

Government of India Submission to UNFCCC on Long Term Co-operative Action

“ A shared vision for long-term cooperative action, including a long-term goal for emission reductions, to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention, in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities”

The focus of paragraph 1 (a) of the Bali Action Plan is **for a shared vision for a “long-term cooperative action” to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention as set out in Article 2. It includes the issue of how to deal with preventing overexploitation of the global atmospheric resource in order to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the global climate system.** The Bali Action Plan emphasizes that this objective must be achieved “in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” of Parties.

The *ultimate objective of the Convention* is of a multidimensional nature. Article 2 reads as follows: “*The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that the Conference of Parties may adopt is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner*” [emphasis added].

Thus the “ultimate objective” encompasses three inter-connected elements. First, it prescribes a *method* – “in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention”. Second, it calls for *stabilization* of greenhouse gas *concentrations* at a level that would avoid dangerous interference with the climate system. **This underscores the importance of cumulative emissions and the historical responsibility that goes along with contribution to the stock of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.** Finally, it includes three specific criteria for determining the *time-frame* within which stabilization must be

achieved, **including that economic development may proceed in a sustainable manner.**

India's views on the "1(a)" may be summarized as follows:

- (1) **Equity must be central to the way forward.** This requires that the **any** stabilization target should be achieved on the basis of the principle that each human being has an equal right to the common atmospheric resource **accounting also for the historical responsibility of developed countries in building the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.** Developing countries cannot be denied access to their **equitable** share of the global atmospheric resource **and carbon space. Equitable sharing of the carbon space, therefore, needs to be urgently agreed to by the international community. As far as India is concerned we have stated publicly that our per-capita emissions will not exceed those of developed countries. We believe that a paradigm of convergence of per-capita emissions of developing and developed countries, also accounting for the historical responsibility of developed countries, provides an equitable approach to fair burden sharing.**

- (2) The Right to Development must be fully respected in the climate change regime. It must be recognized that, for poorer countries, rapid development is not only an economic and social imperative but also an essential requirement for building up a coping capacity against the adverse impacts of climate change. **In this context, the imperative of development for adaptation is essential even from the point of Right to Life and basic issues of survival.** Thus, addressing paragraph 1(a) must *"take fully into account that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country Parties"* (Article 4.7).

- (3) In order to send out a clear signal of the urgency and magnitude of the climate change problem **the international community should start** identifying an indicative stabilization target and a time-frame for its achievement **along with an equitable paradigm for sharing the carbon space**. These should take into account the IPCC 4 scenarios and should be based on the principle of equity. Should it be required in light of new scientific data **or changed economic conditions and technologies available**, the initial stabilization target could be updated periodically to ensure that it sends out a sufficiently ambitious call to action. In the interests of integrity and transparency, and in order to prevent any ambiguity in the signal, there should be no tampering with the baseline year used in the Convention and the IPCC reports (i.e. 1990). Targets for emission reductions are meaningless unless the baseline date is clearly established.
- (4) Any stabilization target, howsoever ambitious, cannot be misused to seek a revision of the provisions of the Convention. The “ultimate objective” itself requires that any stabilization target must be achieved “in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention”, that is, in accordance with the Commitments set out in Article 4 and the Principles enunciated in Article 2. The Bali Action Plan reinforces this requirement by underlining that long-term cooperative action must be pursued “in accordance with the provisions and principles” of the Convention. We must strictly abide by the terms of Article 2 of the Convention and the express requirements of the Bali Action Plan.
- In this context, it would be pertinent to observe that the Convention is so designed that any stabilization level, howsoever ambitious, can be achieved through enhanced implementation of the commitments set out in Article 4. If achievement of a global stabilization goal necessitates mitigation measures in developing countries, the latter must be compensated by the developed countries to the extent of the full

incremental costs, in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 3 and 7 of Article 4. Thus the Convention makes full provision for mitigation measures in developing countries on the basis of full compensation for incremental costs.

- (5) A long-term stabilization target would lack credibility if it is not linked to a medium term target for emission reductions by Annex I Parties, in accordance with their commitments under Article 4, paragraph 2 of the Convention, as well as the provisions of paragraph 1 (b) (i) of the Bali Action Plan. It is a matter of deep concern that the emissions of Annex I countries have been steadily *increasing* since 2000, contrary to the provisions of the Convention. UNFCCC data reveals that total Annex I emissions rose from 17,719 Tg CO₂ equivalent in 2000 to 18,182 Tg CO₂ equivalent in 2005. **Moreover, there have also been increases in terms of per-capita emissions in the Annex I countries.** This alarming trend must be immediately reversed. All Annex I countries should adopt deep emission reduction targets for the medium term based not only on technology options but also **by adopting specific policies and measures that promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production, including** life-style changes. IPCC scenarios indicate that such reductions should be **more than** 25-40 percent by 2020, *excluding* life-style changes. We, therefore, call on the Annex I countries to adopt targets for reduction of their emissions by *more than* 25-40 percent by 2020, ***with further reductions through policies and measures that promote sustainable lifestyles*** from the 1990 baseline.
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