

SOUTH AFRICA
Intergovernmental Planning Meeting - CSD15 Theme: Interlinkages
New York 1 March 2007

Mr Chairman, South Africa fully supports and aligns with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development recognised that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. It also recognised that efforts to achieve sustainable development must address the interrelationships between the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. This means that the themes of the CSD work programme cannot be addressed in isolation of each other, or in isolation of the cross cutting issues, such as poverty eradication, health, Africa, gender etc. In particular, the CSD 15 themes have direct relationships with each other, and policy action must therefore be conceived in a manner that optimises co-benefits in each thematic area.

The preparation of a national sustainable development strategy is an important means for facilitating dialogue at a national level on sustainable development challenges and priorities, and on how to integrate economic, social and environmental policies, plans and programmes. South Africa is in the final stages of completing its National Framework for Sustainable Development, a process that has involved extensive consultation with all spheres and tiers of government, all stakeholders groups and civil society.

Africa is currently focusing on a major productive capacity drive through active industrial policy frameworks. The aim is to address employment and poverty challenges in order to progress towards the international development goals of the Millennium Declaration. This drive requires clear climate change and air pollution regulatory frameworks. In addition it must be supported by sufficient and appropriate transport and energy infrastructure. Co-ordination and support to maximise interlinkages at sub –regional, regional and global levels is thus crucial. Institutional capacity, as well as financial and technical support is needed at all levels in developing countries for an integrated approach to sustainable development

Mainstreaming of gender considerations in sustainable development policy, planning and decision-making processes is of paramount importance in achieving sustainable development. International and regional policy frameworks that integrate gender concerns with planning should be supported and strengthened. In addition, the empowerment of women and their participation in decision making should be strengthened on the agenda of the international community. Specific policy actions include:

- Adoption of gender sensitive approaches in policy actions for all thematic areas;
- Support for the development of gender expertise at national, regional and international levels;
- Establishment of new, and strengthening of existing networks that seek to address gender and sustainable development issues; and
- Enhancing access to information and capacity for data collection on the impacts of gender-focused interventions