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Cross-cutting Issues and Interlinkages

Statement
on behalf of the European Union
by

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Madam Chairperson / Mr Chairman, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic has the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

All the themes of this cycle are highly interrelated and have strong links with the crosscutting issues identified at CSD11. They **all play crucial roles for sustainable development** and in addressing food security, **especially in Africa. Water and sanitation** are key interlinkages between these issues. **A fully integrated approach** of sustainable development policies **requires that the following three cross-cutting challenges be addressed:**

Challenge 1 is thus to improve the integration of agriculture, rural development, land, desertification, drought as well as integrated resource management into national sustainable development planning and implementation processes and targeted strategies for food security. This should be achieved by increasing policy coherence, coordination and aid effectiveness.

Especially important are the development and implementation of strategic assessments that combine social, economic and environmental considerations, including gender equality, and stakeholder ownership and participation in national SD strategies, including strategies for sustainable growth and decent work, research policies and education.

Challenge 2 is, for all countries, to ensure that biodiversity, land, water and forests can provide to both present and future generations the ecosystem services, which also are vital for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The EU underlines the importance of these services.

Considering the risks associated with the degradation of forests and biodiversity globally to be one of the factors of the food crisis, the EU believes that CSD17 should promote the development or strengthening of mechanisms that enforce ecosystem services, especially through strategies of increased policy coherence. In this regard, a payment to farmers for ecosystem services merits greater policy consideration.

Synergies among global initiatives and agreements that are pursuing the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources with a favourable impact on food security should be identified and supported; including inter alia integrated water resources management and internationally agreed sustainability criteria for biofuel production. Finding synergies in combating land degradation, desertification and drought is a key to mitigating the impacts of climate change and for protecting biodiversity, all of which are required in order to reduce poverty. Policies and actions to promote balanced ecosystem approaches to land use are thus needed.

Education policies and other actions must encourage and empower rural development, agriculture and land development communities to think in the frame of ecosystems and ecosystem services and to harness indigenous knowledge.

Challenge 3 is the implementation of the overarching objective of the JPoI: *changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns*, with a focus on food consumption and a strengthened contribution of SCP to poverty eradication. It is another important area in which the EU is committed to playing an active role, including through the Marrakech Process.

Policies and actions to promote sustainable consumption patterns in relation to food, fuel, water and agro-industrial products are particularly needed. These consumption policies consequently will improve agricultural production patterns and promote sustainable growth.

The development of the Ten Year Framework of Programmes to promote Sustainable Consumption and Production requires cooperation among Governments and major groups, with all countries taking action and the developed countries taking the lead, for deliberations at the 18th and 19th sessions of the CSD. This framework of programmes will promote initiatives at all levels with a vision to achieve a low carbon economy and to accelerate the shift towards SCP through the decoupling of economic growth from the unsustainable use of resources worldwide. The wider use of sustainable procurement, the harmonisation of environmental labelling schemes, the reduction of threats to public health, the increase in income-generating employments, trade flows that are less distorting and the mainstreaming of gender equality into all policies should be promoted.

In order to ensure food security and adequate food quality for the global population, all aspects of food consumption should be addressed, and primarily the needs of hundreds of millions of people who suffer from undernourishment because they are unable to buy or produce their food. Contaminated food and water, hunger, malnutrition and high incidences of disease are further underscoring rural health. Global climate change is expected to pose direct threats to health by causing more severe storms, floods, droughts and fires, with consequent disruptions in water and food supplies, medical and other services.

International capacity building initiatives that assess health and environment linkages and assess the knowledge base and education level concerning the interrelation between food security and the global environmental improvement are urgently needed, particularly in Africa; the knowledge gained would enable more effective national and regional policy responses to environmental threats to human health.

However, even in a time of food crisis, we should not forget about the other unsustainable side of the issue, about the increasing number of non-communicable diseases resulting from food overconsumption.

There is a need to develop, implement and evaluate actions recommended by the World Health Organization Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health for reducing the risk and incidence of non-communicable diseases and to improve the health standards of foods consistent with the aims and objectives of this global strategy.

Moreover, all countries should work together in further improving food and feed international and national policies, including food labelling and developing or strengthening, where applicable, preventive, promotive and curative programmes, to address non-communicable diseases (such as cancer, diabetes,...) and conditions (such as unhealthy diets and lack of physical activity).

