

Statement of Finland  
CSD-16, 9 May, Conference room 2  
Session: Inter-linkages and all cross-cutting issues

- Madam Chair,
- First of all, I'd like to associate myself with the statement given by Slovenia.
- Finland would like to share with you our experiences particularly in two issues: 1) strengthening the institutional basis for integrating sustainable development into all policies and 2) facilitating the sustainable production and consumption patterns in the society at large.
- In Finland, the co-ordination between the government departments as well as between the government and the stakeholders has played a crucial role for ensuring policy coherence and broad ownership for pursuing sustainable development objectives.
- One key facilitator of that progress has been the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (FNCSD). It was established right after Rio Conference in 1993 and has operated continuously since then - despite the changes in government coalitions. It is a forum where several government ministers, administration and a broad range of civil society actors get together, engage in discussion of topical challenges, and give guidance on sustainability issues to the government.
- The Finnish Commission played an active role in the preparation of the most recent National Strategy for Sustainable Development, approved in 2006, and in facilitating its implementation. Many of the policy objectives of the strategy have been included in the agenda of the government, one example being an obligation of the state administration to draw up sustainable development programmes in relation to their activities.
- We are facing immense challenges of the increasing use of natural resources and the environmental impacts from unsustainable consumption and production patterns. As a response to our Johannesburg commitments, Finland adopted a National Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production in 2005. The programme emphasizes the need to do more from less within the capacity of the planet's resources and ecosystems. It has brought into the national political agenda three important E's: economic incentives, eco-efficiency and eco-innovations.
- So far we have introduced some new economic incentives – for example a carbon dioxide based vehicle tax. We have also set up a material efficiency centre which will provide a toolkit and environmental technology help desk services for companies and public organizations.
- Finland is also actively engaged in the so-called Marrakech Process, which provides a useful forum for international co-operation to counteract unsustainable production and consumption patterns. Finland is chairing the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Buildings and Construction, one of the seven Task Forces of the Marrakech Process which are working towards the 10 Year Framework of Programmes. As a participant in the regional consultations of the Marrakech Process, Finland will join the Fifth African Roundtable in Johannesburg in June.

- We realize that moving towards a sustainable society is a long process. It is important to take an integrated approach, prioritise key actions, and encourage continuous dialogue between various actors. We need to involve the whole society and to integrate sustainable development into all policy-making.
- Thank you, Madam Chair.