



Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations
57 Park Avenue New York, NY. 10016 Tel. (212) 679-4760 Fax. (212) 685-8741
E-Mail: guatemala@un.int

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. LUIS FERRATE
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT OF GUATEMALA AND CHAIR OF CSD 18
FEBRUARY 1st, 2010**

Excellence, Hans Hoogeveen, Director General, Ministry of Agriculture of the Netherlands,
Mr. Sha Zukang, Under Secretary General of UNDESA
Mr. Tariq Banuri, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you the first multistakeholder dialogue on implementing sustainable development with a special focus on CSD-17 decisions. Through Mr. Hoogeveen, I would like to extend my cordial greetings to Mrs. Gerda Verburg, Chairperson of CSD 17, she could not be with us today, but yesterday she participated in the third Bureau meeting of CSD 18 and I am sure we will continue working together.

Today, we have a wide representation of our most valuable implementing partners for sustainable development. We are here to learn how decisions so carefully drafted and negotiated by member States in CSD-17 can transcend to the international community and can have a positive impact on our country and our peoples through its implementation.

This dialogue could not be better timed given that 2009 marked a global turning point. The world encountered multiple crises, including the unprecedented financial and economic crisis. These multiple crises have made us aware that we are more interconnected than we imagined. We have witnessed how these crises spilled over to every corner of the world, and we are beginning to understand that we have the capacity to impact the most remote places of the planet. Implementation of the agreed policies into concrete action has never been so possible and so necessary.

CSD-17 gave us an excellent "Action Plan", which consists of 278 policy actions and measures on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, Africa and inter-linkages and means of implementation. This action plan represents a true synthesis of what the global community believes necessary to address the challenges confronting sustainable agriculture and rural development. Many of the actions agreed upon are:

Leapfrog from an inefficient agriculture to an energy efficient sustainable agriculture particularly for food security;

Promote an integrated approach for goods and services for inter-generational use;

Promote integrated management of land and water resources;

Allow developing countries access to markets and to fair trade;

Bridge the urban and rural divide;

And spread a homegrown green revolution in Africa and beyond.

The multiple crises need your leadership and your contribution. In this dialogue devoted to implementation we expect from you specific suggestions about how to implement the decisions agreed at CSD 17 and the type of partnerships required.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In my capacity as Chairperson for CSD-18, I will be devoting my energies to ensure successful organization of the 18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. But I am also conscious of the linkages between themes of CSD-17 and CSD-18. For example, throughout the CSD-17 decisions, sustainable production and consumption patterns are mentioned as prerequisite for sustainable development. Similarly, “transport infrastructure” was cited as critical for development of rural economies, and “mining” was emphasized within the context of promoting non-agricultural industries in rural areas as long as the environmental cost does not superseed the economic benefits. Against this background, I see today’s meeting as a bridge between the two sessions.

Last, but not the least, Member States, have decided to hold a UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. The process leading to the Summit, will allow us to build on the progress already achieved, renew political will to close the gaps that still persist and will bring back to the heart of the UN discussions that are essential to integrate in the sustainable development agenda.

I wish you a very productive and successful session. I am confident that you will do your utmost to build the momentum behind implementation.

Thank you.