



**Remarks by**

**Mr. Melchiade Bukuru**  
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**on the occasion of the thematic discussion**  
**on Desertification**

**CSD-16 Review Session**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

I would like on behalf of the UNCCD secretariat to express our thanks to the Panellists we heard this afternoon. We believe that their present constitutes a contribution to better know the issue of desertification including its scientific ground.

As to the note made by Professor Safriel regarding the scientific definition of terms, I hope that Scientist that his is, duly noticed that States Parties which intervened in this debate deliberated and consistently referred to desertification and land degradation altogether, meaning that politically, Parties have already resolved the issue of conventional definition of land degradation and desertification.

Also, the strategy adopted by all 192 Parties solved this issue in our view.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Reliable and strong scientific basis of the Convention is still weak but the Ten-Year Strategy has given it a strong boost.

This issue is now high on the agenda of the Secretariat and constitutes the core of the Roadmap to implement the Strategy.

As expressed during the last COP in Madrid, Parties are convinced that should the scientific basis remain weak, the implementation foundation will remain shaky and ineffective. Last COP has therefore strengthened the basis of the Committee on Science and Technology and its role in mastering the issue.

In this regard, it has to be noted that Parties decided to hold a CST session back to back with the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention next November in Istanbul. This is an illustration of the Parties' will to anchor the scientific and technological body to that of the implementation of the Convention.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Land is increasingly seen as offering a response to food crisis. The UNCCD is the only international legal framework on land degradation. There is a need for more food to feed more and more people, hence more land, including by reclaiming dry and degraded land.

In this respect, the UNCCD, being a land Convention offers a long-term solution to food production.

**Mr. Chairman,**

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According to the report of the Secretary-General on Desertification, UNCCD is a platform for adaptation, mitigation and resilience for adaptation to climate change.

As we embark on the post-Kyoto discussion, time has come to recognize that current Clean Development Mechanism in the framework of Kyoto Protocol has paid more attention to the source of emissions and less attention on the Land in its capacity for carbon sequestration and storage.

It is therefore important that the negotiators of the succession to Kyoto Protocol take this aspect on board. Investing in combating Land Degradation is therefore another way to help this planet and its people, particularly the most vulnerable, cope with climate change effects.

Thank you.