

◆ Speeches**PM's address at the New Delhi High Level Conference on 'Climate Change: Technology Development & Transfer'**

October 22, 2009

"I am very pleased to be here in your midst today to inaugurate this very important Conference. I extend a very warm welcome to His Excellency President Nasheed of the Maldives. Mr. President, you are a respected friend of our country and an untiring champion of global cooperation to address this formidable challenge of climate change. You are very welcome in both your capacities. I also extend a very warm welcome to all the distinguished Ministers and other participants at this Conference.

Developing countries face critical challenges in enhancing their capacity to adapt to climate change. President Nasheed has been most eloquent champion in raising awareness across the world of the threat to the survival of small island states from global warming.

In our country, we are deeply conscious of the vulnerability faced by least developed countries and island states. We too have large and vulnerable populations living in our island chains and in low-lying coastal areas. Whatever modest capabilities we possess to tackle this problem will be at the disposal of countries like the Maldives.

The challenge before the developing world is how to achieve our developmental goals while at the same time minimising ecological costs.

Developing countries cannot and will not compromise on development. But as responsible members of the global community we also do recognise that we, along with other members of the global community, must do our bit to keep our emissions footprint within levels that are sustainable and equitable.

Technology and its diffusion will be a key element in meeting the challenge of climate change.

The key issue before us is that of developing the appropriate technologies and then collapsing the time from their first commercialization to their large-scale adoption in poorer developing countries. We need technology solutions that are appropriate, that are affordable and that are truly effective.

They have to be backed by the establishment of appropriate financial arrangements to facilitate technology transfers. Industrialized countries have the capacity to shift to new energy efficient processes even if it

involves additional costs. Developing countries do not have this capacity and it is therefore only appropriate that the shift in their case should be facilitated by adequate financial support. Hopefully as the new technology spreads more widely the costs involved will fall making it much more affordable. Initially however, the transition in developing countries will need critical financial support.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should play a leading role in directing effective and collaborative actions in this vital area.

We believe that continuation of the process of incentivizing the adoption of climate friendly technologies in developing countries in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol should be a priority global concern.

The Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol has proved to be an effective vehicle for promoting sustainable development in many developing countries, while helping developed countries accomplish the abatement of their GHG emissions at lower cost. CDM revenues often take some of the sting out of the risks associated with the introduction and adoption of newer and cleaner technologies.

Climate friendly and environmentally sound technologies should be viewed as global public goods. This implies that the IPR regime applied to those goods should balance rewards for innovators with the need to promote the common good of humankind. Suitable mechanisms must be found that will provide incentives for developing new technologies while also facilitating their deployment in developing countries at affordable cost.

Such an approach has been adopted successfully in the case of pharmaceutical technologies for the benefit of HIV/AIDS victims in developing countries. The moral case of a similar approach for protecting our planet and its life support system is equally compelling.

An important barrier to technology adoption is the poor absorptive capacities of large number of developing countries. This situation cannot be remedied through forced harmonization of standards. We have to strengthen the limited innovation capabilities in many countries to realize the potential of these new technologies.

India has proposed the setting up of an international network of Climate Innovation Centres (CICs) which should act as vehicles for enhancing technology innovation and capacity building in developing countries.

These Centres could assess and identify locally-relevant key technologies and support their successful and faster development and deployment. Each such centre could focus on a key technological product that addresses climate change. Their task may also include addressing the diverse range of capacity, business and regulatory

barriers to the development and diffusion of the specific technologies. The CICs in different countries may also cross-fertilize each other by sharing of "learning-by-doing" experience.

India's development path has been relatively benign from the climate change perspective thus far. Our per capita consumption of primary energy is less than one-fourth of the world average and our per capita emission of CO₂ is among the lowest in the world. Moreover, the energy intensity of our output has been continuously declining in the last 30 years.

Nevertheless, as GDP rises, our energy use and total emissions will rise unless new technology enables us to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions intensity.

I have stated earlier that we stand committed to ensure that our per capita carbon emissions will never exceed the average of the per capita carbon emissions of developed countries. Equating GHG emissions across nations on a per capita basis is the only just and fair basis for a long-term global arrangement on climate change which is truly equitable.

I have no doubt that if developed countries make a serious effort to bring their per capita emissions within tolerable levels, they will unleash large resources directed towards research. This will generate an upsurge of technology that will make it much easier for other countries to follow suit.

Meanwhile, we are acting to do what we can within our limited capacity. We are committed to further evolving and pursuing our sustainable growth strategy for reasons of our own vital national interests. India will adopt purposive domestic actions to enhance its climate change management. The focus of our efforts will be targeted towards achieving time-bound outcomes related to the energy efficiency of our economy, the share of renewable in our fuel mix and several other sector specific initiatives.

These objectives are reflected in our National Action Plan on Climate Change which contains 8 National Missions focussing on both mitigation and adaptation.

Needless to say, a comprehensive, balanced and above all, an equitable outcome at Copenhagen will enable us to do much more in all these areas.

As we move towards Copenhagen, we must keep to the mandate for our deliberations agreed upon by consensus at Bali. Our objective is to enhance the implementation of the principles and provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We need to work towards a significantly enhanced and scaled-up set of arrangements for technology under a multilaterally supervised

mechanism. We need to act across all the stages of the technology cycle – from research leading to new breakthroughs, to the development & adoption of new technologies and to the transfer of existing & mature technologies.

We should endeavour to create a global platform to bring together the best scientific and technological resources from across the world in a collaborative effort to deliver transformational technologies for the future. We have good examples to guide us, including the ITER project or fusion energy project and the work of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

The expectations from your Conference are indeed very high. People everywhere, both within our governments and civil society at large, will keenly follow your deliberations. I assure you that India will do its utmost to play a constructive role in global efforts to combat climate change. ”

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