



# ITALY

Statement by

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Minister for the Environment, Land and Sea

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Check against Delivery

Mr President,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Delegates,

I fully endorse the statement delivered by Germany on behalf of the EU.

In recent years, after the approval of the Millennium Development Declaration and the Johannesburg World Summit, CSD cycles have been able to point to a number of success stories. Nevertheless, global results are still unevenly distributed and sustainable development, with the Millennium Development Goals as its road map, remains a challenge in many Countries and Regions of the world.

Mr President,

We are glad that CSD 15 thematic issues have finally been placed at the top of international and national agendas dealing with economic and social issues.

We can now strongly affirm that the environment is not a sectoral policy but rather one of the main drivers for poverty eradication, health and global security.

Energy is crucial for development. Meeting the global energy demand and ensuring access to energy for all are the main common priorities. But these goals need to be linked to the protection of the environment if we want to ensure the well-being of present and future generations. This is the only way we can contribute to long-term, stable and equitable socio-economic growth.

We, the Ministers attending CSD 15 bear the special responsibility to deliver a strong message, namely that we will be the catalyst of such a change of perspective for the sake of the environment, sustainable development and a renewed United Nations system.

It is necessary to take immediate global action. Therefore, we welcome the commitment of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to play a leadership role in helping the international community to address climate change. Also as a follow-up to the Security Council debate on climate change and security, we would be ready to support all initiatives aimed at raising the issue of climate change to the highest level.

In this respect, we welcome the appointment of former Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former President of Chile, Ricardo Lagos Escobar, and the former General Assembly President, Hang Seung-soo, as special UN Envoys on Climate Change as an encouraging new initiative that we are confident will bring us forward in our efforts to meet the climate change challenge.

The Stern Review, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the publication of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report all point to a single conclusion: the global environment is under mounting anthropogenic pressure and much of the damage to the environment may turn out to be irreversible. Building on the results of these studies, we must urgently find the path that will lead us to stop human induced climate change. The cost of inaction will exceed the cost of taking early action, probably by several degrees of magnitude. In addition, we can no longer ignore the scientists latest projections on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: whether or not we like it, by 2050 we will have to cut by half the current global greenhouse gases emissions and therefore stabilize them at circa 12 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, which is the maximum carrying capacity of the Earth.

As Germany mentioned in its statement on behalf of the EU, Italy and the other EU Member States are aware of their share of the responsibility and have therefore decided to unilaterally commit ourselves to ambitious internal targets on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, renewable energy share and level of energy efficiency. Italy and the other EU Member States also stand ready to move further should other industrialized nations take similar steps. Since the global effect of these policies can only be limited, it is imperative to reach a global agreement on how to address the climate change challenge beyond 2012. In addition, Italy hopes that other leaders of the G8 and of the economically advanced developing countries will be inspired by our initiative and will help to carry out ambitious international climate negotiations.

Mr President,

I appreciate the role of CSD in facilitating the sharing of views and the further needs assessment on adaptation to climate change. Together with mitigation, adaptation deserves specific and constant attention, in particular in the developing countries and in the most vulnerable among them, as it is the case of Small Island Developing States.

In this context, the concept of integrated climate risk management may provide a framework for ensuring that adaptation policies and risk management strategies are carried out in synergy. Should the disaster and climate change experts intensify the exchange of information, data and general knowledge, the elaboration of adaptation scenarios and strategies could be based upon a clear understanding of the vulnerability and response capacity to the impact of climate change on communities at risk.

In this perspective, Italy has supported two important initiatives in the Caribbean, namely the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre based in Belize as well as the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative and is preparing to launch another important programme for the promotion of renewable energies within the Pacific Islands.

Mr President,

Allow me to highlight the fundamental role of the United Nations system in the protection of the environment. In the broader context of the current international dialogue on the reform of the United Nations, we believe that the creation of the United Nations Environment Organization, achieved through strengthening UNEP, would be a giant first step that will lead us towards the UN reform of which the establishment of a truly effective international environmental governance is a major component. We hope therefore that the forthcoming General Assembly will be able to make decisions that will take us in this direction.

To conclude, Mr President,

Italy reiterates the call for an urgent increase in investments in renewable energies, energy efficiency and sustainable transport worldwide. In this context, we wish to emphasize that technology development and transfer of know-how, within the framework of environmental international cooperation, have a central role to play for the implementation of these goals in developing countries.

A National Conference on Climate Change will be convened in Italy next September with the participation of eminent international personalities to take stock of national achievements to date and launch a multi-stakeholder “Alliance for Climate” intended to catalyze action in the sectors indicated by the IPCC IV Report as requiring the most urgent mitigation measures, namely, energy supply, transport and buildings. We ask that the UN system guide all of us in pursuing these mitigation policies worldwide, while also addressing the negative impact of deforestation and desertification on the most vulnerable communities and ecosystems.

Mr. President,

tackling climate change and modifying the current patterns of production and utilization of energy resources are major challenges that decision makers can no longer afford to postpone further. Climate change not only is here to stay; it is moving at a pace which is much faster than what we had originally anticipated. And yet, international dialogue and decision making lag much too much behind and must be accelerated.

Thank you Mr. President.