

NGO Major Group intervention
Africa Regional Session
Conference Room 3
May 5, 2008

NGOs believe that the specific focus of Africa is a great opportunity for a clear understanding of the continent through a thorough review of factors that plague the continent. The entire matrix of themes in this session has direct implications for Africa and they are all inter-related.

In mapping the path for a just development of Africa, CSD 16 is a good platform to examine the dislocating impacts starting from structural adjustment programmes as well as unjust trade rules. Reckless exploitation of resources such as minerals, forest products, etc., has gravely degraded the lands of the continent. The themes of CSD 16 are issues very relevant but require careful handling.

We believe African indigenous knowledge and technologies must be appropriated for purpose of enhancement of the optimal production and satisfaction of the peoples' needs.

We submit that Africa should not be seen as a disaster zone but as a land of opportunity. Regarding several of the panel presentations we see some of these opportunities, especially in improved drylands management, the appropriate scaling of livestock integration for community and household level livelihood improvements, and the development of more equitable value chains in meat and milk production.