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Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the 17th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

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Statement by the Australian Delegation

(Check against delivery)

Madam Chair.

Australia would like associate itself with the comments of Canada and the United States.

Australia would like to acknowledge the work of the bureau and your leadership over the course of this preparatory meeting. We thank you for pulling together this summary of the issues discussed at the IPM meeting.

In the limited time available to us to study this summary document, we note there are a number of omissions in the document.

To illustrate this, we would like to offer three brief examples:

1. Firstly, on the references to food security we would agree with others that the document does not capture the urgency of the situation and that the underlying issues around agricultural production and on world commodity supply and demand remain.
2. Secondly, on the importance of open markets to liberalizing trade in agriculture, it is important that subsidies and barriers are reduced around the world, not just in developed countries. Farmers need to receive clear market signals and take informed production decisions accordingly.
3. Thirdly, the document does not give due recognition to the importance of good governance, and of basing national and local actions on nationally identified priorities developed with regard to national settings, and the importance of associated plans.

Accordingly, and in view of the limited time available to study this draft summary, we wish to reserve the opportunity to further review the document and provide more detailed comments.

In conclusion, we look forward to meeting again in May to commence negotiations and to continue our discussions on the way forward in this important issue.

Thank you.