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*Luxembourg Presidency
of the Council of the European Union*

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**STATEMENT AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE
13th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.

First of all, the EU would like to thank the Chair, the CSD Secretariat and the Bureau for their excellent work. We wish to welcome the excellent reports of the Secretary General on water, sanitation and human settlements that have been prepared for this occasion. The EU also welcomes the conclusions of the related international meetings that have taken place since CSD12.

The European Union believes that CSD12 was highly successful and clearly identified the main constraints and obstacles to overcome in the field of water, sanitation and human settlements. The readiness to overcome these obstacles and constraints will mark the success of CSD13. In order for CSD13 to be successful and truly action-oriented, the challenge is to identify and commit all the key actors to implement the CSD13 policy decisions.

We are happy to meet here in this first preparatory meeting of the new CSD cycle and in this innovative format. We recognize that CSD 13 has a special responsibility in setting a successful example for further CSD cycles. The EU believes that the new way of working within the CSD could prove to be a strong example of solving issues in an integrated way reflecting the 3 pillars of sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman, we meet here today in an important year for the international community and the development community in particular.

The **UN Millennium Review Summit** in September of this year, and the preparation process leading to it, will enable us to take stock of the progress made and give us an opportunity to keep sustainable development high on the agenda. CSD 13 is an **important milestone** in those preparations. Our discussions this week and the outcome of the CSD13 session in April will give an input into that process and, we are confident, bring a strong, concrete and action-oriented contribution on water, sanitation and human settlements to the general debate and outcome in September.

The Report of the High Level Panel on Threats and Challenges and the Report of the Millennium Project both recognize the importance of environmental sustainability issues and conclude that the world is not on track to achieving sustainable development. An integrated and coherent implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs is necessary, taking into account the Monterrey, Johannesburg and Doha commitments. The implementation of the JPoI is crucial to meet the MDGs. CSD needs to highlight this clearly in view of the Millennium Review Summit, and should also make a strong contribution to that process by showing the importance of water, sanitation and human settlements to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in general, MDG 7 in particular, and broader development objectives.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process

The EU looks forward to the Secretary General's report in March, and hopes it will build on the analysis and recommendations of the HLP and Millennium Project reports, by making focused and concrete recommendations on measures to tackle environmental challenges, and establishing a necessary balance between the environment and the other issues dealt with in both Reports.

Mr. Chairman, the EU wishes to stress its strong intention to work from words to commitments and from commitments to action. In this context, I would like to mention the **EU Sustainable Development Strategy** of June 2001, that is currently under review, with a view of better integrating our global commitment into internal policies. We are implementing and further developing the EU Water Initiative, our main contribution to meeting the MDGs and JPoI targets related to water and sanitation. The EU will also decide in the near future about an addition of EUR 250 million to the already allocated amount of EUR 250 million in the framework of the ACP-EU Water Facility.

The EU believes that the policy options and actions that are going to be identified during this week should mainly respond to the three major challenges retained in the report of CSD 12, to meet the goals set in Johannesburg and the Millennium Development Goals, namely **capacity building and technology transfer, governance and financing.**

The EU believes that the following key principles and policy options, which will allow for economically, socially, and environmentally sound solutions, should be considered in **priority**, as they are common to the three sectors of water, sanitation and human settlements.

- **Adopting an integrated approach in planning and implementation** of all future actions and projects to equally address sustainable use of natural resources, social needs and economic development, promote the participation of all stakeholders, in particular local communities and enhance the opportunity for the development of partnerships and synergies.

In addition, integrated planning procedures are extremely important to good governance and local leadership, if success is to be achieved in service provision. Integrated planning includes, for example, the simultaneous planning of land use, transportation, and the provision of water, sanitation and housing.

As an example from the water sector, an integrated multi-sectoral approach to planning and management should be developed. IRWM-plans, based on an ecosystem approach and Water Efficiency Plans should be finalised (by 2005) and these plans must play a crucial role in the development of National Sustainable Development Strategies and Poverty Reduction Strategies as well as be based on an ecosystem approach.

