

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – CSD 17
Agriculture, Rural development, Land, Drought, Desertification and Africa.**

May 12
Business and Industry Dialogue Statement

Madam Chairperson, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Business and Industry welcomes this opportunity to take part in these important discussions to advance implementation of sustainable agriculture and development.

It is imperative to tackle the challenges of sustainable development - here in this policy session - and afterward. For years we have seen a persistent decline in the resources flowing to agriculture, dropping from 18% of development assistance down to 3%, over the past two decades. At the same time, the private sector has picked up a growing proportion of research expenditures, invested in programmes, provided training and education, and helped with outreach. Business has maintained and furthered our commitment to agriculture and we invite our counterparts in government to make equivalent commitments.

To cite just two examples of relevance to this CSD:

In the area of integrated crop management, the plant science industry is heavily involved in providing access to training and conducts annual programs to reach farmers around the globe. In 2007, CropLife Madagascar partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture to broadcast a series of training programs on radio on responsible and effective use of crop protection products, reaching 2 million farmers and agricultural workers. Globally, over 350,000 stakeholders are directly trained each year.

In the area of infrastructure, fertilizer companies and other partners have joined together to help the building of ports, railroads, and storage facilities along geographically

determined lines that tie in stakeholders along the value chain and help bring farmers' products to local, regional and global markets. Development corridors are being created in Mozambique for instance, and could be expanded regionally.

It will take many resources and many partners to make a difference in the complex issues of the six themes in this CSD. We believe the text should recognise the importance of public-private partnerships.

Multi-stakeholder efforts are important, and an excellent example is Farming First. Its focus includes enabling millions of farm families, especially smallholders, to grow more crops sustainably through effective markets, more collaborative research and committed knowledge sharing.

As well, food and agricultural commodities chains are increasingly global and comprised of many different stages and players, including farmers, manufacturers, suppliers, transport, retailers, consumers and waste managers, all of whom generate different environmental impacts. Sustainability in food and renewable commodities chains therefore requires shared responsibility and engagement among all those involved along their life-cycles.

As stakeholders, we all have an important role to play in developing, promoting and achieving sustainable agriculture and development in the context of other challenges, such as climate change, water scarcity and attaining the Millennium Development Goals. It is possible to achieve these goals as long as policies and programs support innovation, foster initiatives that build skills, and include a mosaic of solutions through joint efforts and partnerships.

We hope, Madame Chair, the deliberations this week do result in an agreed text that reflects the importance of the themes before CSD-17.