

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
CSD15 THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Intergovernmental Planning Meeting - New York 28 February 2007

Mr Chairman, South Africa supports the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China

Introduction

Climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. It has to be recognized that sustainable development goals and targets will not be achieved without addressing challenges associated with climate change. The potentially devastating impacts of climate change on livelihoods in developing countries, in particular in Africa, make adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change, a top priority. In order to access the required new and additional funding, we must also widen the circle of implementation beyond the narrow emphasis on integrating adaptation and development programmes. In addition, efforts are needed to reduce barriers to technology transfer and diffusion and to enhance research and development efforts in developing countries on adaptation technologies.

Challenges and Constraints

Key challenges and constraints in relation to climate change faced by developing countries include:

- The fact that developing countries have an overriding priority to address poverty and basic human needs through economic and social development which demands that international climate change policy and related disaster management measures needs to be "development focused"
- Inadequate research, data collection, analytical and scientific capacity and therefore a lack of reliable locally relevant scientific and predictive information for policy, planning and decision-making
- Generally, developing countries lack the financial, technical and institutional capacities to address climate change
- At the international level there is a lack of urgency, clear market signals and the development of climate incentives which inhibits investment in climate friendly development paths
- At national levels there is often a lack of capacity to access, manage and attract meaningful investment in existing climate instruments such as the CDM
- All these challenges are further exacerbated by the inadequacy of current funding available under multilateral mechanisms to support climate mitigation and adaptation measures

Key Policy Options

South Africa believes that the CSD should not duplicate the extremely complex discussions that are currently taking place in other multi-lateral fora such as the UNFCCC. However, the CSD has a key role to play in addressing broader sustainable development policies and capacity with direct climate change co-benefits. In this context, South Africa believes that the policies to be addressed at CSD 15 should focus on policies and measures to:

- Strengthen regional and international early warning systems, such as the Global Climate Change Observation System (GCOS), and support the establishment of Regional, Remote Sensing Units (RRSU).
- Support the establishment of disaster management capacities and centres at regional levels, in particular where they do not yet exist. We would like to emphasise that the key needs for such international policies and measures have already been outlined in the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and include capacity to identify and assess disaster risks; enhancing disaster related knowledge management systems; integrating disaster management programmes with the ongoing sustainable development plans.
- Enhance developing country, in particular Africa's, capacity to initiate, manage and attract investment into low carbon social, economic and environmental development paths, including improved capacity to access international market based instruments such as, the CDM.
- Strengthen developing country, in particular Africa's, sustainable development research and institutional capacity which will enable the development and implementation of adequate responses to mitigation and adaptation challenges.
- Support developing country, in particular Africa's, capacity to mobilize resources for the implementation of "climate proof" and low carbon sustainable development path which puts at the forefront initiatives to adapt to climate change and manage the risks and impacts of extreme weather events, sea level rise and climate variability
- Enhance South-South sustainable development co-operation with climate change co-benefits