



AZERBAIJAN

STATEMENT

by

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Mr. Chairman,

The mentality of mankind has not drastically changed. It is the living standards that have changed bringing in a simultaneous increase in needs.

At the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest, it was declared that the existing lifestyle of population should be considered in developing healthy and sustainable housing policies. Of course, these issues should be given consideration, but nowadays, on the brink of the drastic global changes we notice that this lifestyle ceased to meet contemporary needs and cannot universally respond to the challenge of the time - because the challenge arrived too abruptly. Therefore, it is necessary to change the lifestyle, established traditions and customs, and try not to adjust initiatives to existing conditions.

Simply saying, if in the comparatively recent past a man had to draw water from a well and the amount of efforts and time spent on that determined reasonable limits of water consumed: that was he consumed strictly as much as he needed, not less or more - nowadays with the availability of water supply network at homes, easy and instant access to water has become the cause for its uneconomic use while increasing pressure on a surrounding environment.

However, people have a right to safe drinking water, sanitation and security tenure and, accordingly, it is the responsibility of Governments to make it accessible and affordable. Correspondingly, our Government promotes the policies of enabling environment, including through measures stimulating partnerships, incentives for investments and greater involvement of private sector.

We consider promotion of safe water supply and rational utilization of water resources as essential components of national development strategy to be followed by the policy measures on stimulating introduction of cleaner technologies, water purification and water distribution mechanisms. Furthermore, in our view, it is important to develop an environmental segment of economy, which is both economically and socially valuable.

In the context of trans-boundary watercourses, we respect the ethics of coexistence in the shared environment; having said that we underline the importance of international cooperation, while taking into account the "polluter pays" principle.

Mr. Chairman,

In the area of human settlements, we emphasize the importance of integrated approach in the planning process, while placing adequate emphasis on sound regulatory framework and enhanced access of the poor to financial services, land use efficiency and waste management as well as infrastructure development. Our delegation also supports the calls for the strengthening of UN-HABITAT.

Furthermore, we underline the importance of regulations in the field of forced eviction due to the seriousness of its consequences, including those related to influx

of refugees and internally displaced persons. Therefore, we fully concur with the view of G-77 and China that support to UNHCR and refugee host countries has to be strengthened.

Many speakers mentioned the necessity of international financial assistance in tackling environmental problems. Financial support from donors, particularly technical aid is always appreciated. But we should be honest in admitting that without a strong will inside environmental challenges could hardly be overcome. Countries should assume more commitment to addressing the alarming issues at a national level.

Another aspect of human settlements which requires urgent attention is an issue of illegal settlements emerging from foreign occupation. Illegal settlements continue to be a serious cause not only of political problems but also of environmental damage, including land degradation, water pollution, - biodiversity loss, natural resource depletion. Sustainable development cannot be pursued if international community keeps eyes "widely" closed to such problems.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me stress that we look forward to a successful outcome of this implementation cycle, which policy decisions will reinvigorate political support and contribute to the achievement of MDGs.

Thank you.