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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Eighth session
New Delhi, 23 October – 1 November 2002
Agenda item 13 (a)

DRAFT REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES ON ITS EIGHTH SESSION

Addendum

PART ONE: PROCEEDINGS

XI. HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT ATTENDED BY MINISTERS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS
(Agenda item 11)

1. The high-level segment of the Conference at its eighth session was opened at the 3rd plenary meeting, on 30 October. On this occasion addresses of welcome were delivered by the President of the Conference, the Executive Secretary, and the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Furthermore, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs delivered a message to the delegates on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Statements were also made by heads and representatives of United Nations agencies and related organizations, and by representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

2. On the same occasion, Indian youth representatives delivered a Children's Charter on climate change, which had been developed by students from twenty-five schools in New Delhi on the initiative of the Indian Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI). Following the delivery of the Charter to the delegates, the youth delegates presented the document to the President. The President expressed his appreciation for the active interest of youth delegates in the climate change debate and the Charter presented to him.

A. Inauguration

1. Statement by the President

3. In opening the high-level segment of the Conference at its eighth session, the President expressed his appreciation for the strong commitment of the Prime Minister of India to promote the cause of the environment. The current session was yet another demonstration of the Prime Minister's commitment and the country's resolve to safeguard the earth's environment.

4. Taking place only shortly after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the current session provided a momentous occasion to address the formidable challenges which humanity faced in its struggle to secure food and water for the needy. The Conference had to take up the central

message of the Johannesburg Summit and address the inseparable link between climate change and sustainable development. The fight against climate change was, in fact, a fight against poverty. Sustainable development would never be possible if humankind did not succeed in combating climate change; similarly, pursuing the overall goal of sustainable development was a precondition for successfully tackling global warming.

5. The President expressed his hope that the current session, inspired by the message of the Johannesburg Summit, would open up new avenues on the way to achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention.

2. Statement by the Executive Secretary

6. The Executive Secretary expressed her appreciation that the Prime Minister of India had come to attend the opening ceremony of the high-level segment of the Conference at its eighth session. His presence was proof of the deep commitment of the Government and the people of India to making progress in international cooperation on climate change.

7. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (WSSD) the world community reaffirmed sustainable development as the core strategy for jointly addressing poverty eradication, environmental protection and natural resources management. The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol is just a matter of months. Meanwhile, the world has been confronted by the negative consequences of development patterns that do not adhere to the principles of sustainability. In recent months, many countries have witnessed an unprecedented number of extreme weather events, which are likely to increase in frequency and severity in the future. This development underlines the urgency of reducing vulnerability and of national and international action, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It also points to the need for cooperation among the three Rio conventions, particularly at the national level, and with other organizations.

8. The analysis of past emission trends and policies and measures suggests that Annex I countries should be relentless in their efforts to meet Kyoto targets and address adaptation. Non-Annex I countries take action on adaptation and mitigation. National communications should be seen as a pre-eminent tool for exchanging experiences, drawing lessons and embarking on a dialogue on action. In terms of implementation and the promotion of international cooperation, the clean development mechanism (CDM) is expected to be an important vehicle linking sustainable development and climate change and providing an additional channel for investments in, and technology transfer to, developing countries. The CDM embodies the concept of public-private partnership and, once operational, will support the strong push towards sustainable energy patterns, including an increased share of renewable energy, promoted by WSSD. This Conference places strong emphasis on enhancing capacity-building and providing support for the least developed countries, which are the most vulnerable among of all the Parties.

3. Statement by the Prime Minister of India

9. In his welcoming statement, the Prime Minister of India said that global climate change with its diverse local impacts had emerged as one of the most serious environmental concerns of our times. The Convention provided a sound basis to address that phenomenon in the spirit of global cooperation. It also reflected a consensus that addressing the challenge of climate change was an integral part of achieving sustainable development, an issue which was at the heart of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. At that Summit, delegates had recognized that eradicating poverty, changing consumption and production patterns, as well as protecting and managing natural resources necessary for economic and social development were essential requirements for sustainable development.

10. India, which had ratified the Convention in 1993 and acceded to the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, was committed to the goals of sustainable development. A sign of this commitment was the fact that the country had one of the most active renewable energy programmes world-wide, promoting wind power, solar energy, hydropower and natural gas. In the context of those efforts, India also welcomed the operationalization of the clean development mechanism. It was intent on promoting enhanced energy efficiency and increasing the share of advanced energy technologies, while at the same time according high priority to the conservation of its forests and wildlife.

11. The proportion of greenhouse gases emitted by India and all other developing countries was very small compared to that of industrialized countries. While that situation would not change in the course of the next decades, developing countries would nevertheless bear a disproportionate burden of the adverse affects of climate change. It was therefore necessary to pay adequate attention to the concerns of developing countries relating to vulnerability and adaptation, and to strengthen their capacity to cope with extreme weather events.

12. The Prime Minister rejected suggestions that a process should be initiated to enhance mitigation commitments of developing countries beyond those included in the Convention. Such suggestions were misplaced given the very low per capita greenhouse gas emissions and per capita incomes of developing countries and the fact that, at purchasing power parity, developing countries' emission intensities were not higher than that of industrialized countries. In conclusion, he expressed his hope that the principle of sustainable development would inform the deliberations of the Conference and help all Parties to make progress in responding to the challenge ahead.

