

**Representative of Israel**  
**Mr. Ilan Fluss**  
**5 May 2008**

Thanks you, Mr. Chairman.

The filled hall this morning, with more than 1300 representatives of major groups and the more than 70 side events that will take place in the next few days are clear evidence of the importance of the CSD and the thematic issues in front of us this cycle. Agriculture, food crisis, land degradation, desertification, water, hunger, poverty and Africa and many more issues – all these are challenges that we must address, together, united with a global perspective. We cannot sit and wait. We need to take action now.

Israel has dealt with these issues since the early days of statehood.

And Israel is happy to work with Member States, UN agencies and other organizations in order to create partnerships, transfer experience, know-how and best practices, and to help one another works towards sustainable development and implementation of the MDG's.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel is proud to be a member of the Bureau of the CSD-16. Israel believes that the CSD is one of the most important and professional bodies in the United Nations system and that implementation of “Agenda 21” are crucial. Therefore, Israel has organized intersessional activities and sent a strong professional delegation to the CSD16. We will have a number of side events, a learning centre, and certainly take an active role in the meetings and discussions.

After hearing the opening statements this morning, we hope that and call on Member States not to politicize this important meeting. Political messages during these deliberations are disruptive and destructive to our important work.

Mr. Chairman,

We look forward to a successful, professional and productive meeting.

Thank you.