The EU has taken action to develop production and consumption policies to improve the products and services provided while reducing health impacts and the ecological footprint, maintaining healthy ecosystems that also can provide food for generations to come, using, where appropriate science-based approaches, such as lifecycle analysis.

The role of education, awareness raising and information, is crucial as these can change consumers' behaviour and thus function as a means towards more sustainable lifestyles.

Thank you for your attention.



**Statement by H. E. Dr. Dessima D. Williams
Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations**

On Behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

**At the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the CSD-17
On the Thematic Discussion on Inter-linkages, Cross-cutting Issues
and Means of Implementation Plenary session**

27 February 2009

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Distinguished Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

AOSIS shares the view expressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the need for a holistic approach using national sustainable development strategies and other national sustainable development plans to yield better results by addressing the inter-linkages among the issues. Support to strengthen human resource and institutional capacity is required by Small Island Developing States to develop these strategies and implement them.

Food production is hampered by the scarcity of land, energy, technology, investment, and capacity in SIDS. Land degradation, bio-fuels production, droughts, and floods also reduce food security. In order to boost agricultural production in SIDS and ensure food security the international community should:

- Support and strengthen efforts undertaken by the SIDS, especially food security and vulnerability reduction programmes aimed at improving the sustainability of forestry, fisheries, and agriculture sectors;
- Support diversification of options for growing crops and harvesting fish;
- Significantly increase the level of official development assistance and investment devoted to agricultural production;
- Provide policy space for SIDS in the global trading regime to encourage the use of locally grown products to reduce reliance on expensive imports and boost the agricultural sector.
- Assist SIDS in creating an appropriate investment climate for agricultural and rural infrastructure

Climate change exacerbates threats already affecting food security and poses new challenges in land, agriculture, and rural development. Policy responses at the international level should:

- Support climate vulnerability analysis for all food production sectors in SIDS;
- Support the efforts of SIDS to diversify agricultural production systems to adapt to climate change;
- Ensure new, additional and predictable resources are provided to SIDS to address the impact of climate change;

- Support the establishment of research and monitoring institutions, and support for MSI implementation, and programmes for boosting renewable energy production and reducing vulnerability to disasters;
- Institute a system of carbon credits to help preserve standing forests and boost SIDS' mitigation and adaptation efforts;
- Support the integration of climate change adaptation strategies with land, watershed, and coastal zone management;
- Engage in re-forestation, sustainable land use, zoning and other sustainable measures to improve resiliency to climate change;
- Secure increased assistance, resources, capacity building and technology transfer targeted especially to SIDS;
- Support ecosystem approaches that integrate management of land, water and living resources to protect and build the resilience of the biodiversity base supporting livelihoods of SIDS communities.
- An ambitious and comprehensive agreement(s) within the UNFCCC that results in significant reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions

The effect of the global financial crisis has been particularly devastating in SIDS given our small size, high exposure to international markets and dependence on sectors such as tourism. AOSIS is concerned that the financial crisis could further threaten the fulfillment of commitments made by the international community to support the sustainable development efforts of SIDS including the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The crisis should not be used as an excuse to reduce international support to SIDS.

The special challenges and capacity needs of SIDS must be taken into account in the implementation of technical assistance programmes, including in technology development and technology transfer in areas such as agriculture and food production systems.

As it relates to the means of implementation policy responses include:

- Support "truly" integrative approaches in programming to increase efficiency and effectiveness of ODA support;
- Assist SIDS in strengthening partnerships between NGOs, governments, the UN, and the private sector in order to encourage technology transfer, capacity building, and resources for development;
- Support the establishment of a structured framework for the sharing of best practices and lessons learnt among SIDS, using the SIDS Unit in UNDESA as a platform.
- Support efforts to build national and regional capacity in SIDS
- The international financial institutions including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) should facilitate SIDS' access to financial and technical resources to develop and implement projects to address land degradation.
- Wherever possible, utilize local expertise to strengthen local capacity;
- Pursue a bottom-up approach in improving rural livelihoods, where responsibility for outcomes is shared and community ownership of the development process encouraged;
- Overcome limited rural development opportunities with empowerment, participatory assessment, and training to build capacity;
- Simplify processes and systems in project management

I thank you Madam Chair