4. Message by the Secretary-General of the United Nations

13. The message, conveyed by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, drew attention to the fact that the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties was the first to take place since the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. The consensus reached in Johannesburg had significant implications for efforts to address climate change and its adverse effects. Apart from what it had to say on the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations, there were other commitments relevant to the agenda of the current session of the Conference, including technical and financial support, capacity-building, dissemination of innovative technologies, systematic observation and the exchange of scientific data.

14. Johannesburg had also advanced the policy consensus beyond what was agreed at Rio in the area of sustainable consumption and production. That would have a major impact on energy, including renewable energy, energy markets, energy efficiency, and access to energy. In all of those areas, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation marked an important step forward. One challenge for the current session of the Conference was to consider whether, and to what extent, the approaches, goals, and methods agreed in Johannesburg were a basis for cooperation in this forum.

15. Like the Johannesburg Summit, the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties marked a transition in which the focus was increasingly on implementation of what had been achieved. That encompassed many things: clear commitments by Governments on goals, targets and, where relevant, the provision of financial and technical resources; mechanisms to ensure accountability; and the constructive use of partnerships between the public and private sectors. The Kyoto Protocol involved innovative methods in all of these areas and should, when it entered into force, make a key contribution.

16. At Johannesburg the Secretary-General had called for a greater sense of shared global responsibility. The Convention and the Kyoto Protocol were expressions of that spirit in one critical area. Their goals, as well as the Millennium development goals and the quest for sustainable

development, must be pursued with vigour and commitment if humankind were to make a long overdue investment in the survival and security of future generations. In that spirit, he delivered his wishes for a successful session.

B. Round-table discussions

17. At the 4th plenary meeting, on 30 October, ministers and heads of delegations convened for the first of three round-table discussions dealing with the general theme of implementing the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. The specific topic of the first round table was "Taking stock" and was co-chaired, on the invitation of the President, by Ms. Margaret Beckett, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom. On the invitation of the co-Chair, lead-off statements were delivered by the representatives of New Zealand, Tonga, Mexico, Japan, China and Denmark. In the course of the ensuing discussion, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of 31 Parties and two non-governmental organizations.

18. At the 5th plenary meeting, on 31 October, ministers and heads of delegations convened for the second round table on the topic "Climate change and sustainable development". On the invitation of the President, discussions were co-chaired by Mr. Mohammed Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa. Lead-off statements for this round table were delivered by the representatives of Uganda, Slovakia, Colombia, the United States of America, Germany and Mauritius. Subsequently, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of 27 Parties and one non-governmental organization.

19. Upon the conclusion of the second round table at the 6th plenary meeting, on 31 October, the President expressed his gratitude to the two co-chairs for guiding the discussions. In summarizing some of the main points addressed in the course of the round tables, he said that the statements delivered had made clear that there was concrete evidence of the effects of climate change on countries. This evidence showed that climate change belonged no longer to the realm of theory and scientific hypothesis but had started to have an impact on the lives of people. There had been many calls to reflect on how much still remained to be done to implement and pursue the work of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in spite of the efforts undertaken by Annex I and non-Annex I Parties. In the first round table, Parties had highlighted the magnitude of the challenge ahead and the gaps that still existed in addressing it. The second round table had provided useful insights on the relationship between climate change and sustainable development. Many speakers had stressed the relationship between economic development and sustainable development, and there had been a number of comments on the interdependence of the two domains emphasizing that sustainable development depended on economic growth. In the course of the discussions, views had also been exchanged on the fact that in the near future climate change and global warming would be one of the biggest obstacles to economic development. Parties had therefore noted the urgency of making the Kyoto Protocol operational. Other issues addressed by speakers included mitigation, adaptation and the balance between the two, the link between the clean development mechanism and sustainable development, and the role of renewable energy.

20. Following his summary statements on the first two round tables at the 6th plenary meeting, the President invited Parties to deliver interventions on the third round-table topic, "Wrap-up". Subsequently, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of 30 Parties.

21. In concluding the round-table discussions, the President expressed his gratitude to all speakers saying that they had contributed to valuable and productive discussions which would provide a good basis for Parties to move ahead. Aside from the plenary discussions, he had held consultations with major groups and individual member States in order to receive their comments and suggestions on the informal proposal for the envisaged Delhi Declaration, which had been made available to delegations on

28 October. Taking into account the various suggestions and inputs, he had tried to identify areas where there was a clear consensus. These had been incorporated into a revised proposal for the Declaration, which would be distributed to delegations. The President suggested that if delegations saw the need to address issues not included in the revised proposal, they should approach other groups or delegations in order to seek to obtain a consensus on inclusion of the issue in question. However, the Declaration should not be used as an opportunity to include any new process or action which could lead to new commitments or the involvement of developing countries in shouldering additional burdens. In conclusion, he invited spokespersons from groups to participate in further discussions with a view to obtaining a consensus on the Declaration.

C. Conclusion

[to be completed]

D. Other statements

1. Statements by United Nations agencies and related organizations

22. At the 3rd plenary meeting, on 30 October, statements were made by the following representatives: the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Assistant Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Director of the Environment Department of the World Bank.

2. Statements by intergovernmental organizations

23. At the 3rd plenary meeting, on 30 October, statements were made by the following representatives: the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), and the Director of the Infrastructure Division, Southeast Asia, of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

3. Statements by non-governmental organizations

24. At the 3rd plenary meeting, on 30 October, statements were made by the following representatives: the Coordinator of the Climate Action Network, South Asia, on behalf of the Climate Action Network (CAN), and the Head of Sustainable Development, Powergen UK, on behalf of the business and industry organizations.

[to be completed]
