

Statement by Dr. Liu Yuyin, the Chinese Delegate at the intergovernmental preparatory meeting for CSD 17 on SIDs

Feb. 23, 2009 New York

Madam Chairman,

The Chinese delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Sustainable development is a challenge facing the whole international community and the development of small island developing states is an indispensable part of the global sustainable development.

The current ever widening financial and economic crises, deterioration of the ecological environment, extreme weather and frequent natural disasters are posing unprecedented challenges to the development of all states. Because of their size, limited land and narrow natural resources bases, and the fragility and interdependence of their terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, and the relatively low level of economic development, the small island developing states find themselves in particularly dire straits -- a situation to which they are unable to come up with a fundamental solution by themselves without the help and attention of the international community.

For countries in special situations, there should be special support policies targeted to their needs. In order to address the question of agricultural and rural development of the SIDs, it is necessary to implement effectively, on the basis of these countries' specific conditions, such important documents as the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Declaration. The needs of the SIDs are multi-faceted, of which the most important is the need to enable these countries to maintain a certain agricultural foundation so that they are better able to withstand external shocks.

First, the priority concerns of the SIDs should be addressed. The report of the Secretary General points out that the SIDs are faced with various obstacles and challenges in effective land management, rural

economic development and recovery of the agricultural sector. The international community should, taking into account the specific needs of the SIDs, help them overcome difficulties in the areas of land and marine ecological system protection, land degradation and climate change, increase investment in the rural economy and agricultural sector of the SIDs, support them in their efforts to formulate and implement appropriate adaptation measures so as to help them cope with the challenges caused by serious natural disasters.

Second, the importance of trade to the recovery of economic vitality and realization of sustainable development of the SIDs should be fully recognized. With the financial crisis deepening continuously, all parties should work together to prevent the surge of protectionism and minimize the negative impact of the decrease in trade, thus taking practical actions to create favorable conditions for the development of the SIDs.

Third, we should help the SIDs in the comprehensive implementation of their strategies for sustainable development. The international community should increase input in the areas of technological transfer and personnel training to enhance the capacity of the SIDs to respond to traditional and new challenges, and help the SIDs formulate and implement integrated strategies which correspond to their specific development needs with a view to promoting the comprehensive and sustainable development of these countries.

Madam Chairman,

As a developing country itself, China fully empathizes with the SIDs in terms of the difficulties they encounter in striving for sustainable development. Over the years, the Chinese government has steadily deepened and expanded cooperation with the SIDs and provided assistance to them within the limits of our capabilities. We are willing to further strengthen international cooperation, move forward together with the SIDs and other countries in our common endeavor to promote global sustainable development.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.