

CSD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development

Statement delivered on behalf of Business and Industry

February 1 2010

Thank you Mr. Chairman for this opportunity to participate in today's dialogue. Business and Industry welcomes this focus on implementation and the opportunity to share views with other stakeholders.

We believe CSD 17 decisions set important goals and priorities for agriculture and so tracking their implementation is crucial. The presentation earlier this morning from IFPRI highlighted additional key points of importance to the business and industry community, such as the importance of trade and access to markets, the need to integrate climate change and the value of focusing on smallholder farmers for development.

The private sector has been proactively engaged in many of the areas discussed by CSD 17 for many years. In particular, private sector contribution through public-private partnerships are helping create opportunities and spur innovation. Public private partnerships are a powerful pathway for engagement with other stakeholders and offer an opportunity to bring together the knowledge, expertise and resources of different actors together. The private sector is actively involved in many partnerships focusing on agricultural productivity and food security, such as the Harvest Plus project (which seeks to biofortify key crops in Asia and Africa) or the Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) project, another initiative seeking to address the challenge of food security in the context of climate change. The return of agriculture at the top of the international agenda provides additional support to these efforts.

In this context, CSD has offered business and industry an important avenue to engage with other stakeholders. CSD 16 directly contributed to the creation of the Farming First coalition, which brought together farmers, scientists, engineers, and business and industry around a joint policy platform. Together we have articulated a shared vision, advocating for a knowledge- and farmer-centred approach to sustainable agricultural development. Farming First is an example of a partnership working together to articulate a common vision of the building blocks needed to turn CSD 17 decisions into reality. As my colleague from the scientific and technological community mentioned this morning, the coalition has continued to grow since May, welcoming new members, and we have been able to take this joint platform to new fora.

Business and Industry is committed to participating in the CSD process as well as other processes related to sustainable development and certainly the effort to focus on implementation is welcome. However, building on the earlier presentations by Mr. Townsend of the World Bank and by the UN Secretary General Special Representative on Food Security and Nutrition, Dr. David Nabarro, we would like to highlight the challenge for business and industry of engaging in the many fora that coexist within the UN.

Sustainable development is tied to many other topics, such as desertification and biodiversity, which are each also being discussed in different UN bodies. How different decisions feed into implementation decisions and how policy processes are coordinated are important questions which impact on stakeholders' capacity to engage and effectively contribute to implementation.

We welcome and encourage the efforts by CSD and the UN Secretary General's High Level Task Force to bring together the decisions taken in different fora so that horizontal cohesiveness is increased. For Business and Industry, greater clarity would help us contribute in a more effective and targeted manner, and help us identify more easily where opportunities for partnerships exist.