

Remarks by the Representative of Japanese Delegation

Thematic Discussions on Drought, Commission on Sustainable Development

7 May 2008

Mr. Chair,

First of all allow me to express my heartfelt appreciation to you for giving me the floor. I am also grateful to all the panelists for their informative presentations.

(As has already been pointed out,) drought has been one of the major concerns in the world today, especially for African countries. It is deeply connected with many other problems that today's world faces: Sharp increase of food prices, shortage of water supply, land degradation, drought and Climate Change are all inter-connected and should be addressed in a coherent manner.

(Cool Earth Promotion Program)

Japan's Prime Minister, Yasuo Fukuda announced the "Cool Earth Promotion Program" at the beginning of this year. Japan has made it clear that we will provide financial resources for developing countries as a means to assist them with their efforts for adaptation (2 billion US dollars). Such assistance is geared towards promotion of sustainable development, including response to drought.

(Lessons learned)

We have already made various contributions in this area through ODA projects and other measures based upon COP decisions of UNCCD. We would like to share with you some insights that we have gained through our experience.

I would like to point out that the market economy is developing in countries that suffer from drought. With economic growth and accumulation of wealth countries can be better prepared for the shortage of water and food in case of drought or famine.

My delegation considers that the following measures are relevant and valid with regard to drought preparedness.

- a) Adoption of technologies that mitigate development pressure on land.
Such measures include introduction of appropriate agricultural practices.
- b) Utilization of technologies conducive to recovery of degraded soil through tree planting and so forth.
- c) In addition to these measures, addressing poverty and improving people's adaptability by creating new sources of income (making soap or sewing, for example) that are not dependent on such land-based industries as agriculture are essential.

Thank you.