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**Statement by**

**H.E. Mr. László Borbély,**

**Minister of Environment and Forests**

**of**

**Romania**

**and Chairperson of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on**

**Sustainable Development (CSD-19)**

**at the Opening of the**

**19<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**

**New York, 2 May 2011**

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Your Excellencies,  
Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Sha Zukang,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

This meeting takes place at a time when global sustainability is high on the international agenda. Our world is facing multiple crises in the form of poverty, food crisis, economic recession, environmental degradation, climate change and devastation from increasing natural disasters. Just recently, a massive earthquake and subsequent tsunami struck Japan. Last summer, devastating floods displaced hundreds of thousands of people in Pakistan. Our thoughts and sympathy goes to the families and communities affected by these tragic events. And unfortunately, the list could go on and on. These crises are severely threatening the very existence of the world's population.

The global economic crisis in particular caused significant setbacks in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Despite early signs of recovery, the fallout will continue to have adverse impacts on economic and social development. Sustainability is further endangered by a growing world population with ever-increasing consumption trends, including energy and water consumption, and rising carbon-emissions. The evidence is clear: it shows us that the traditional path to growth is no longer viable. We must follow a new path of development aligned with sustainable consumption and production patterns. We must use our resources and residues as sustainably as we can.

The Millennium Development Goals Summit last year, the high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy for SIDS and the on-going preparatory process of 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development sent a clear and strong message: in the midst of the multiple crises faced today, we need to become even more determined to advance the implementation of the sustainable development agenda, particularly in promoting sustainable consumption and production which is at the core of sustainable development. The principles of sustainable development should guide our efforts. But our work also needs to strongly focus on translating commitments into concrete measures and actions.

This session of the Commission can be just an ordinary session or a remarkable session. The choice is ours. It is in our hands to increase the momentum to respond to the current challenges, and to implement the sustainable development agenda.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

CSD-19 is a policy session. Therefore, we need to make policy decisions and to identify concrete measures to advance, in an integrated manner, the implementation of the agenda in front of us, especially in the thematic areas of transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns.

During the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting in February, we identified a range of policy options and actions for overcoming the main constraints and obstacles impeding implementation in the five thematic areas and cross-cutting aspects.

On transport, we recognized that addressing the growing transport challenges is increasingly urgent. Integrated urban and rural transport planning, as well as supportive fiscal and regulatory policies, combined with the development of new technologies and greater international cooperation, are key factors for achieving a transport sector that meets the requirements of sustainable development. In order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and eradicate poverty, it is necessary to expand the transport infrastructure and transport services in developing countries, especially in rural areas.

On chemicals, sound management of chemicals has important implications for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Chemicals can indeed contribute to job creation, improved living standards, eradication of poverty, improved health of humans, agricultural productivity and energy efficiency. But sound management is needed to prevent adverse consequences for the environment and human health. Significant progress has been made towards the 2020 goal on sound management of chemicals through SAICM. However, this progress is insufficient and uneven across countries and regions.

On waste, developing countries face special challenges in management and minimization. A number of new waste streams have emerged or recently assumed greater importance, especially e-waste and hazardous waste. The negative impacts on the health of surrounding communities, as well as on the local environment, in terms of pollution of land, water and air, are becoming more acute. It is imperative to decouple waste generation from economic growth.

On mining, the main goal is to maximize the positive economic impact of mining while minimizing its negative environmental and social impacts, and reinforcing the capacity of producing countries to benefit from their natural resources in the long term. A holistic approach with mining integrated in the sustainable development paradigm is necessary. There is also a need to create a linkage between mining and other economic sectors while pursuing sound economic diversification strategies.

Sustainable consumption and production is an overarching objective of sustainable development. Since the UN Conference on Environment and Development and World Summit on Sustainable Development, progress has been made in all regions in launching initiatives that can accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production. Yet, these initiatives remain fragmented along sectoral, ministerial, and other lines, and their aggregate impact remains small in comparison with the challenges. The Marrakech Process has been effective as an interim means to share information and knowledge across countries and regions. A unique opportunity now exists to move to a new level of ambition through the creation of a global ten-year framework of programmes in support of national and regional initiatives to speed up the shift towards sustainable consumption and production, as called for in the Jonesburg Plan of Implementation.

The five themes of the current cycle of the Commission are all closely linked with each other as well as with other sustainable development themes. Following the significant work already undertaken, coherence should continue to be enhanced between and within international processes and institutions having an impact on these thematic areas. Moreover, the provision of means of implementation is critical to implementing global, regional and national policies in various areas, including the thematic areas of this cycle. To complement and reinforce local and national actions, international cooperation is essential.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Bureau has discussed the organization of work of the CSD-19 and decided to organize the thematic negotiations in 2 parallel working groups. An updated version is available in the room today, as well as on the CSD-19 website. The first working group will cover the themes of Transport, Chemicals, Mining and Interlinkages, cross-cutting issues and means of implementation, while the second working group will deal with a 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP, Waste management and Preamble. The following Bureau members were assigned the responsibility of guiding and facilitating negotiations: Mr. Meñez (transport and mining); Mr. Vergara (chemicals and interlinkages, cross-cutting issues and means of implementation); Mr. Merabet (waste management); and Amb. Goledzinowski (SCP). The Preamble section will also be dealt by the two co-chairs of the working group 2. This afternoon, the Bureau members are prepared to proceed with the issues of transport in WG1 and SCP in WG2, and will continue thereafter in the thematic order presented for each working group, while being also aware that a certain level of flexibility may be required as we advance.

CSD-19 should be a forward-looking and action-oriented session. We have a daunting challenge ahead of us during the next two weeks. We also have an opportunity to make a real difference in advancing the implementation of sustainable development. The Chair's summary of the IPM of CSD-19 is, in my opinion, a good basis for our discussions. I urge you to make positive contributions to the discussions in an effort to reach consensus and adopt policy measures for effectively addressing the current challenges. Our recommendations should trigger prompt implementation and concrete actions in the five thematic areas of this CSD cycle, while equally addressing cross-cutting issues and means of implementation. We should aim at concrete deliverables.

As Chairperson of CSD-19, I pledge to work closely with all of you in order to reach consensus and ensure the success of CSD-19. I count on your cooperation and enriching inputs. I look forward to our productive discussions and successful outcomes.

I thank you.