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Statement

by

**H.E. Dr. Kyul-Ho Kwak
Minister of Environment and Head of Delegation of
The Republic of Korea**

at

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the Commission on Sustainable Development**

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am very pleased to meet honorable Ministers and other heads of delegation today, after getting to know many of you at the Eighth Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Jeju, Republic of Korea, last month.

The forum concluded successfully with the “Jeju Initiative,” which presents the key points of our constructive and interactive discussions. I expect the Jeju Initiative to be fully considered and reflected at the first cycle of the CSD programme of work.

Particularly, I believe that the best practices presented at the Jeju UNEP meeting, along with partnerships among countries and regions with social, economic, cultural and environmental differences will contribute to attaining the goals on: ecosystem approach in integrated water resource management; water and sanitation; as well as water, health and poverty.

As one of the best practices in Korea, where water scarcity and water contamination are widespread, I would like to shed light on our newly established water management policies along with the lengthy process that brought conflicting parties to an agreement.

Between 1999 and 2001, Korea enacted a series of Special Acts for each of the four major rivers in line with the paradigm shift toward demand-side,

ecosystem-based, and precautionary approach for integrated water resource management.

Among others, the Korean Government has designated riparian buffer zones along the riverbanks, in which land development is strictly limited. In order to compensate upstream communities for land use restrictions, *Water Use Charge* is levied on the residents of downstream regions.

In developing these measures, our Government spent three years coordinating the divergent interests of affected residents, local governments, NGOs, and experts on over 400 occasions. As a result, stakeholder conflicts have been substantially mitigated, ensuring the effective enforcement of the Special Acts with the extensive participation of all stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that Korea's experience will provide useful lessons for other countries as they consider policy options in the field of water resource management.

Thank you.