

Intervention for the review of CSD13 Decisions on Water and Sanitation (13 May, 2008) by Mr.Thanade Dawasuwan, a Thai representative

Mr.Chair,

I appreciated the useful presentations and broad discussions on water and sanitation from our panelists and colleagues yesterday and today.

Thai people believe that ‘water is life’ and is important for social and economic development. Thailand has adopted IWRM approach in national level since 2002. However, at present, we still cannot meet all our goals and targets. During wet season, people in lowland sometimes suffer from flood; while, in dry season, in some arid areas especially in north-eastern region, people do not have enough water for their crops which very much affects their agricultural productivity.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to take this opportunity to share some experiences as follows:

Firstly, for the basis of equitable access to water supply. Recently, we have problem arising from insufficiency of water in the eastern seaboard which is an industrial zone. Quite often there were conflicts of water uses among those from industrial sector and agricultural sector. I would like to listen to CSD what criteria we should set forth and how to justify the benefits differently made from both sectors.

Secondly, most of capacity building is aimed at experts and specialists in central government. It was found that one third of our water supply systems cannot be well functioned due to local staff’s lack of knowledge in operation and maintenance. Therefore, Thailand views that international fund should be allocated to capacity building with an emphasis on operation and maintenance techniques.

Thirdly, on pricing and private participation. Infrastructure for water supply requires big investment but our government has very limited budget. If water for agriculture is priced, people will oppose to it. Moreover, although private sector involvement could be a solution to ease government’s budget problem, it is found that people cannot accept that.

Finally, I would like to comment on creation of the strategic partnership in Mekong region which includes our neighbor countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar Vietnam and China. This cooperation shall reinforce our joint efforts to address challenges of water security, sustainable access to safe affordable water supplies, hygienic education and sanitation in the region. Establishment of water information system is a key element and should be mutually carried out to ease the IWRM in the region.

Mr.Chair,

With the support of the international community, Thailand is pleased to cooperate with our colleagues in all aspects to achieve the MDGs together.

Thank you.