

**Intervention by External Affairs Minister at the Round Table during the
Climate Change meeting at the UN on 22 Sep 2009**

[Round Table 2 – Conference Room No. 6. Co-Chaired by President Tarja Halonen of Finland and Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah of Kuwait]



Hon'ble Co-Chairs.

Permit me to begin by appreciating the admirable manner in which you are guiding our discussions. I am also appreciative of the Secretary General for convening this meeting.

It is imperative that our meeting galvanizes political momentum for the real negotiations at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Hon'ble Co-Chairs,

India faces one of the most enormous development challenges in the world. Nearly 200 millions live on less than 1\$ a day and nearly 500 million do not have access to modern sources of energy.

Our overriding priority, therefore, has to be eradication of poverty for which we must address our energy poverty and use all sources of energy, including fossil fuels.

Climate change has now posed for us a huge adaptation challenge too as we are severely affected.

We have a major interest in ensuring a substantive and constructive outcome in Copenhagen and we will be part of the solution, even though India has not caused the problem in any way.

The outcome must be rooted in equity and respect the provisions and principles of the Convention, especially common but differentiated responsibilities and also historical responsibility.

It must also ensure that developing countries can pursue accelerated development, also so that they have the resources to cope and adapt to climate change.

Hon'ble Co-Chairs,

The background paper for today's event has posed important questions with the one on lifestyles, perhaps, being the most pertinent.

Here we cannot get away from the fundamental fact that unsustainable lifestyles and patterns of production and consumption in the developed world have caused climate change. This cannot continue.

And, the way forward must ensure that developing countries can pursue growth and poverty eradication.

Scientific evidence suggests limiting global emissions by the middle of this century to a level that would keep the temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius.

It is imperative that this aspirational global goal includes an equitable burden sharing and that all citizens of the world have an equal right to the global resource of the atmosphere.

Moreover, developed countries must commit and deliver on significant reduction in their emissions of at least 40% by 2020 from the agreed 1990 baseline.

Hon'ble Co-Chairs,

India's per-capita emissions are only around 1 tonne of CO2 equivalent per annum, which is a quarter of the global average and half that of the developing countries as a whole. Moreover, our contribution to the stock of carbon dioxide is negligible.

We have also repeatedly reaffirmed that our per-capita emissions would never exceed the average per capita emissions of the developed countries, even as we pursue our development objectives.

We are taking many domestic adaptation and mitigation actions on a voluntary and systematic basis.

These include national missions and other actions in the area of solar energy, extensive deployment of renewables, use of clean coal technologies, boosting energy efficiency, adoption of green building codes, large scale reforestation efforts and promotion of green agriculture, among others.

Many of the mitigation efforts in different sectors like energy, transport, industry, agriculture and forestry will have specific quantitative and time-bound domestic goals, with even mid-term deadlines, that would enable our national democratic institutions to monitor and check their implementation.

The creation of mechanisms along with provision of financial resources and access to technology which will enable us to upscale our national efforts is an important expectation that we have from Copenhagen.

Naturally, efforts that are supported by external sources will be subject to international monitoring, but it is important that the ambition levels of domestic actions are not crimped by an international review obligation.

And while private funding is important, government commitment for funding, both for mitigation and adaptation, has to be a key element, to ensure predictability and to catalyze other flows.

For new green technologies to be deployed effectively in the developing world, rewards for innovators would need to be balanced with the needs of humankind. This, along with collaborative R&D activities, I believe is the critical piece of the climate puzzle.

In this connection, I would like to mention here that India is organizing a major conference on technology cooperation for climate change in collaboration with the United Nations in Delhi in October this year. This Conference will feed into Copenhagen substantively.

Hon'ble Co-Chairs,

Climate negotiations should be focusing on the developed countries from where the problem has emanated and who are reluctant even to meet their commitments on emission reduction, let alone provide technological and financial support to developing countries on the vast scale that is required.

Instead, the onus for action is sought to be shifted to developing countries, which have contributed little to the accumulation of greenhouse gasses and face the huge burden of adaptation.

Protectionist trade and border tax response measures, which basically seek to protect their competitiveness, are being talked about in developed countries under the garb of climate change.

And, regarding financial resources for developing countries, even in so far as the minimalist amounts that appear forthcoming, all efforts are underway to ensure that their governance remains outside the UNFCCC and squarely in control of developed countries.

There is a tide of change in world economic relations. Climate negotiations should not seek to stem this tide.

Thank you.

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