

Intervention by the Government of Turkey

- Desertification, drought and climate change will be the several forces shaping prospects for human development during the 21st century. Nobody will be immune to their consequences. However, some countries and people are more vulnerable than the others.
- We share the view that countries have different needs and priorities and face different challenges. Accordingly there can be no prescriptive “one size fits all” solution. There will have to be a range of options which are implementable for each country depending on the capacities, concerns and priorities of them.
- Needless to say, desertification contributes to food insecurity, famine and poverty and that it can give rise to social and political tensions. In this context, UN Convention to Combat Desertification is one of the most important tools for poverty eradication and food security in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid areas of our planet. We concur with the UNCCD view that programmes to combat desertification should be integrated into development policies as a whole, addressing the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification and drought. Turkey, as the Party to the UNCCD, has made tremendous strides to control soil erosion and combat desertification since 1980s. We believe that the followings play crucial role for combating desertification:
 - Establishing national strategies to mitigate impacts of desertification and drought”,
 - Providing effective participation among the public institutions, local administrations and civil society organizations
 - Increasing public awareness
 - Identifying scientific, economic, social and technical criteria in new or additional policies,
 - Analyzing current environmental protection policies and identifying gaps and deficiencies
- About 86% of land of our country is under risk of desertification and drought. Therefore, Turkey has launched an aforestation project which will cover 2.3 million ha land in 5 years. We believe that sustainable protection of existing forests is extremely important and appropriate forest plantation and other erosion related measures are strictly needed.

- We believe that the war against poverty and environmental degradation will be won if all governments - in both developing and developed countries - seriously work together. We also stress the importance of synergies, including cooperation with the United Nations system and the international financial institutions. In this context, Turkey has launched variety of financial and technical support projects to the 37 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Europe since the late 1980s. In this respect, 559 projects have been completed.
- The seriousness of desertification depends on factors which vary from one region, country or year to another. These factors include: the severity of the climatic conditions in the period considered (particularly in terms of the annual rainfall) population pressure and the standard of living of the people involved; the level of the country's development, and the quality of the preventive measures.
- Desertification cause poverty, poverty cause further desertification. It is a vicious cycle. Dealing effectively with desertification will lead to a reduction in global poverty.