

## **Desertification**

Thank you Madame Chair

I would like to join~~x~~ others in thanking the panelists for their comprehensive presentations.

Madame Chair

Concerted efforts both locally and globally are needed to combat desertification. And in doing so, a holistic approach that takes into account the desertification, land degradation and the socioeconomic context of the countries should be taken.

Korea has been undertaking this approach in carrying out cooperation project to combat desertification with Mongolia. Since 2007, the Korean government has been pursuing the “Greenbelt Plantation Project” in Mongolia to not only combat desertification as such but also to improve the living conditions in the region. For instance, local people are encouraged to join the project by choosing fruit trees for plantation so they can contribute to local sustainable development while earning alternative sources of income.

Madame Chair

Combating desertification requires regional cooperative efforts especially when transboundary resources and issues are involved. In Northeast Asia, desertification worsened by climate change is bringing on more frequent and intense dust and sand storm, which in turn is affecting neighboring countries. To tackle this problem, Korea, China and Japan have been conducting joint studies and implementing measures together.

Madame Chair,

I would like to point out two important issues closely related to desertification: climate change and poverty. First, unless climate change is properly addressed, it would be difficult to combat desertification. My delegation would like to underscore the importance of enhancing the capacity of the vulnerable people to adapt to climate change and alleviate the negative impact of desertification.

Second, poverty is another serious issue related to desertification. We have seen how it is more difficult for the poor people in the affected area to refrain from exploiting the natural resources in an unsustainable manner, which in turn has contributed to desertification. Without solving poverty problem in the affected area, we cannot effectively address desertification. In this sense, my delegation would like to fully support the idea in the Secretary-General's report that a national action plan to combat desertification should be integrated into national development frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies.

Thank you. Madame chair.