



**Commission on Sustainable Development
Fifteenth Session**

30 April to 11 May 2007

Statement by

**Mr. Sigmar Gabriel
Federal Minister for the Environment
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
President of the Environment Council of the European Union**

on behalf of the European Union

New York, 09 May 2007

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 member states. The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

From the outset, I would like to remind us of the strategic potential of the outcome of this CSD 15. Given the challenges we are facing, in particular climate change, access to energy, energy security, and poverty eradication, we urgently have to **accelerate the implementation** of what was decided at the Johannesburg Summit. We are at a **crossroads** of this Commission on Sustainable Development. **We have to move forward, not backwards.**

I am convinced that there is a good chance for an **ambitious and result-oriented outcome** provided that **we all engage in constructive negotiations** during the few days which are left. Let us work together in **avoiding a failure** as expectations are high.

This CSD policy cycle offers us a **unique opportunity** to address the key issues of energy for sustainable development, climate change, air pollution and industrial development in an **integrated manner**, issues that are deeply interrelated and where the involvement of all major actors is essential. They are at the heart of ensuring long-term sustainable development, in particular for fostering progress in **poverty eradication** and for achieving the Millennium Development Goals as well as the goals and commitments agreed upon 2002 at the Johannesburg Summit. Achieving gender equality and gender mainstreaming is crucial in this respect.

Let me start with the most prominent of topics here: **energy**.

Environmentally sound, reliable and affordable energy supply is a decisive issue of this century. This applies not only to the environmental, but also to the economic dimension. Former World Bank chief economist Nicolas Stern has shown in his report that if the increase in greenhouse gases continues until 2050 at today's level, tremendous growth losses are to be expected. Or, to put it bluntly, our current patterns of energy use are making us poorer every day. Energy security is becoming a central priority for all nations as a factor for economic growth and stability, both internal and external. But energy security is about more than just securing future oil resources. It includes the diversification of energy sources, increasing domestic supply to meet the future growth in demand and strengthening efforts to reduce such demand.

The EU has adopted ambitious targets in February of this year. We decided on a 20% reduction of energy use through increased energy efficiency by 2020, on an increase of the share of renewables to 20% by 2020 and on an increase of the share of biofuels to 10% by 2020. While this is certainly an important contribution to the ongoing efforts to reduce GHG emissions, in the light of the challenges we face this is only just a first step. The International Energy Agency predicts a rise of more than 50% in primary energy demand over the next 25 years.

* *Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

In our view, as we have repeatedly expressed before and during negotiations, CSD-15 has to tackle a number of important issues. Amongst our key priorities are the following:

- CSD should recommend the adoption of **time-bound targets** and commitments at the national and regional levels to increase energy efficiency and the share of renewable energies as well as access to energy, and the **integration of such sustainable energy policies into national planning frameworks by 2010**.
- CSD should endorse a clear and effective **review arrangement** for energy for sustainable development. This review arrangement would provide a long-term perspective, would demonstrate progress and showcase success stories, but would also reveal gaps and barriers for the expansion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and access to energy services. Furthermore, the CSD should devote time to **review and follow-up on energy for sustainable development** at its sessions in 2010/11 and 2014/15.
- CSD should encourage the **sustainable production and use of bio-energy, including bio-fuels**. We would very much welcome an international dialogue on this issue.
- CSD should encourage further global efforts to **increase energy efficiency by promoting the establishment of an international platform** that would facilitate the sharing of information, research cooperation on energy efficiency and provide an opportunity for discussion of research and financing.

Mr. Chairman,

we must ensure that this CSD sends a strong signal: serious steps must be taken to move to a **low-carbon economy** that uses energy far more efficiently than today. This makes sense from every angle - it will cut emissions and help to achieve climate and energy security at the same time!

This brings me to the issue of **climate change**. The EU underlines its willingness to commit to a reduction of 30% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 as its contribution to a global and comprehensive agreement for the period beyond 2012, provided that other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and economically more advanced developing countries adequately contribute according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities. The EU has decided that until a post-2012 agreement is concluded, to make a firm independent commitment to achieve at least a 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 compared to 1990.

We believe that there is an urgent need for a **global and comprehensive post-2012 agreement**. Negotiations on such an agreement need to be launched at the COP 13 COP/MOP 3 at the end of 2007 and completed by 2009.

It is critical to ensure the continuation and expansion of a **global market for carbon** as an element of an effective global response to the challenge of climate change. We must make full use of innovative mechanisms and of the Clean Development Mechanism.

Climate Change is undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges of this century. There is a significant number of countries which are threatened in their very existence. **We are extremely alarmed by the latest scientific findings of the IPCC** on the impacts of climate change such as heat waves, droughts, floods and heavy precipitation events as well as the consequences that these impacts will have on security due to increased competition for access to energy and water resources.

We know that the issue of climate change is dealt with under the UNFCCC. However, CSD can meaningfully **complement the work under the climate convention** by addressing the links between climate change and issues such as energy, industrial development and air pollution. In particular, CSD should recommend the integration of policies addressing climate change within development policy and planning processes, including mitigation and adaptation measures. Adaptation

to climate change is an area in which urgent action is needed. The timely development of strategies for adapting to the impacts of climate change is of extreme importance for countries with the highest exposure, in particular the Small Island Developing States.

Closely related to both energy and climate matters is the issue of **industrial development**. The EU strongly believes that enhancing industrial development, especially in developing countries and emerging economies, is a key engine for achieving the Millennium Development Goals as long as it is based on principles of sustainability and good governance.

Let me make it very clear that the EU is aware of the challenge facing both developed and developing countries of **changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns**. Our experience, however, shows that more resource productivity, and thereby decoupling economic growth from resource use, often reduces costs to a significant degree. And this will become increasingly relevant with rising resource and energy prices. **Resource efficiency** and the protection of natural resources have in many countries proven to be an instrument for enhancing, not hindering international competitiveness.

In the EU, a policy mix of mandatory standards, economic instruments and voluntary commitments has been the basis for a fast growing environmental technology sector. The development and export of environmental technology has driven growth and created jobs on a large scale.

The CSD can create important incentives by recommendations for enhancing **technological innovation** and strengthening business capacity to address unsustainable industrial practices. This should include strengthening industry support institutions, such as the UNIDO/UNEP cleaner production centres.

On the topic of **air pollution**, the EU expects CSD 15 to recommend the worldwide application of an integrated approach to air pollution on the basis of the experience gained under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. The EU would like to see CSD 15 recommend the establishment of emission limit values for both mobile and stationary sources and the improvement of the quality of fuels.

The EU is concerned about the problem of **indoor-air pollution** in developing countries and its severe health-impacts; as a matter of fact we carry out numerous bilateral and multilateral cooperation development projects in this field. From CSD we would like to see the encouragement of instruments and incentives for switching from unsustainable use of biomass to more efficient and cleaner cooking fuels such as liquid petroleum gas, biogas or electricity.

Ever since Rio 15 years ago, key impulses have come from this UN Commission on Sustainable Development. In Johannesburg decisions of tremendous importance were taken, most notably on the **increased use of renewable energies** worldwide and in the field of **water and sanitation**. Now it is our common task to further build on that heritage and fulfil the CSD mandate.

Continuing with our wasteful consumption of scarce resources places a burden, in particular on the poor and on future generations. This has to stop. Let us work together to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg objectives at the international, regional and national levels as well.

We must move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.