

**Agriculture Statement
Business and Industry Major Group
To the Commission on Sustainable Development – IPM session
February 24, 2009**

Madam Chairperson, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

With modern agriculture, farmers have doubled the production of world food calories since 1960, tripled the output of foods such as cooking oils and meats and increased per-capita food supplies in the developing world by 25%. And we've maintained a stable area of agricultural land since 1950, despite a global population that has more than doubled.

Still, there is a great deal more to be done and agriculture must rise to the top of the policy agenda. Ensuring food security while protecting natural resources calls for increases in agricultural productivity through sustainable intensification. Agriculture presents many solutions by providing opportunities to steward the land, protect biodiversity, and provide jobs and sustenance for people.

Some 20-40% of the world's potential crop production is still lost annually due to the effect of weeds, pests and diseases; however crop losses would be doubled if existing pesticides uses were abandoned. The depletion of soils from essential nutrients and erosion are also preventing farmers from increasing their yields. Organic agriculture presents good opportunities for farmers to access niche export markets. However, organic agriculture cannot feed 9 billion people in a sustainable way, without incurring intolerable environmental costs due to extensification. Different agricultural systems can coexist, but meeting challenges of the future requires investments in a new Green Revolution.

Most subsistence farmers are essentially farming without inputs like good quality seeds, fertilizers, and crop protection. If given the opportunity to have access to technology and training, smallholder farmers can grow more

food on their available land and free their children to go to school and expand their horizons. We need to increase access to these tools and to the many programs which work to spread the use of best practices, such as Integrated Pest Management.

Future rises in food prices will be exacerbated without the techniques and technologies we have now to increase production being applied more sustainably in all regions. Plus, we need to continue developing new technologies to further food production in an environmentally responsible, socially sensitive manner.

Thank you.