

Statement by Deputy Minister Jongsoo Yoon

CSD 19

Ministerial Roundtable 3

Moving towards zero waste and sound management of chemicals

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I would like to briefly touch upon sustainable waste management.

To tackle increasing types and amount of solid and hazardous waste generated by ever-growing economy, a sustainable waste management is necessary to decouple waste generation from economic growth.

"Wastes" are no longer "wastes" but "resources" because "resource circulation" is the essential element in fulfilling sustainable development. Thus, we need to achieve resource circulation society. The concept of this society is broader than that of recycling society. The resource circulation society identifies the flow of materials, minimizes side effects of using them and maximizes efficiency of materials.

I would like to bring up some points regarding sustainable waste management.

First, waste management policy, in its nature, should start from a long-term perspective. Long-term strategy and system are needed for transition toward resource circulation. This long-term strategy consists of goals and policies to promote national resource circulation and will lay the guideline for resource circulation and provide the foundation for upcycling of waste resources, converting them into materials or products of better quality.

Second, we should improve infrastructure and technology to efficiently deal with new waste stream including electronic and hazardous wastes. Such wastes need an online waste disposal management system, which utilizes the state-of-the-art technology and

manages the information on wastes along the whole process from waste generation to final treatment. The system successfully manages wastes in a safe and transparent manner and gains accurate statistics.

Third, in the context of green growth and high oil prices, we need to devise strategies to convert wastes to energy. In establishing wastes policies, national circumstances should be considered. For example, a country with relatively small size territory might focus on incineration over landfill. On the contrary, a policy highlighting landfill rather than incineration is more useful for a country with big size territory. What is essential in waste management policies is that taking economies of scale into consideration, whichever policy is chosen. “Wastes to energy” is as important as new renewable energy such as wind, solar and thermal power, etc.

Lastly, we need to build international partnership on sustainable waste management. Countries with advanced waste policies should provide master plan or conduct feasibility study for establishing environmental facility for developing countries to disseminate good practice and know-how in waste management. Korea is participating in forging global partnership by taking part in international discussions on Asian Network, United Nations Center for Regional Development (UNCRD), etc. and will join the global effort to share information and experience in waste management with other countries.

Thank you.