

74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Second Committee

Agenda Item 19 Sustainable Development

INDIA STATEMENT

By Mr. Siddharth Malik, First Secretary

14 October 2019

Thank you Mr. Chair,

I am honored to share India's perspectives on the important issue of sustainable development. India associates itself with the statement delivered by Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77.

The achievement of 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals requires multilateral action to address the challenges and adjust national policies to the changing global landscape. Our ongoing national efforts to pursue an inclusive and sustainable development are in close sync with the global agenda.

It is heartening to note that within the last four sessions of the High Level Political Forum more than 140 countries have presented their Voluntary National Reviews, re-affirming their commitments to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In the spirit of sharing experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learnt to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda 2030, India presented its VNR at the 71st session and will present its second VNR at the next High Level Political forum in 2020.

Mr. Chair,

We welcome the steps taken by Secretary-General to reform the UN development system. One of the key elements of the reforms is the 'reinvigorated Resident Coordinator System'. The objective of the new system is to strengthen accountability, transparency and development of an effective UN system which will become a driving force in achieving the 2030 Agenda. In that spirit, we made a voluntary contribution to the UN Special Purpose Trust Fund for the new Resident Coordinator System.

Mr. Chair,

Since 2015, India has made Agenda 2030, a cornerstone of the development policies. During the last five years, a large number of flagship programmes have been implemented with the aim of implementing SDGs.

The flagship programmes such as Poshan Bharat (a National Nutrition Mission) Aayushman Bharat (National Health Protection Scheme), Beti Bachao Beti Pado (Save

the daughter, Educate the daughter) directly address the challenges highlighted by SDGs. To comprehensively address all water-related issues and provide tap water to all households by 2024, a new Ministry for Water Conservation and Management (Jal Shakti) has recently been established.

India has taken several steps to protect flora and fauna for a sustainable future. The number of Tigers in India, which constitutes more than 70% of world population, has increased from 2,226 to 2,967, a 33% increase in the last four years. India is already pursuing a massive afforestation programme. India joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge pledge to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020, and additional 8 million hectares by 2030. India's pledge to restore 21 million hectares of land is one of the largest in Asia. These numbers are evidence of our successful approach to conserve biodiversity.

We have taken several steps to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). We organized the COP-14 of UNCCD from 2-13 September in New Delhi, which saw adoption of an ambitious Delhi declaration. We have announced to increase the total area that would be restored from its land degradation status from the earlier target of 21 Million Hectares to 26 Million Hectares between now and 2030.

Mr.Chair,

We have been successful in adopting, implementing and even monitoring SDGs. The responsibility for overseeing SDG implementation has been assigned to the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), which is chaired by the Prime Minister of India. It has launched the India Index an online dashboard, which monitors implementation of the SDGs at state level and provides incentives to the provinces appropriately, bringing competition to perform better.

Mr.Chair,

Sustainable development has to address Climate change through appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures. By 2022, India plans to produce 175 GW of renewable energy and later achieving the target of 450 Giga-watt of renewable energy.

International Solar Alliance (ISA) which India co-founded with France. The ISA has become a treaty-based intergovernmental body and 79 countries have joined the alliance till date. It has become a major global initiative for contributing to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement through rapid and massive deployment of solar energy.

The world is witnessing an increase in natural disasters due to extreme weather phenomena. Last month, we launched a Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. The Coalition will act as a mechanism to assist countries to upgrade their capacities and

practices, with regard to infrastructure development. It will help in successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement.

Mr. Chair,

We value the role of global partnerships for achievement of SDGs. In the spirit of South-South Cooperation in 2017, India established the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to work with fellow developing countries by providing support to projects that aim to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A sum of US\$ 150 million has been committed for the next decade focusing on developmental projects in LDC, LLDCs and SIDS.

In the spirit of fundamental mantra of our government “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas aur Sabka Vishwas (together with all, for the development of all and with the trust of all) during the recently concluded, high level week, we announced allocation of US\$ 26 million grant and another US\$ 300 million concessional Line of Credit for undertaking solar, renewable energy and climate related projects in Pacific Islands Developing States and CARICOM countries.

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to conclude by re-emphasizing India's steadfast commitment to sustainable development and to the spirit of development partnership for implementation of 2030 Agenda globally.

I thank you.