

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP  
BY DR. LAWRENCE CHIDI ANUKAM, DIRECTOR PLANNING AND POLICY  
ANALYSIS, NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND  
REGULATIONS ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (NESREA) OF NIGERIA ,  
AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE 19<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-19)  
New York, 2 May 2011**

**Mr. Chairman,**

1. It gives me great pleasure to make this statement on behalf of the African Group. The Group aligns itself with statement delivered by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. This session is being held as we witness an increasing desire by the Member States and other Stakeholders to take strong actions towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This session also takes place as we prepare for another World Summit to be held in Brazil in 2012, twenty years after the Earth Summit in Rio.

3. Although the issues presented to this session are largely technical, they are nonetheless strongly related, as the issues of mining, transport, chemical and waste management are all interrelated, and are directly linked to patterns of sustainable consumption and production. Therefore it is important that we deal with them in an integrated and concerted manner taking into account the economic, social, and environmental dimensions in accordance with the cardinal Principles of Rio, especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The topics which will be reviewed in this session relate to our daily lives and affect our economic, social and environmental circumstances. The African Group believes that any further progress in the areas under discussion would benefit from a broad range of policies and measures, including a mix of regulatory approaches and the engagement of all stakeholders. In this regard, please be assured that we will be actively engaged in the negotiations on each of the five thematic issues, and ready to clarify our position on their different aspects.

**Mr. Chairman,**

4. This session provides an opportunity to articulate and propose solutions to the difficulties encountered in the fulfillment of the commitments made under Agenda 21 and in response to the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We emphasize in this regard, the importance of identifying the specific means of implementation that will enable developing countries derive the benefit of these commitments; and indeed, we dare say that this has become very urgent in the light of the need to narrow the increasing gap between developed and developing countries, in the implementation of these outcomes.

**Mr. Chairman,**

5. African Countries remain committed to fulfilling their obligations under all multilateral agreements. However, the results so far achieved have been limited because of the challenges posed by a number of global crises, chief among which are the consequences of the world financial and economic crisis, which have negatively impacted on the development and environmental efforts in the continent. In addition to this, the continent is still grappling with problems posed by the basic need for the transfer of technology and the inability to fulfill its needs for building and developing its institutional capacities and enhancing its human resource endowment, which among other things, has suffered repeated incidences of forced displacement and induced emigration of highly qualified people to other regions. This phenomenon has to be resolved through concerted efforts.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. We therefore stress the importance of the International Community fulfilling its commitments to support Africa in its efforts, as was promised in the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Equally important is the urgent need to match promises with actual delivery on those assurances contained in the Political Declaration on Africa's development needs of 22 September 2008, and the conclusions reached with the Steering Group on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

7 We stress that the provision of sufficient and predictable funding, the transfer of environmentally sound technology, and the support and the encouragement of building the human and institutional capacities of African countries, will contribute significantly to the achievement of the desired goals in the areas being considered in this session. We also underline in this respect the importance of increasing the amount and quality of the official development assistance, as well as the reduction or outright cancellation of the external debt in favour of the most needy African countries.

8 African Union is the flagship organization for harmonizing and coordinating regional programmes in Africa. Despite the progress made in the development of policies at the regional and sub-regional levels, the implementation gap in Africa is still wide. We therefore call for the strengthening of support and encouragement of plans and programmes of the African Union and regional economic communities in order to ensure the effective translation of policies and programmes into concrete measures, especially in the field of sustainable development.

**Mr. Chairman,**

9. The African Group reiterates that consideration of the thematic issues in the agenda of CSD must be undertaken in the context of the three pillars of sustainable development, which include economic development, social development and environment protection. The three pillars are mutually reinforcing and inter-related and they must be considered in an integrated manner.

10. We also emphasize the importance of consistency in the work of the Commission vis-à-vis the increasing number of multilateral agreements, as well as the need to provide more encouragement to the cooperation between the concerned international institutions in the implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements.

11. In conclusion, the African Group attaches great importance to the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which should continue to provide guidance and coordination on issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and more importantly the means of their implementation.

12. Thank you.