



STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE
THEMATIC DEBATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE 61ST UN GENERAL
ASSEMBLY ON AUGUST 01, 2007

Madam President,

I thank you for arranging this thematic debate on Climate Change in the UN General Assembly.

I shall try to deal seriatim with the issues listed at the beginning of the paper circulated with your letter of July 9, 2007: scientific assessment; adaptation and mitigation; the role of the private sector; possible next steps in the multilateral process.

A realistic course of action on Climate Change has to be based on science and not on treating it as a post-modernist religion. And science has uncertainties which have to be recognized. A precautionary approach can be invoked in the absence of scientific certainty but environmental concerns should not become additional conditionalities on growth in developing countries. The Rio Declaration had also inter alia recognized that environmental standards set in one society could have an adverse socio-economic impact if applied in countries at different levels of development.

A scientific approach also means recognizing the facts and their relative proportions. Allow me to address the issue of "large emitters" - a classification that does not exist in the Framework Convention or any other UN agreement, yet appears surprisingly in several recent UN documents. The developed countries have followed a kind of Ecological Kuznets Curve except that they have externalized the problem (the effects of pollution) on to the developing world and there are some trends that they also wish to externalize the cost of the solution. The present state of

greenhouse gasses concentration in the atmosphere is the result of over a century and a half of unabated emissions by the developed countries, which even today are at extraordinarily high levels. They have created an 'irreparable rift' in the 'metabolic interaction' between man and nature by appropriating the global commons and the carbon absorption capacity of the biosphere to their benefit. According to research studies and modeling results, Annex I countries (developed countries) would continue to contribute more to greenhouse gas emissions in future also. These countries have clearly accepted their responsibility and need to show leadership in emissions abatement. Strict equity would mean that till the excessive amounts of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere have been soaked up the developed countries ought to be held down to less than a per capita equal share. However, an equal per capita basis can be accepted as a fair distribution. Major polluters most certainly do not include developing countries such as India with small carbon footprints in per-capita terms.

India, with 17% of the world population has only 4% of global GHG emissions. Moreover, in per-capita terms India's GHG emissions of 1 ton/annum are just about a quarter of the global average of 4 tons per annum, 4% of the US, 12% of EU, 15% of Japan. There has also been effective de-linking of energy sector growth from economic growth; currently, the primary energy consumption growth rate is 3.7% per year, against GDP growth exceeding 9%. It is worth noting that this is in contrast to the developed countries and even a few major developing countries where higher growth has followed the traditional pattern of increased use of energy. India has made major efforts to reduce energy intensity of GDP and in PPP terms it is now 0.16 kgoe per \$ GDP in PPP terms down from 0.30 kgoe per \$ GDP in PPP terms in 1972; this is the same as that of Germany. Moreover, in all the major energy intensive sectors – steel, aluminium, fertilizer, paper, cement, levels of energy efficiency are at global levels. We also have strategies for energy conservation. We have developed an Energy Efficiency Code for Buildings and using a combination of market mechanisms and the CDM, we are launching one of the biggest efforts world-wide for use of CFLs to replace conventional light bulbs at affordable prices for the consumer. This also includes taking care of their disposal to allay fears of any mercury contamination. The share of renewables in total primary energy is still at 34%. Our Prime Minister has made it clear that India's per capita GHG emissions will at no stage exceed those of developed countries even while pursuing policies of development and economic growth.

What, in our view, are realistic next steps on Climate Change in the multilateral process?

- The process of burden sharing must be fair. It should take into account where the primary responsibility for the present levels of GHG concentration rests and not perpetuate poverty among developing countries.
- No strategy to deal with Climate Change should foreclose for developing countries the possibilities of accelerated social and economic development.
- The principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capability is very important.
- The time is not ripe for developing countries to take quantitative targets as these would be counter-productive for their development processes.
- The determination of any particular stabilization goal and the time-frame in which it should be achieved needs to be made at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- Adaptation is the key for developing countries. It needs to be adequately resourced without diversion from funds meant for development, which, in any case, is the best form of adaptation. Encompassing many small islands within its territory, India is entirely sensitive to the very serious concerns of the small island developing countries that arise out of climate change and the imperative to fully assist them in tackling it.
- The resources required for Adaptation are of a similar order of magnitude as for GHG Mitigation. For this we should realize resources from the entire carbon market.
- It is important that critical and promising clean technologies are made affordable for developing countries, where there is a large reliance on fossil fuels.
- The IPR regime should balance rewards for the innovators with the common good of humankind.
- Many needed technologies based on resource endowments of developing countries (e.g. biomass) do not yet exist, or are too expensive. Collaborative R&D between developing and developed country R&D institutions can address this gap.

- The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) needs to be expanded to include approvals for programmatic approaches. Enhanced level of GHG abatement commitments by the developed countries would significantly stimulate CDM projects.
- We believe that the Carbon market has a significant role to play in tackling climate change and that we should spur private sector involvement in climate related technologies and investment.
- With the process to determine the GHG reduction commitments of developed countries after the initial Kyoto period (2012) having already started, we hope that developed countries would come forward and take on substantially larger emission reduction targets than the 5.2% in Kyoto I and complete these negotiations by 2008/09.

Madam President,

A scientific approach also requires us to address not just the symptoms but the cause. It is the production and consumption patterns of developed countries that created the metabolic rift through dumping ecological wastes into the atmosphere. Mahatma Gandhi had recognized the problem in the early years of the 20th century. Sustainable development requires sustainable patterns of production and consumption and this is where we need to concentrate our efforts. Invigorated negotiations under the provisions of the UNFCCC encompassing GHG mitigation at a significant level in developed countries along with their real cooperation with developing countries on adaptation and technology development & cost effective transfer can result in pragmatic, practical solutions which are to the benefit of all humankind.

Thank you Madam President.

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