



# PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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## PRESS RELEASE

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(Translation)

### **Statement by H. E. Ambassador Zhang Yishan, Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, at the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the CSD13 on Sanitation**

(2 March 2005, New York)

Mr. Chairman,

Sanitation is a core issue in human development. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) clearly set a sanitation target, placing it for the first time at the center of development and poverty eradication endeavors. While an additional one billion people in the developing world gained access to improved sanitation facilities in the past decade, two billion more people still need to be provided with such access before the target could be met. The acceleration of urbanization increases the demand for sanitary and environmental services in the cities of the developing countries, an increasingly tough challenge for developing countries with large populations.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the issue of sanitation. We have always given top priority to our people's health and safety. Being a large developing agricultural country, China is currently focusing on the development of sanitation facilities in the rural areas. The Chinese Government has set the target of achieving 55% sanitation coverage in rural areas by 2005 and 65% by 2010.

The Chinese Government has undertaken efforts along the following lines:

1. It has formulated widely applicable policies and measures in the light of the specific conditions of China. At the current stage, features in our sanitation policy for the rural areas include: government initiation, sectoral coordination, societal support, people participation, community-sponsored projects with government assistance, multi-source funding, projects based on local conditions, and guidance backed by science.

2. We have increased input in building rural sanitation facilities by making the government assume more responsibilities and mobilizing the whole society in providing public services.

3. Through enhanced international cooperation, we have brought in managerial skills, technology and funds from abroad.
4. Local governments at all levels, NGOs, women and youth organizations have all been involved in this process. They have brought into full play their comparative advantages in the common endeavor to speed up the upgrading process.
5. Through the media, we have educated rural residents on sanitation, health and the need to change old concepts. In a campaign entitled "900 Million Healthy Farmers," the government advocates the importance of upgrading sanitation facilities and the good effects on their health. This in turn has triggered a participatory approach.

China has achieved some results in building sanitary facilities. However, as a developing country with 248 million rural households, China still faces the challenge of upgrading the sanitation facilities of 122 million rural households, which are mainly located in the poor, remote and low-income regions where shortage of funds impedes the process. The Chinese Government will continue to adopt effective measures, intensify our efforts, expand international cooperation and exchanges in this area and bring in foreign funds, advanced managerial concepts and technology, so as to make the sanitation target a reality in China.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.