



PAKISTAN

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STATEMENT BY

**H.E. MR HAMEED ULLAH JAN AFRIDI,
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

AT THE

**HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE
18TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-18)**

New York,
13 May 2010

**Statement by H.E. Mr Hameedullah Jan Afridi,
Minister for Environment during the High Level Segment of the
18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18)
(New York, 13 May 2010)**

Mr. Chairman,

In Pakistan, the increasing fragility of our ecosystems that are struggling to support and sustain over 160 million people, and our vulnerabilities on account of climate change have made the challenge of growth and sustainable development ever more daunting.

2. Safeguarding environment and promoting sustainable development is, therefore, no longer an option but an urgent imperative for us.

3. In fact, Pakistan was one of the first few countries in the world to prepare a National Conservation Strategy (NCS) before the Earth Summit in 1992. We were also quite early in bringing out, among others, our National Environment Policy, National Energy Conservation Policy, National Sanitation Policy and National Clean Drinking Water Policy.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Pakistan is making consistent and concerted efforts to promote sustainability in all the thematic areas being considered at this CSD Session.

5. Let me avail of this opportunity to briefly share with you some of our experiences and achievements made in Pakistan in the areas of transport, chemical, waste management, mining and sustainable consumption and production.

6. On **transport**, our vision is to establish an efficient and well integrated transport system that will facilitate the development of a competitive economy and poverty reduction, while ensuring safety in mobility. The strategic thrust is on optimal utilization of the existing capacity, improved management for maintenance and operation and coordinated use of various modes of transport. Private sector participation in the sector is being enhanced, as is the institutional capacity and R&D activities to promote efficiency in this sector.

7. A key element of our transport strategy is to introduce mass transit schemes in cities that we believe will greatly help in reducing traffic congestion and pollution.

8. Pakistan maintains one of the largest fleet of vehicles running on clean Compressed Natural Gas - this has been possible due to concerted government efforts. We are also in the process of inducting a fleet of 8,000 CNG buses in our major cities. This, we believe, will go a long way in not only addressing the transportation needs of the population but also reducing the carbon emissions linked to transportation sector. It is already a candidate for CDM projects.

9. We have also phased out lead from gasoline and reduced sulphur content substantially from diesel. The Environmental Protection Council, headed by the Prime Minister, has recently approved the Pakistan Clean Air Programme, which seeks to systematically phase out two stroke engine vehicles by 2013. The Council has also approved national environmental quality standards for noise and ambient air.

10. On **chemicals**, Pakistan's efforts in compliance with the phasing out of ozone depleting substances have been particularly recognized by the Montreal Protocol Secretariat. Already, we have totally phased ODS from foam industry, while it is nearing phase out in refrigeration. Pakistan has also completed the inventory of Persistent Organic Pollutants (PoPs) and submitted National Implementation Plan to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat. Similarly, are in the process of preparing the national chemical profile, identifying the areas where chemicals are either used or traded. We have also completed the inventory of mercury and mercury products. In this regard, we are now developing various plans and pilot projects.

11. On **waste**, particular attention is being given to the effective handling and safe disposal of hazardous and chemical waste. Moreover, an inventory of electronic waste is also being initiated to estimate the volume and type of this waste for safe disposal. Hospital waste management rules have been approved and are being implemented for their safe disposal since 2005. We have also initiated the development of a Green Ship breaking Yard, which will help prevent marine pollution from ship breaking waste and improve conditions for the workers.

12. The **Mining** sector plays an important role in Pakistan's economy. Currently more than 50 minerals are under exploitation in Pakistan, although still on a small scale. Mining sector, however, has tremendous potential for development in Pakistan because of rich marble, coal, gypsum and other minerals. The sector is, therefore, likely to grow in future and demands considerable attention in terms of environmental safeguards. Hence, Environmental Impact Assessment of mining projects is being conducted on regular basis as a mandatory requirement. The Government is also encouraging

mining industries to acquire ISO certification for promoting cleaner production. National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) are also in place for the same reason.

13. Some of the key issues facing this sector include the need for better inter-departmental and inter-ministerial coordination; capacity enhancement and strengthening coordination and transparency; and better monitoring and maintenance of data records.

14. In regard to **Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)**, the current development and economic paradigm focuses heavily on fossil fuel oriented growth. This encourages unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. To move to a more sustainable pattern of production and consumption, the existing economic and development paradigm may have to be shifted, .

15. This will be possible only with major investments including in the renewable energy sector, water and energy conservation, recycling and waste management. This will help encourage greener growth patterns and jobs, allowing for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

16. Several cleaner production initiatives have been undertaken in Pakistan in the past decade, primarily focusing on assessment of needs, energy audits, provision of technical assistance to the industry in adopting energy efficiency, promoting waste water recycling techniques and raising awareness of cleaner production packages. Much more still needs to be done particularly in acquiring knowledge and capacity to use sustainable production technologies and awareness of the environmental impacts and potential financial benefits associated with them.

17. Pakistan fully supports the need to build, through an inclusive and transparent process, a 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP, based on the work that we have done in this area at various levels including under the Marrakech Process. We believe that the Marrakech Process should remain an important forum for dialogue and cooperation on SCP issues among Governments and other stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman,

18. The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), now pending approval by the Cabinet, adopts a holistic and integrated approach to comprehensively address the challenges posed to sustainable development in its three key dimensions i.e., environment, social and economic. Importantly, it

seeks to put the country on a development path where progress is not measured through statistics of economic growth but by the quality of life of its people, especially the vulnerable and dispossessed.

19. This people centered approach, whether for economic and social development or for environmental enhancement, demands enhanced participatory planning and management through involvement of stakeholders. This is what the new NSDS offers.

Mr. Chairman,

20. Implementation has been the Achilles heel of the global development agenda. It has also been the biggest challenge for planners in Pakistan in the context of the implementation of NSDS. To overcome the implementation related hurdles, the NSDS provides a concrete plan of action at all three levels of government including federal, provincial and local.

21. The Plan of Action involves setting up of institutional mechanisms and building institutional capacities, generating requisite financing for change, establishing means for providing incentives and accountability in implementation, putting appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in place, promoting awareness and participation, empowering relevant stakeholders, and establishing an effective feedback mechanism through monitoring and reporting.

22. In fact, Pakistan is one of the few developing countries of the world that have developed an integrated set of indicators to allow analysis of the inherent trade-offs and inter-linkages between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

23. The NSDS seeks to systematically monitor integrated sets of sustainability indicators through a monitoring framework, and employs a mix of formal and informal approaches and tools to learn and adapt accordingly. Further, the monitoring framework is expected to relate directly to a clear framework for accountability.

24. Lastly, in implementing the NSDS, a key priority is to evolve and not impose a system for the implementation of sustainable development. In this regard, NSDS proposes the creation of a National Sustainable Development Commission.