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Bangladesh

Statement

by

Her Excellency Ms. Ismat Jahan

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh
to the United Nations

at

the informal meeting of the Plenary on
**'national strategies and international commitments
to address climate change'**.

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Madam President,

Bangladesh delegation applauds you for organizing this timely thematic debate. Our deliberations here, would no doubt provide necessary impetus to the ongoing discussions on climate change.

We align ourselves with the statement of Pakistan on behalf of the G77 and China. However, we would like to focus on certain points as we take the floor to share our national strategies in the area of climate change.

Madam President,

The impacts of climate change pose a global threat. However, the poor and vulnerable countries bear the major brunt. For many, including Bangladesh, climate change is simply a matter of survival. Even as I speak now, much of Bangladesh remains affected by flooding.

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted with a big bang. The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol also generated a glimmer of hope. However, no tangible progress has been achieved so far. The scientific projections rather show that the current trend of climate change will further accelerate. The fourth assessment report of the IPCC paints an even more devastating scenario for the future, predicting further increase in temperature and rise in the sea level in the next century.

Madam President,

The projection for Bangladesh is ominous, to say the least. Frequency and intensity of extreme weather are causing devastating impacts. Agricultural productivity is projected to fall. Inundations caused by the sea level rise will create huge displacement.

As a party to UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol as well as guided by its own national compulsions arising out of its geo-physical position, Bangladesh has undertaken a number of significant steps.

A Climate Change Cell has been established under the Ministry of Environment to mainstream climate change issues into the development activities of the country. The work programme of the Cell focuses on capacity building, improving adaptive capacity, strengthening information accessibility to adaptation and awareness raising.

We have designated focal points at different Ministries and Agencies for mainstreaming Climate Change in Development strategies. A Knowledge Network on Climate Change (KNoCC) has been set-up to train and disseminate Climate Change knowledge and information at the grass root level through NGOs and CBOs.

We have developed a generic framework to operationalize climate risk management and adaptation mainstreaming. It will ultimately lead to Climate Resilient Development, and hence towards sustainable development. We have submitted our first National

Communication to the UNFCCC in 2002. We are in the process of preparing our second national communication.

Bangladesh has submitted its National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) to UNFCCC in November 2005. We have also established a two tier Designated National Authority (DNA) for accessing Clean Development Mechanism projects under the Kyoto Protocol. The tiers are National CDM Board and National CDM Committee.

Madam President,

The overall grim situation of climate change, calls for urgent, decisive and collective actions as guided by the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and other relevant international conferences and summits.

National efforts cannot succeed alone without commensurate global actions. An effective international approach based on multilateral frameworks is essential to respond to the scale of the challenge. We call upon the international community to fulfill their commitments based on the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities". In our view, the following issues are key to effectively address the climate change:

First: We reiterate our call for full implementation of the commitments made in Kyoto. The status of implementation should be reviewed in future conferences of the parties. We are encouraged by the recent G8 declaration which has indicated to set a goal of "at least a halving of global emissions by 2050". We would hope that all major emitters would join together in setting and implementing a global target, for short, medium and long-terms, that would stabilize the atmosphere at a safer level.

Secondly: The annex-I countries need to adopt effective climate change mitigation policies and measures including through the development and use of advanced and appropriate technologies;

Thirdly: mitigation strategies and adaptation programmes are complementary. Without sufficient and targeted funding, adaptation runs the risk of not being effectively addressed;

Fourthly: affordable access to environmentally sound technologies, know-how, practices and processes pertinent to climate change, is crucial. There should be specific modalities for the development, application and diffusion of such technologies to developing countries, in particular the LDCs and SIDS on preferential and concessional terms;

Fifthly: International co-operation through partnership is essential to redress the global climatic disruption. Development partners must honour their existing commitments, particularly those made in Monterrey Consensus, JPOI and Doha development agenda without further delay;

Sixthly: United Nations agencies, Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs), GEF and other international organizations and agencies have important role to play in facilitating the

implementation of the global commitments. The LDC Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Adaptation Fund need to be adequately strengthened;

Seventhly: The private sector and the NGOs also have an important role. They are the biggest user of energy and often the major driver of innovation and diffusion of technologies. Public-private partnership can help to promote international collaboration in addressing climate change threat;

Eighthly: Climate change triggers a large number of "climate refugees". Such refugees could reach 200 million by the end of this decade. Urgent international attention is crucial for their necessary rehabilitation.

Finally: It is well recognised that the LDCs will be the hardest hit by the climate change, though ironically, their contribution to the phenomenon itself is insignificant. The least developed countries, particularly the low lying ones deserve special attention of the international community. They must enjoy full-flexibility in all future decisions on climate change. There should be concrete commitment from the development partners for necessary financial and technical support in building adequate adaptation capacities and infrastructure of the LDCs.

Madam President

Article 3.9 of the Kyoto protocol mandated the parties to initiate negotiations for post-Kyoto instruments by 2005. We need to fully engage in the process with utmost sincerity in order to conclude the negotiations on time. The post-Kyoto regime should be based on a more concrete, realistic and legally-binding emission reduction targets. It should also comprise specific commitments of supports for means of adaptation needs and mechanism for enhanced technology transfer particularly to the LDCs.

Madam President,

The horrendous nature of global climate threat is clear and obvious. Happily today, there is a growing "scientific consensus" on climate change. The challenge before us now is to translate this into a broad political consensus for global action. We would thus need to reinvigorate our efforts in transforming visions into clearly defined goals, discussions into frameworks and in the ultimate the agreed commitments into real actions. I believe, our deliberations during this informal debate would provide necessary inputs to the High-level event scheduled for September. We must build on the momentum generated in order to reach a comprehensive agreement on the modalities for a future climate change regime in Bali in December 2007.