

Norwegian Delegation
Statement – Discussions on Water Tuesday 1 March 2005

Mr. Chairman;

Norway would like to focus on two important points in this intervention; women and integrated water resources management – IWRM.

We need to focus on women, we need to empower and to actively involve them in our work. Women and girls are key agents of change and they are the primary victims of lack of access to water.

We would like to refer to the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender and Water: A gender perspective on water resources and sanitation. This report gives us some specific proposals how to integrate the gender perspectives in water and sanitation, for instances when it comes to regional and local level. We would like to see these proposals be taken care of in the chair's text and in our future work at CSD-13.

Mr. Chairman, you reminded us earlier that we should focus on how we can overcome obstacles to deliver on the targets. We would like to focus on IWRM plans as a prerequisite to deliver on the water and sanitation targets in a sustainable manner. For most developing countries, the implementation of this target requires acceleration.

IWRM can take many forms depending on factors such as social and cultural backgrounds and the economic situation in each country.

There is no universal standard, and there should not be either, for what an IWRM plan should look like. What is of importance is how each country plans to change their ways of developing and

managing water resources so they can take specific steps they consider appropriate for their country. The plans should articulate the first steps that the country intends to take to improve water management.

The development, use, and management of water resources must be harmonized in order to ensure that human activities and the environment can effectively benefit from the valuable water resources. Overall IWRM plans should be conceptualized around the water basin, but adopted at the national level.

The responsibility of preparing such plans resides with the national governments, the process should be open-ended and include all stakeholders.

The 2005 plans should be considered as the first step towards achieving full scale sustainable water resources development and management, and should be reviewed and revised as implementation proceed. This calls for strong political will. The plan should be endorsed and adopted at the highest political level and it should be reflected in and build on national development plans, such as poverty reduction strategies.

Thank you!