

**STATEMENT BY HON'BLE MR. A.C. JOSE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND
MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION ON AGENDA ITEM 94 –
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT THE SECOND
COMMITTEE OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON
OCTOBER 16, 2003**

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for the reports submitted under the sub-items of Agenda item 94 on "Environment and Sustainable Development", under consideration today. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community has focussed considerable attention over the past decade on formulating policies towards the conservation of biodiversity. The **Convention on Biodiversity** adopted in 1992 was a significant milestone. It reflected the commitment of the international community to address the main concerns, namely conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 highlighted the need to integrate the objectives of the Convention into global, regional and national sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes and policies. One of the significant outcomes of the Summit was adoption of the commitment to reduce significantly by 2010 the current loss of biological diversity, one of the main goals of the strategic plan adopted by the sixth meeting of the Conference of Parties. It was acknowledged that the achievement of this target would require provision of new and additional financial and technological resources to the developing countries to facilitate its effective implementation.

Being one of the 12 mega-biodiversity countries of the world, India has taken a series of measures including adoption of the National Policy and Action Strategy on Biodiversity, for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. International cooperation and initiatives are required to strengthen the monitoring of bio-piracy and to establish mechanisms to ensure equitable sharing of benefits from the utilisation of

biological and genetic resources. In this context, we welcome the decision of the Johannesburg Summit to negotiate within the framework of the Convention an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources and call on the Conference of Parties to take the necessary steps in this regard.

India supports an effective and credible *sui generis* system of protection of biodiversity and the associated traditional knowledge, including by way of prior informed consent and benefit-sharing for traditional knowledge used by patent applicants and others. The protection regime of Intellectual Property Rights should not displace the developing countries as competitors and transform them into mere suppliers of raw material. Patenting of biological resources must not deny or restrict developing countries' access to their own biological resources.

We welcome the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety, negotiated under the aegis of the Convention on Biodiversity. India has ratified the Protocol. We hope that the Protocol will enable the State Parties to protect their biodiversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnologies.

Mr. Chairman,

Climate change has emerged as one of the most serious environmental concerns, a global phenomenon with diverse local impacts. India has always argued that strengthening of global cooperation is central to address global environmental problems. The **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) has provided us with a sound basis for global cooperation. India ratified the Convention in 1993 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, thus reaffirming India's commitment to strengthening global endeavours to combat climate change in accordance with the principles of the Convention. We call on countries that have not done so to accede to the Kyoto Protocol. Early entry into force of the Protocol would be a significant step in giving practical effect to the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. Progress in this regard is imperative if we are to consider further steps in the implementation of the Convention during the second commitment period.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, we recognised that issues associated with climate change, with potentially most serious impacts on developing countries, were a common concern for humankind and that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns, protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development were essential requirements for sustainable development.

India was privileged to host in New Delhi the Eighth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, immediately after the Johannesburg Summit. This provided us with an opportunity to address the mandate of Johannesburg in concrete ways. The Conference adopted at its Eighth session the New Delhi Work Programme for five years relating to education, training and public awareness. The Conference adopted the Delhi Ministerial Declaration which establishes

the link between climate change and sustainable development and brings out the importance of adaptation in this context. Effective and result-based measures should be supported for developing approaches at all levels on vulnerability and adaptation, as well as capacity-building for the integration of adaptation concerns into sustainable development strategies.

India is deeply committed to the goals of sustainable development. We have one of the most active renewable energy programmes in the world. It involves the public and private sectors, local communities and households. We are among the leading nations in wind power production. We have vigorously promoted the use of solar energy in both thermal and electricity generation modes. We are steadily increasing the share of hydropower and natural gas in our energy mix. We are promoting various energy efficiency measures in the industrial, commercial, governmental and domestic sectors.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches considerable importance to the **UN Convention to Combat Desertification** and was among the early signatories to this Convention. We welcome the decision of the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to include land-degradation (desertification and deforestation) as an additional focal area and the approval for designation of the Facility as a financial mechanism to the Convention, as agreed at the Johannesburg Summit. These decisions of the GEF are significant for the implementation of the commitments made at the Summit. We welcome the conclusions of the meeting of the Conference of Parties held recently in Havana.

Mr. Chairman,

We support the convening of an international conference for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States, being hosted by Mauritius in 2004. We hope that this would result in new and additional commitments for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.

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