

Address of Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha
on the topic 'Placing Democracy at the Service of Peace and Sustainable
Development, Building the World the People Want'
at the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament
New York, 31 August - 2 September 2015



Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Delegates:

I am sure all of us would want to live in a world that is peaceful, provides equality, human rights and dignity of labour and is free from discrimination, poverty and hunger. But the question is how can we make democracy deliver effectively to promote peace and sustainable development. We must empower democracy by ensuring that it is participatory and inclusive to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable sections of society. I am happy that one of the SDGs seeks to provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Good Governance is an enabler for development. Inclusive participation together with good governance will promote peace and sustainable development. The post-2015 development agenda is notable and important for several reasons. It clearly emphasizes *inter alia* ending poverty and hunger, ensuring gender equality, empowerment of women and girls and reduce inequality within and among countries. Every country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development and may follow different approaches, visions, models and tools, in accordance with the national circumstances and priorities. So I feel no sovereign country should be subjected to external oversight mechanism or benchmark with regard to progress on these goals. A global common approach to sustainability demands that developed countries, which bear the historical responsibility for climate change and have better financial and technological resources, must lead by example.

The onus of global sustainability cannot be placed on developing countries alone. Therefore a strong global partnership is needed to support the efforts of developing countries in the spirit of *वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्* (the entire world is a family) and like interdependence in a family all must share the responsibility according to individual capacity and capability. India has its own vision of development. The focus of our development is on inclusive growth to ensure that no one is left out in development process. We have the mission '*Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas*' means participation of all and development for all. The finest example of inclusive growth has been witnessed in India when at the call of our Prime Minister millions of well to do people have voluntarily surrendered subsidy on LPG to help the poor. I would like to once again reiterate India's commitment to work collectively with the Speakers of Parliament. In the end we need to strike balance between our need and greed. A world without

poverty or hunger is safer, better and fairer. Sustainable development means where human and nature co-exist in productive harmony. Environment and development is not either/or it is in fact both/and. We must ask ourselves is our future sustainable with present development? I think modern technology owes an apology to our ecology. The real meaning of sustainable development has been explained in this ancient Indian Shloka and I quote:

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ॥

All should/must be happy, be healthy, see good;
may no one have a share in sorrow.

Thank you.