- **Including sustainable development and CSD 13 priority sectors in national processes.** At the national level, **National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) and/or Poverty Reduction Strategies** that integrate economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development must provide the basis for the implementation of the whole WSSD agenda in accordance with each country's national priorities. Achieving the internationally agreed targets requires country ownership and the setting of domestic targets

and implementation plans. NSDS are good vehicles to better define and foster each country's ownership of such global targets. For this reason the EU stresses the need for NSDSs to have begun to be implemented in accordance with the timetable by 2005. In this context the EU supports the second recommendation of the Millennium Project Report that MDG-based poverty reduction strategies should focus on issues that need more attention, such as (maternal and child) health, gender equality, water and sanitation and environmental sustainability.

The economic impacts of lack of access to clean drinking water, inadequate sanitation and lack of (affordable) human settlements are significant, but are often not properly recognised or internalised. These economic impacts need to be highlighted and explicitly expressed in national development policies, in order to ensure a higher priority for these three sectors in national and local development planning.

- **Ensuring ownership** of all programs and actions to account for local needs, empower local actors in participating in policy decisions and actions and foster long term commitment to implementation. Therefore, relevant actors governmental or non-governmental, local, national, regional or global, from developed and developing countries, including private-sector, should be actively involved in multi-stakeholder decision making and implementation of actions and solutions.
- The involvement of **all stakeholders** – particularly the private sector and civil society – is key to the implementation of the JPoI and thus the success of CSD. Partnerships are one way to achieve and to ensure that governments and stakeholders work to meet common goals.
- **Stimulating decentralization at the lowest appropriate level**, through adequate capacity building and financing to respond more effectively to variations in local needs and preferences, to lower costs of planning and administration, provide opportunities and incentives for policy innovation and give citizens greater choice and voice in policymaking.
- **Enhancing co-ordination and cooperation** among UN-agencies and International Financing Institutions (IFI's), bilateral donors, stakeholders and beneficiaries to enhance the effectiveness, scope and reliability of development efforts.
- The EU would also like to welcome the fact that time has been set aside to address **inter-linkages** between water, sanitation and human settlements, as well as and **cross-cutting issues**

In our view, the inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues are key to enhance synergies and undertaking joint management of water, sanitation and human settlements, which is essential to ensure a truly efficient and sustainable result of our efforts. Any isolated action is likely to have only short-term, even though beneficial, effects. To overcome most of the obstacles identified during CSD 12, we need to address the links between the three closely linked areas, and to actively take into account the cross-cutting issues, such as sustainable consumption, education and gender, that create some of the major constraints to implementation.

Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development. In particular, adopting a **pro-poor** approach in all policies and

actions is also necessary to address the close links between water, sanitation and human settlements and poverty eradication by prioritizing policies and actions which guarantee improved service delivery to the poorest.

The EU also believes that the question of the **monitoring and follow-up**, as well as the need for coordination, needs to be addressed. It is crucial to keep track of progress in meeting the targets and the delivery on commitments between CSD13 and the overall review in 2016. The monitoring and follow-up modalities should be based, as far as possible, on existing processes and initiatives. Moreover, a better understanding of the respective scopes of intervention of each of the actors in the different fora, is needed at the occasion of CSD 13.

The CSD secretariat will have to continue its role in providing a comprehensive overview of implementation of all the CSD13 themes and their inter-linkages as part of the Secretary General's report to the review year of respective implementation cycles and could profit from the monitoring of the MDGs. Also, at the national and regional levels, countries should be supported to develop their monitoring capacity and reporting processes in order to improve reliable data collection.

Mr Chairman, the EU is looking forward to participating actively in the debates ahead of us and will get more into the detail of the specific sectors and of inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues during the different panels and debating sessions. We are looking forward to a dynamic and open debate that will live up to our expectations for CSD 13 and to hear about creative suggestions of policies and measures that will advance our common agenda.