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**16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development  
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**High-level Segment  
May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Statement by Mr. Matthias Machnig  
Secretary of State  
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and  
Nuclear Safety**

**Federal Republic of Germany**

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H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General;  
Mr. Chairman;  
Honourable Ministers;  
Distinguished Delegates and Representatives;

- Sound agriculture and rural development policies are crucial for achieving Sustainable Development targets, including environmental commitments. Germany advocates the **adoption of basic environmental and social standards at the international level** for all agricultural products as food, feed and fuels.
  - **New and emerging challenges** linked to both the environment and agriculture are currently high on the international media agenda. The debates on climate change, biofuel production and food security call for better linkages between agricultural and environmental policies.
  - In times of **high rising food prices and new debates on the fight against hunger**, we recall not only the need of investments in agriculture and rural development to increase food supply, but the equivalent importance of the rights-based approach to this struggle. In this respect we call your attention to the Right to Food as a basic human right.
  - In Germany, we strive for an **Ecological Industrial Policy** that effectively combines environment, innovation, and economic development. Agricultural production, rural development and environmental concerns are all to be considered in a balanced way.
  - The EU has outlined how the recent changes of its **Common Agricultural Policy** have been successful in integrating environmental standards as well as supporting farmers for good environmental practices. Germany fully supports these decisions as they indicate a shift towards an integrated approach for rural areas.
  - The current **revision of the Common Agricultural Policy**, known as Health Check, will further this process and strengthen the linkages between environmental, social and ecological aspects of farming.
  - In addition, **sustainability criteria for biofuel production** are urgently needed. The German government sees biofuels as an important building block towards reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. However, the production of biomass must be linked to clear standards based on greenhouse gas reduction potential plus social and environmental targets. The EU emphasizes the need for early assessment and monitoring on social and economic consequences, esp. food security, and biodiversity. We support the efforts on EU level to find a common set of standards for biofuel production.
  - The German **Strategy for Sustainable Development**, and its sibling, the **National Strategy for Biodiversity**, were developed in an open and participatory process. From our experience it is of great value to establish an intense dialogue with all sectors, and in particular between environmental and agricultural interest groups.
  - Sustainable development is, from our perspective, closely linked to the goals of the **Convention on Biological Diversity** and its target of safeguarding the world's natural resources and environmental services. As you will be fully aware, the next **Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity** will take place in Bonn, Germany, as of next week. The outcomes will be an important step for the international community to face current problems that are hindering sustainable development worldwide.
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- Germany welcomes the **review on water and sanitation** as an important step to strengthen the overall effectiveness of the CSD. Systematically reviewing past decisions is a way to make the **CSD a more effective and accountable body**. The water and sanitation review was a true milestone in this respect. Germany would welcome if the results of this session would be further developed in a **specific policy session on water and sanitation** next year.

Thank you.