



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C.

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting
UN Commission on Sustainable Development -19
Thematic Discussion: Interlinkages and Cross-cutting Issues
Intervention for March 3, Afternoon Session

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Thank you, Chair. Attention to cross-cutting issues is critical to making progress on the thematic issues of the CSD; these cross-cutting topics can support progress in all of the CSD-19 themes.

First, policies should be based in sound science. Science should guide policies and be used to determine their effectiveness. Science-based solutions can help avoid unintended consequences and lead to innovation.

Policies should be transparent efforts with participation of the public. Citizens need to be informed and involved in decisions that affect them, be it the decision process for where new facilities or transportation infrastructure will go or environmental standards for chemical or waste facilities. Citizens and groups can make important contributions that result in sustainable solutions.

We must use a variety of tools and approaches to achieve our goals. Sustainable solutions should be tailored to local circumstances and use an array of tools, both regulatory and voluntary.

We must promote gender equality. President Obama's National Security Strategy states, "Experience shows that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. When those rights and opportunities are denied, countries often lag behind. Furthermore, women and girls often disproportionately bear the burden of crises and conflict." Women and girls are fundamental to making progress toward sustainable development.

Sustainable consumption and production concepts should be considered in all CSD-19 thematic areas. A lifecycle approach to mining, chemicals, transport, and waste generation should significantly reduce the environmental impacts of development in these sectors.

We must include education and capacity building to overcome current obstacles and meet future challenges with innovative solutions. We need innovators to develop sustainable technology and workers to integrate sustainable concepts into our production and consumption patterns. We must teach our young people and train our workforce in ways of achieving our goals of economic as well as environmental and social growth.

Finally, cross-sector collaboration is important among the thematic areas. Within each thematic area, there are programs that can affect or improve another area and collaboration among experts with those areas is essential for mutual success. For example, the Global Methane Initiative seeks to reduce environmental impacts from both mining and waste. Similarly, the programs to reduce mercury use in artisanal gold mining reduce environmental impacts from mining and chemicals.

These are areas that we should keep in mind as we move forward in the five thematic areas, as they will help propel us to new heights in sustainable development. Thank you very much.