

***Agenda Item 95 (a): Environment and Sustainable Development: Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the future implementation of Agenda 21***

***Statement by Hon'ble Mrs. Krishna Bose, MP, Chairperson, Standing Committee on External Affairs,***

***on October 19, 2000***

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**Mr. Chairman,**

**At the outset, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77. We have read with interest the reports by the Secretary General on agenda item 95(a): "Environment and Sustainable Development -Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the further implementation of Agenda 21".**

**At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio in 1992 we collectively launched the global partnership for sustainable development and environment based on the understanding that the basic developmental needs of developing countries needed to be fulfilled. It was recognized that economic growth and poverty eradication, which are and must be overriding priorities for developing countries, require substantial resources and thereby preclude the generation of adequate domestic resources by developing countries for them to tackle environmental concerns. If developing countries were to meet the environmental objectives of Agenda 21, without any external assistance from the international community, it would not only be an onerous burden on their already scarce domestic resources but it would be at the cost of developmental activities. Taking all this into account at Rio, we forged a balance between developmental and environmental imperatives and created a framework for assistance by the international community to complement and support the efforts of the developing countries in achieving sustainable development. This was to be done through the transfer of new and additional resources and environmentally sound technologies on concessional and preferential terms to developing countries to meet, at the minimum, the incremental costs involved in addressing environmental obligations.**

**Developing countries have done commendable work in the implementation of Agenda 21, under an exceptionally difficult global environment. The promised resources and technologies from developed countries have failed to materialize. The Rio+5 Special Session of the UN General Assembly held in 1997 acknowledged the disappointing lack of fulfillment of international commitments voluntarily entered into in Agenda 21, by the industrialized countries either to assist developing countries or to meet their own obligations under the common but differentiated principle and the polluter pays principle, in view of their historical industrialization and technology choices as well as unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. Unfortunately, therefore, the tasks we set for ourselves at the Earth Summit remain largely unfulfilled – the sustained development of developing countries remains far in the future while the rapid depletion of the resources of Planet Earth continues. We have daunting tasks ahead of us and there is no luxury of time.**

We have now begun preparations for the ten-year review process for Rio against the backdrop of the disappointing performance of the last eight years. We are, however, somewhat encouraged by the clear signal from the recent Millennium Summit Declaration, which re-affirmed the principles of sustainable development as, set out in Agenda 21 and gave a call to spare no effort to free mankind from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activity. It is with this clear political directive that my delegation will work so as to constructively contribute both during this General Assembly session and during the preparatory process to make Rio+10 a success.

The 10 year review will, no doubt, be an occasion to renew political commitment for sustainable development and will provide us an opportunity to evaluate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and identifying the constraints that hampered its effective implementation. The attempt should be to work for an action oriented outcome that would establish mechanisms to make available to developing countries, in a time bound manner, financial resources and environmentally sound technologies so that the developing countries could leap-frog stages of development. My delegation believes that Agenda 21 continues to provide a solid and a vital basis to address the common objectives of development and environment and that Agenda 21 needs to be fully implemented and not re-negotiated.

We are of the view that the preparatory process for Rio+10 should be open-ended, transparent and participatory and, therefore, are supportive of the decision taken at the eight session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) that at its tenth session CSD would convert itself into an open-ended preparatory committee that would co-ordinate and integrate various inputs into the review process. Inputs should be drawn from Governments and from other different sources, including the previous sessions of the Commission of Sustainable Development, UNEP, the Conference of Parties of the various Environment Conventions and regional bodies. My delegation would also like to highlight the need for high quality preparations, inter-alia, through timely availability of inputs and reports that are prepared through a consultative process.

Mr. Chairman,

India welcomes the consensus that the Rio+10 review meeting should take place in a developing country and looks forward to the conclusion of discussions during the current session of the General Assembly on the timing and venue for the Review conference as well as on other organizational and procedural matters to facilitate early preparations for the review session.

The sincerity of the international community towards Rio+10 can be best demonstrated if in the time period intervening from now till the holding of the review conference, some concrete steps are taken by our partners in the developed world towards fulfilling commitments under Agenda 21.