

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17)
Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting
Statement by the Delegation of Japan
SIDS (Monday, 23 February 2009, 15:00-18:00 @ CR 4)

Thank you Mme. Chairperson,

Let me stress at the outset how much we are pleased to see, on the agenda of this year's CSD, so many issues related to the climate change adaptation. This is very timely as the member countries of the UN and of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change get ready to negotiate the future framework toward Cop 15 in Copenhagen in December.

The Government of Japan has long been advocating in various international forums that the adaptation is equally important as the mitigation, as the most vulnerable countries and the human security situation therein are already being affected by the negative impacts of climate change.

It is urgently needed, in particular for the Least Developed Countries and small island countries, to build up medium- to long-term resilience of society to climate change, by taking short-term measures to respond to climate disasters as well as by incorporating measures to address climate change into their development strategies and programs.

In this context, agriculture, rural development, land management, drought, desertification are the key issues to be addressed, and the SIDS and Africa are the two groups of countries that merit special attention.

With regard to the SIDS, given increased risks and possible security implications due to climate change, Japan shares the sense of urgency and increased needs for international support to the efforts for adaptation. We fully share the view pointed out in the SG report on the necessity to strengthen human resource and institutional capacity for integrated rural development and sustainable development of natural resources.

At the same time, I would like to stress the importance of taking short-term measures to respond to climate disasters as I explained earlier. For example, Japan provided grant aid

to construct seawalls around Mare Island in Maldives, 6 kilometers of length by 2002, which protected the island from the 3 meters high waves caused by the Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004.

Japan extended grant aid and technical support to the Palau International Coral Reef Center which serves as the focal point for the global coral reef monitoring network and conservation in Micronesia. Capacity building through the center's activity would serve not only biodiversity objectives but also climate change adaptation. Japan has also been extending assistance to the Pacific Islands in the areas of waste management and infectious disease through facilities such as the New Pharmaceutical Services Center in Fiji.

Being itself a chain of islands in the Pacific, Japan has hosted the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) every three years since 1997. This year, on May 22 and 23, 2009, PALM 5 will be held in Hokkaido with the participation of Pacific Island Forum (PIF) countries. The issue of sustainable development is expected to be one of the main topics of discussion. At PALM 4, Japan pledged to provide 45 million yen worth of aid, mostly in grants in three years and we are happy to state that the target has almost been met, and is to be followed up at PALM 5.

Finally, the Government of Japan is pleased to see most of the SIDS join the "Cool Earth Partnership" with Japan, on the basis of respective bilateral policy consultations on climate change issues. As of January this year, 72 countries including 15 SIDS have joined or taken steps towards joining the Cool Earth Partnership. Japan is looking forward to cooperating with these partner countries to address climate change, and in particular the immediate need for adaptation.

Thank you Mme. Chairperson