

**Remarks by Minister Aleksi Aleksishvili, Chairman of the 14<sup>th</sup> session  
of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-14)  
at the ECOSOC Panel of Chairpersons of the Functional Commissions  
(7 July 2005, New York)**

Thank you  
Mr. President

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in the panel discussion with the chairpersons of the functional commissions. This is my first official activity as Chairman of CSD-14. I am delighted to have an opportunity to share my views on the contribution of CSD to coordinated and integrated implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Johannesburg commitments in sustainable development and to listen to colleagues chairing other functional commissions. I hope our discussion today will contribute to the ongoing debate on the reform of ECOSOC, in the broad context of the UN reform.

Mr. President,

As many delegates will recall, CSD has recently completed the first two-year cycle of its multi-year programme of work, focusing on the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements. The two-year cycle consisted of a review session in the first year and a policy session in the second. In the review session, the Commission identified a range of obstacles to implementation and continuing challenges; in the policy session, the Commission took major policy decisions on options and practical measures to expedite implementation in the three areas.

The Commission's decisions, adopted at CSD-13, set forth approximately 30 policy recommendations and some 100 practical measures and actions. The decisions have been submitted to the sixtieth session of the GA and the ECOSOC as CSD's contribution to the upcoming 2005 World Summit.

It is worth noting here that the decisions also contain an innovative voluntary monitoring mechanism by which the Commission requested the Secretariat to update, on a regular basis, policy options and practical measures and to develop web-based tools to disseminate information on implementation and best practices.

Mr. President,

The innovative features of CSD introduced during the first cycle greatly enhanced the interactivity and dynamism of the Commission's work. Over 200 Ministers attended CSD-12 and CSD-13; some 100 experts, many from UN agencies, contributed to the Commission's deliberations as panelists; Regional Discussion and Regional Perspective Sessions were also organized during the first cycle.

Equally important, close to 1000 participants attended more than 30 courses in the Learning Centre as part of the capacity-building activities. The Partnerships Fair provided an important venue for networking among partners and for exchanging lessons learned and best practice. The number of partnerships registered with the CSD Secretariat has increased from 235 in 2003 to over 300 today.

The implementation-focused reform of CSD, initiated at CSD-11, and the subsequent introduction of new methods of work, undoubtedly contributed to a more effective CSD. CSD-14 marks the start of the Commission's 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation cycle. As Chairman, I will aim to deliver more concrete results by building upon the successes of my predecessors - Minister Brende of Norway and Ambassador Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda. Among other actions, I intend to seek closer collaboration with other functional commissions to avoid duplication and to further enhance the potential synergies among the functional commissions.

Mr. President

The Commission will address Energy for Sustainable Development, Industrial Development, Atmosphere/Air Pollution, and Climate Change during its 2nd implementation cycle. The importance of these issues for meeting MDGs and Johannesburg commitments can hardly be overemphasized.

Today, some 2.4 billion people live without access to modern energy services, relying on traditional biomass; 1.4 billion people in developing countries do not have access to electricity in their homes, with serious implications for their health, education and livelihoods. In sub-Saharan

Africa alone, some 130 million people live in areas where fuel wood provides the main energy source. The daily need for gathering firewood represents a lost opportunity for schooling and productive employment, especially for girls and women.

Access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy are among the key issues that will be addressed by CSD during its second cycle.

Intricately linked with energy is climate change and air pollution. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions calls for renewed efforts to improve energy efficiency, promote technological innovations, including advanced fossil fuel technologies, expand markets for renewable energy sources and foster cleaner fuels for transportation. Such efforts will help address air pollution and other atmospheric problems, including trans-boundary air pollution.

As a large energy-consuming sector and a significant source of GHG emissions and air pollution, industry is likewise linked with energy, climate change, air pollution and other atmospheric problems. The environmental dimensions of industry will therefore be addressed in conjunction with energy, atmosphere and climate change at CSD-14. However, I firmly believe that the development aspects of industry must be accorded equal attention. There is an urgent need for fostering economic growth in developing countries through broad-based industrial development that creates jobs, including through small- and medium-sized enterprises. CSD-14 will add real value by identifying gaps in industrial development and by disseminating case studies and best practice.

Mr. President,

The issues I just outlined will be dealt with in an integrated manner at CSD-14, with equal attention to the relevant cross-cutting issues and means of implementation, as called for by CSD-11. To this end, I will work closely with my colleagues on the Bureau and with the Secretariat to ensure that CSD-14 conduct its review within the framework of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and relevant CSD decisions, with the broadest participation of member Governments and Major Groups.

As a high-level intergovernmental body on sustainable development, CSD is uniquely placed to contribute to the work of ECOSOC. Its emphasis on an

integrated consideration of the three pillars of sustainable development opens up avenues for close collaboration with other functional commissions, as well as organizations of the UN system. In addressing the complex and inter-related issues of Energy for Sustainable Development, Industrial Development, Atmosphere/Air Pollution and Climate Change, I stand ready to explore and utilize these avenues to the fullest extent.

Given the new challenges we are tackling, UN reform is necessary in order to meet the growing and changing needs of its member States. As CSD-14 Chair, I will do my utmost to ensure that the Commission continue on its reform path and deliver real results in our common pursuit of a sustainable world.

Thank you.