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IPM/CSD-17 on [Agriculture, Rural development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa](#).
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Opening Statement General comments on the Chairperson's draft negotiating document

Liliane Ortega, Phd.

Madam Chair,

First of all, my delegation would like to congratulate you for the excellent work you are doing for this session of the CSD.

- The right to food an underlined principle for all the issues considered during this session of the CSD. Switzerland supports the national implementation of the Right to Food as the best base for effective food security policies and strategies.
- Moreover, I have several points on issues which should have more clarity in the final text.
- More specifically about agriculture, Switzerland reiterates that the International Assessment of Agricultural Sciences and Technology for Development (IAASTD) is an important contribution for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. More should be said in our final resolution about this initiative and its recommendations.
- A vital objective to ensure food security is the promotion of agricultural production methods that are productive but also protect or even restore resources. Agriculture offers potential solutions through its ecosystem services. Public-private partnerships can encourage remuneration of the environmental services provided by farmers.
- More emphasis must be put on recognising criteria of sustainability and sustainable practices (environmental, social) through the rules of international trade. It is therefore crucial to give more importance to the recognition of sustainability standards and harmonized certification schemes in international trade rules.
- Regarding land, Switzerland is of the opinion that it is important to recognise the economic value of land and make better use of economic instruments. This will accelerate the transfer towards more sustainable forms of land use and will help to prevent further soil degradation. In this context, payments for ecosystem services are effective instruments which should be promoted and applied more widely. This has to be reflected in the text.
- We need to be aware that there are limits to increasing the productivity of your soils. We will therefore not be able to fully compensate reduced land availability with increased productivity

- About the combat against desertification, Switzerland hopes that this session of the CSD may release a clear message towards the importance of the Strategic Plan 2008-2018 for the implementation of UNCCD. The final text should be more precise on this aspect and also recognize the potential of UNCCD implementation to alleviate poverty, restore biodiversity and adapt to climate change.
- We expect this CSD session will set recommendations to facilitate the participation of African farmers' organizations in the international debates and decision making processes.
- Finally, no achievement will be possible in any of the considered area without seriously taking into account gender equality as a determinant for progress. Switzerland indeed considers gender equality as an extremely powerful factor of progress in the diverse aspects of food security.