

Item 20 – Sustainable Development

Second Committee

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Statement by

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Madam Chair,

Malta associates itself with the statement delivered by Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

My Delegation would like to register its appreciation to Secretary-General for providing this Committee with a series of important and valid reports relating to this agenda item 20 – Sustainable Development.

Indeed, the item which we are discussing today brings out the important connection which exists between the environment and development. The sustainable development of our planet is therefore of crucial importance in improving the lives of our populations if not also of their survival. The conservation and protection of our resources, human or natural, requires that the international community acts together and decides together. Climate, biodiversity, forests, oceans and seas, marine life, the atmosphere, are all areas which have a direct impact on the challenges which the environment presents for humankind.

Malta since it became a Member of the United Nations has taken initiatives to ensure that the heritage with which our planet is blessed is used for the benefit of humankind and in the sustainable development of our planet. The Law of the Sea and the preservation of climate for present and future generations are just two initiatives which Malta has successfully put on the international agenda of the United Nations.

It is with these perspectives in mind that Malta continues both as a Member of the European Union as well as a Member of the United Nations, to support initiatives at the national, regional and international levels which would create the right political decisions that will shape international action in the protection of our environment while at the same time maintain and strengthen sustainable development. In this regard, Malta continues to give prominence to climate change, one of the major challenges and priorities of this century. As a State Party to both the Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, Malta is working with its partners in the EU as well as within this Organization to ensure that the vulnerable countries, particularly the small island States, are enabled with the support of the international community to address the negative impacts of climate change.

It will be recalled that one of the key achievements of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference nearly a year ago was a pledge to provide US \$ 30 billion by 2012 – known as ‘fast start funding’ – to help developing countries reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change impacts, with the commitment to increase to US\$ 100 billion per year by 2020. Of this amount, the EU and its Member States have pledged the amount of Euros 7.2 billion for the fast

start period amounting to 30% of the whole amount. Malta has pledged an amount of Euros 800,000 for the period 2010-2012.

In this regard, as a Member of the European Union, Malta has been undertaking detailed national commitments aimed towards both mitigation and adaptation. Last week, Malta became an Annex I Party to the Convention and Malta will retain the perspective of a Small Island State within the Mediterranean region and its empathy for the situation of other small island States. In this regard, as an active Member in the early years of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and now as a EU Member State, Malta notes with satisfaction the Political Declaration adopted in September 2010 by the High-level Meeting on progress made in addressing the vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development.

On a national level Malta has adopted a 'National Strategy for Policy and Abatement Measures Relating to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gases' containing mitigation measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging recourse to renewable energy sources, electricity efficiency and conservation. Malta is currently formulating an Adaptation Strategy focusing on areas which are most likely to be affected by climate change, including water and flooding, health and socio-economic policy, tourism, agriculture and biodiversity. In this respect, Malta notes the adoption of the Aichi Targets and the Nagoya Protocol last week which gives new hope in the protection of the world's biodiversity.

At the regional level Malta has been working assiduously with the other littoral States of the Mediterranean which are facing the prospect of severe impacts as a result of the adverse effects of climate change. Only a few days ago, the Prime Minister of Malta joined other Mediterranean Heads of Government in the launch in Athens of the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative and in the adoption of a Declaration that will aim at contributing to the emergence of low carbon, resource efficient and climate resilient economies in the Mediterranean. Malta has welcomed this initiative by the Prime Minister of Greece as part of a broader, long-term process of dialogue and collaboration for the entire Euro-Mediterranean region which Malta hopes will lead to concrete and coordinated action in advancing the interests and concerns of the Mediterranean region in tackling climate change. It is also Malta's hope that this Initiative will contribute to the follow-up process of the negotiations of COP-16 to take place in Cancun later this month.

Another dimension where Malta is active on issues relating to Climate Change is its support to a project undertaken by DiploFoundation through the project *Climate Change Diplomacy* with the main objective of strengthening policy capacity of small and developing states. The project executed by DiploFoundation and supported by Malta and Switzerland, involved no less than 160 participants from 31 small states and 72 developing states in high-quality online training. Besides participating in an intensive 10-week online training, participants conducted research on climate change policy issues of relevance for their respective countries. The Project focused on awareness building on climate change among diplomats and policymakers through the development of numerous illustrations and graphical tools including the creation of the *climate change 'building'* that summarises all main issues of climate change policy in one building.

Thank you.