN Under-Secretary-General /  
Executive Secretary of UNESCAP and  
Current Coordinator of the Regional Commissions  
On Behalf of All UN Regional Commissions**

***(This is the full text of the statement whose abridged version was  
delivered at the Ministerial Dialogue on Thursday, 11 May 2006)***

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the current Coordinator of the five Regional Commissions, namely, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), it gives me great pleasure to deliver this statement at the Ministerial Dialogue of CSD 14.

In our multi-disciplinary capacity and forum role, we Regional Commissions have a sound record of being instrumental in enabling regional follow-up of the CSD priority themes on sustainable development. In that regard, we Regional Commissions cooperate actively with DESA as the CSD secretariat. I wish to especially acknowledge the support provided by the CSD Bureau. I thank the active interest of the CSD Bureau and member states which, at various levels, engage in regional follow-up.

As you may be aware, all five Regional Commissions in collaboration with members of the United Nations system and with the support of institutional stakeholders at the regional level, successfully held Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) in our respective regions. The RIMs assessed regional challenges and opportunities with regard to energy for sustainable development, air pollution and atmosphere, industrial development and climate change. This cluster of issues is central to the prosperity and environmental sustainability of all five regions.

The RIM outcomes were well reflected in the Regional Discussion sessions that the Regional Commissions organized last week in cooperation with DESA and the CSD Bureau. Those consultations resulted in an enriching exchange of views among delegations, regional institutions, and major groups.

The regional discussions were complemented by interactive panel discussions. One such was the discussion on “Enhancing means of implementation through sub-regional and, regional, and international cooperation”. ESCAP participated in that panel. ECA hosted a side event entitled “Climate Information for Sustainable Development in Africa” which highlighted the effects of human-induced climate change on the livelihood of the poor in Africa.

In the light of the outcomes of the regional discussion, I am pleased to highlight some major challenges and make suggestions on the “way forward” towards implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Given the diversity and unique context of each region of the world, progress in the implementation of WSSD outcomes has been mixed.

The Regional Commissions have a comparative strength in regional advocacy. Thus, we are well-placed to effectively promote the regional implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and related WSSD commitments, as well as sustainable consumption and production within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and to link environmental sustainability to poverty reduction at national, regional and inter-regional levels.

In spite of differences in development paths, capacities, populations and resource endowments, many concerns related to the cluster areas are shared by all the regions of the world. The concerns include limited access to modern energy, owing largely to inadequate funding and a policy focus on the development of indigenous energy resources. With continued reliance on fossil fuels, many countries have not been able to increase efficiency in the utilization of energy for economic growth.

Most developing countries lack appropriate industrial policies that encourage environmental sustainability. Poor air quality in major urban areas has adverse effects on human health, contributing to increased morbidity and mortality rates, with millions of work days lost. Moreover, a number of countries, such as the small island developing States, face extreme vulnerability to climate change, which critically impairs socio-economic development.

Regarding key concerns and strategies that are common to most developing countries, there is a compelling need to develop industries on the one hand, and to expand access to energy services on the other, to drive economic growth. Many countries have identified four priority areas for action:

- Poverty reduction through enhanced access to modern energy services;
- Improved energy production and consumption efficiency;
- Diversification of energy resources, and the development of cleaner fuels and advanced fossil fuel technologies.

Developing countries have also called for support to develop sustainable industries, establish national clearing houses for a variety of environmental issues, as well as for enhanced strategic policy interventions. Although many developing countries are actively engaged in mitigating climate change, they have also called for further international cooperation to strengthen institutional capacity, improve assessment of the environmental and economic impact of climate change, implement climate change related adaptation programme, and to accelerate the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The key challenge for all of us is how we might continue with economic growth for poverty reduction, without compromising environmental sustainability.

The environmental dimension of sustainable development is closely linked with all aspects of socio-economic development, including gender equality, health promotion, finance, trade and technology. Critical environmental issues demand that all members of the United Nations system work closely together to better serve the needs of Member States.

The Regional Commissions look forward to contributing to the policy dialogue and recommendations for regional follow-up towards CSD 15, building on the this year's RIM experience.

Let me assure you that all five Regional Commissions --- ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ECSWA --- stand ready to further strengthen our collaboration at all levels and with all partners, including DESA and UNEP, so that we may together give fresh impetus to moving forward the sustainable development agenda.

Thank you.