



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SWITZERLAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement by Switzerland

by

**Mr. Franz Xaver Perrez
Deputy Head of International Affairs Division
Federal Office for the Environment**

New York, 11. Mai 2007

Mister Chair,

Ministers

Distinguished delegates

Dear colleagues

When this 15th session has opened, Switzerland has recalled that 15 years ago, the global community has adopted in Rio a strong commitment to address the challenges of increasing environmental degradation, increasing poverty and unjust distribution of economic wealth and a strong commitment to sustainable development. This commitment was reaffirmed 5 years ago in Johannesburg.

The CSD was established to provide political guidance on the most pressing issues and catalyze effective action the ground.

We have indicated that in the past, the CSD did not live up to its mandate; and we have underlined that today, it is more important than ever to address the pressing challenges to promote and ensure sustainable development.

We have underlined that this session of the CSD has to make a difference. This 15th session of the CSD should not simply be another session with a lot of talks, discussions and night long negotiations, it should not simply repeat and eventually even weaken previous engagements, but it has to build on and add value to the commitments already undertaken. We have therefore called for a clear, focused, concise and substantial decision.

Mr. Chairman

Now, two weeks later, we have to note that once again the CSD, that we together did not live up to our task. Mr. Chairman, this text on which we all have worked hard over the last days and nights

- does not add value;
- will, if adopted, catalyze no single additional concrete activity on the ground;
and
- it falls behind what we have agreed in the past in several areas, e.g. by indicating in paragraph 26 that only poverty eradication and economic development should be the overriding priorities of developing countries. Switzerland is convinced and committed that all development has to be sustainable, thus embracing not only social and economic, but also environmental aspects and that sustainable development has to be the overriding priority of each country.

Mr. Chairman, we do not believe that we can solve the pressing challenges by repeating and weakening previous commitments. Therefore, also Switzerland cannot agree to the draft decision.

Let me conclude by thanking all for the efforts undertaken, and by underlining that Switzerland remains deeply committed to sustainable development and to the CSD. And let me express that we hope that today's non-decision will help us to cooperate together more effectively in the future.