

# South-South Cooperation on Climate Change

Remarks at High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change:  
“Partnership for Climate-Friendly and Sustainable Development: Southern Countries in Action”, 15 November 2017

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*As prepared for delivery*

I am honoured to participate in this High-Level Forum that focuses on the critical role of South-South cooperation and partnerships in advancing climate change action.

We meet today a little over a year since the Paris Agreement entered into force. Since then we have seen further evidence that climate change is a global phenomenon, which affects all countries, large, small, poor and rich. We saw this recently as extreme weather events hit around the world, causing devastation from Texas to Bangladesh.

Yet, as the Paris Agreement has shown us, action to combat climate change is also universal. Both developed and developing countries have made commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Adaptation is also becoming more urgent and more common as we see countries taking measures to address the increasingly harsh reality of adverse climate impacts.

In support of the Paris Agreement and broader sustainable development objectives, Southern partners and a growing number of global development actors have been working in collaboration with the North to not only make

commitments for future action, but also demonstrate what they have already been doing to address climate change. UNDP, as a partner supporting climate change action in over 140 developing countries, has seen this impressive suite of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures emerge - actions which are translating into concrete results on the ground.

One of the leaders of this effort is China. Through the work of key institutions such as the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC), China is supporting climate change action through clear resource commitments, global engagements, know-how and a strategic vision. For example, in 2014, China announced a \$3.1 billion South-South Climate Change Fund to assist developing countries in addressing climate change challenges through South-South cooperation within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

Deepened partnerships, including the types of partnerships among the countries of the South discussed here today, are required to meet the ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement. The South-South cooperation modality can have a catalytic potential to address climate change, transferring experience, technology and resources, in which China playing an increasingly leading role.

We have been expanding UNDP's collaboration with China on South-South Cooperation in the areas of research and dialogue, and on match-making initiatives that bridge demand and expertise needed to find solutions to development challenges. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) opens further

opportunities for these forms of partnerships. UNDP has also facilitated dialogue and partnerships on development financing for low carbon solutions in the South with 24 Belt and Road countries engaging with Chinese financing institutions and solution providers earlier this year. More recently, in the Caribbean region, UNDP with the support of China, are assisting in rebuilding key infrastructure, housing and communities after hurricanes Maria and Irma hit several island nations.

China and UNDP have also cooperated through Trilateral initiatives where expertise from China, UNDP and recipient countries is brought together to address climate change challenges. An example of this is with Ghana and Zambia where we are supporting renewable energy technology transfer through a \$5.6 million contribution from the Danish Government.

Indeed, many countries in the South have important experiences to share on low emission and climate resilient pathways, and UNDP is helping to facilitate these exchanges. For example,

- In the Latin America and Caribbean region, UNDP supported the establishment of risk reduction management centres in Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, British Virgin Island and Guyana to provide information on disaster risks through SSC engagement with Cuba.
- In Armenia, UNDP supported cooperation between Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in jointly developing a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategy
- With UNDP's support, Indonesia shared best practices with the Philippines to support the recovery efforts from Typhoon Haiyan.

- In Africa, the World Bank and UNDP are working with NiMet to support climate/weather services initiatives with national governments across the continent – setting up early warning systems in Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia.

To help advance action under the Paris Agreement, UNDP has also co-organized 15 NDC regional dialogues, with UNFCCC Secretariat and other partners, since 2014, benefitting approximately 150 countries across all regions. These NDC dialogues provide a forum for countries to exchange knowledge and lessons learned in preparing for NDC implementation in the context of sustainable development.

Additionally, just last week, India has pledged to scale-up its contributions to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, through a multi-year contribution of US\$100 million. The first project from the Fund will contribute towards a climate early warning system in Pacific Island Countries which aims to increase resilience to natural disasters in seven countries.

While we already have many nascent examples of such partnerships we are still far from leveraging the full potential of South-South Cooperation to raise the ambition of climate change action, particularly to strengthen partnerships in the South, for the South. I hope that because of this meeting today we are able to take a few steps in that direction with new 'partnerships for climate-friendly and sustainable development'. UNDP is a committed partner to help make this happen.