

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

19TH SESSION

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

STATEMENT BY

MS. ROSA DANIEL

DEPUTY SECRETARY (POLICY)

FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES

OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

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Mr Chairman,

The five themes being discussed at this session of the CSD – chemicals, waste management, the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, transport, and mining – are relevant and important, and have to be addressed in a balanced and holistic manner. Singapore therefore associates itself with the Statement made by the distinguished representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Allow me to share with you Singapore's experience in addressing some of these issues, and our national sustainable development plan.

Integrated Solid Waste Management

As one of the most densely populated countries in the world with a land area of only about 700 square km, a key challenge for Singapore in managing the environment as we continue to develop is addressing the waste generated. Notwithstanding our economic growth that grew 41-fold in the past 50 years, the volume of our waste has increased only 6-fold over the past decades. To pursue the vision of zero-waste and zero-landfill for Singapore, we have adopted a multi-pronged approach. The nation-wide strategies we have adopted cover waste minimisation, reducing waste to landfill, recycling, and incineration.

Along side this integrated waste management system, we have also put in place the necessary organisation, regulatory and infrastructural framework to ensure that our programmes are effective. With escalating refuse output arising from an increasing population, greater economic activity and higher standards of living, Singapore must continue to improve our waste management system by engaging both the private sector and the general public in waste minimisation efforts.

Chemicals

Turning to the issue on chemicals, Singapore is a major transshipment hub that lies on the cross-roads between East and West. Singapore is aware of the potential hazards that toxic chemicals and other hazardous substances can pose. This is why we fully align ourselves with the spirit and country obligations of the Basel Convention on transboundary waste; the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants; the Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent procedure; and the Vienna Convention as well as the Montreal Protocol for the protection of the ozone layer.

Singapore has also been actively participating in the negotiation process leading to the establishment of the global legally binding treaty on mercury.

To reduce the impact of hazardous chemicals and substances on the environment and human health, Singapore is committed to carry out our obligations, where relevant, as Party to the above chemical treaties, working in tandem with our industries and other private sectors players.

A Sustainable Singapore

The constraints faced by Singapore as a developing country since our early years are the same challenges faced by many cities today. These include limited land and water scarcity, which are often aggravated by industrialisation and urbanisation. Getting the right balance in the environment-social-economic nexus is key to environmental sustainability. None of these factors should be pursued at the expense of the other. Despite the rapid economic development that Singapore enjoyed over the last few decades, we have managed to ensure high standards of clean air, clean land, clean water and good public health. We have achieved this as we have constantly sought to adopt an integrated and holistic approach to development.

Energy Efficiency

As a responsible member of the international community, Singapore is committed to global climate change mitigation efforts. Due to our natural constraints in exploiting alternative energy sources, Singapore's primary strategy to reduce carbon emissions is to improve energy efficiency. Singapore outlined our targets for environmental sustainability under the Sustainable

Singapore Blueprint in 2010. On energy efficiency, Singapore has set an economy-wide energy intensity reduction target of 35% from 2005 by 2030.

To ensure efficient use of energy across all sectors, we price energy according to sound market principles. We are also introducing a suite of measures such as legislation and financial incentives to spur energy efficiency in all end-use sectors – industry, transport, buildings and households.

Building Our Capabilities

As a small city-state with no natural resources, Singapore has sought to be at the forefront in seeking innovative responses to challenges such as water and energy security, in the context of rapid urbanisation and continued economic growth. The development of ultra-pure, high-grade reclaimed water which we call “NEWater” is an example of how Singapore applies technology and innovation to overcome our constraints and achieve greater water sustainability. Driving research and development will continue to be particularly important to Singapore as we have no natural resources but human capital.

Continuous innovation will also be essential for Singapore to stay ahead of environmental management challenges. At the same time, we place high priority on community engagement to educate the public and raise awareness of the environment across all strata of society.

Conclusion

For Singapore, the road to environmental sustainability is on-going, and we will continue to look for ways to do better than before and work with our community and stakeholders to address new and emerging socio-economic and environmental challenges. In this regard, we strongly support the adoption of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. If we all can play our part, taking into account the Rio principles, including, *inter alia*, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, we can ensure a better environment for ourselves and the next generation.

While Singapore is small, we can continue to play a role by contributing ideas and sharing what we have done before. In this regard, we stand ready to

share our experiences with other developing countries while continuing to test-bed new technologies and ideas to better achieve sustainable development and stay ahead of the curve.

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