

(Translation)

**Sustainable Development—The Road to Achieve
Chinese Dream and Human Progress**

Remarks by H.E. Wang Yi
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Political Forum on Sustainable Development

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Ms. Chair,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by extending congratulations, on behalf of the Chinese government, on the official inauguration of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This forum is the core mechanism in the UN endeavor to promote sustainable development. We are confident that it will play a positive role.

Ms. Chair,

The concept of sustainable development was formally introduced at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. Yet the idea had never been new to the Chinese people. Concepts of harmony between man and nature and not to drain the pond to catch the fish have always been part of the fine traditional Chinese culture and today they are as appealing as ever.

Sustainable development is a basic state policy of China. The Chinese government makes it clear that we cannot repeat the old way of "pollution first, treatment afterwards" and that we must be responsible for our future generations and the international community. We are now actively implementing a scientific outlook on development that puts people first and promotes comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development. We will grow the economy and, at the same time, protect the environment

to safeguard the fundamental and long-term interests of the people.

China is now the world's largest investor in new and renewable energies. In the first decade of the new century, we increased forest coverage in China by 3.8% or 365,100 square kilometers.

We have identified energy-saving and emission-reduction as a focal point in adjusting our economic structure and an important yardstick in evaluating the performance of our government officials. With the promulgation of laws and regulations such as the *Law on Renewable Energy* and *Energy Conservation Law*, China now has a fairly well-established legal framework for environmental protection.

From 2005 to 2010, we cut energy consumption by 630 million tons of standard coal equivalent through energy saving and energy efficiency improvement, which equals 1.46 billion tons less of CO₂ emission. Now we are fighting for the goal of reducing energy consumption and CO₂ emission per unit of GDP by 16% and 17% respectively between 2011 and 2015.

This month, we have just unveiled an action plan on air pollution prevention and control, which requires us to raise the share of non-fossil fuel consumption to 13% of the total energy consumption, and decrease that of coal to less than 65% by 2017.

Given China's national conditions and development level, we will face many difficulties and pains on the way to sustainable development. But we are determined to fight this uphill battle and stick to this path as it is the only road to realize the Chinese dream. Our efforts will pay off as we move forward.

Let me give you an example. In Kubuqi, the seventh largest desert in China, sand used to encroach on human habitat and local people were threatened by wind and sand day and night. Then, they changed their line of thinking and decided to make something out of the sand. They began to plant a special kind of willow on the barren land and make construction materials from sand, thus tackling the sand problem and growing the economy at the same time. Now more than 5,000 square kilometers of their land have turned green, annual precipitation has increased from 70 mm to over 300 mm and wildlife have returned. This is a win-win scenario between the environment and economic development.

Ms. Chair,

From Vision to Action, the theme of today's round-table meeting, has shown us the way to realize sustainable development globally as well as the direction for the forum. In this connection, I wish to make the following proposals:

First, we must strive to promote ecological progress. To do this, the key is to respect the law of nature, follow nature's will, and foster a sound interaction between economic growth, social progress and environmental protection. This is what mankind has learnt from the past and the common undertaking and pursuit of the international community today. China now regards ecological progress as being no less important than economic growth, and is mobilizing the entire country behind this endeavor. We see environmental protection as a precondition and opportunity for economic development. While we want prosperity and wealth, we also want clear waters and green mountains. In fact, clear waters and green mountains can bring us prosperity and wealth.

Second, we have to foster a favorable environment for sustainable development. Sustainable development cannot gain ground in the absence of a real and solid recovery of the global economy and a sound international trade and investment climate. We should improve global economic governance and make it fairer and more equitable. We should uphold a free, open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and oppose protectionism in all forms. We should better prepare ourselves for cross-border financial risks, discuss ways to improve global investment norms and encourage rational and well-managed flow of global capital. We should build a global value chain that shares interest and foster a big global market that benefits all, so as to achieve development with win-win results.

Third, we should adhere to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities". Sustainable development is a common cause for all mankind, to which all countries should contribute as much as they can. However, given their different basic national conditions, developing countries, including the emerging economies, and developed countries have different historical responsibilities and immediate obligations. "Common but differentiated responsibilities" is a fundamental principle in the area of development. Imposing uniformity and ignoring differences is to dodge or even shirk the responsibilities of developed countries. International cooperation on sustainable development must take into full account the differences between developed and developing countries in level, resources and means of

development. Concrete efforts should be made to address the difficulties of developing countries in capital, technology, capacity building and other means of implementation.

Fourth, we need to put social issues high on the agenda. A country's strength and prosperity requires more than economic growth, and sustainable development is not "sustainable economic development" only. Harmony, progress, fairness and justice of the society are also crucial. We believe that the assurance and improvement of people's well-being should be given greater importance. The pursuit of economic growth must be accompanied by the efforts to strengthen social development, improve the basic public service system, and make innovations in social governance. Social issues of people's immediate interest, such as schooling, medical care, housing, old-age care and social security should be properly handled, so that everyone contributes to and benefits from development.

Fifth, we should innovate in the thinking, model and method of development. Traditional ways of development, depleting resources and damaging the environment, have proved to be unsustainable. Greater efforts should be made to raise the quality and efficiency of development, adjust the structure of economy and improve the distribution of industries. Single-minded pursuit of speed and quantity should be avoided.

Real economy, the manufacturing industry and agriculture in particular, is the lifeline for many developing countries and should be strengthened and expanded. Financial industries should serve the real economy, not the other way round.

Inadequate infrastructure is the weak link of developing economies, while investing in infrastructure is an important way to overcome the financial crisis. Therefore, it is necessary to build partnerships on infrastructure development and set up investment and financing platforms in this regard.

Emerging industries and technologies in such areas as clean energy, energy saving and emissions reduction are becoming new growth points in the world economy. Scientific and technological innovation can provide a strong driving force for sustainable development. We should encourage technological breakthroughs and technology transfer from the North to the South so as to boost the development of green production forces.

Ms. Chair,

The establishment of this forum brings opportunities for sustainable development. I hope the forum's work will be down to earth and efficient, generating solutions while conducting discussions, and take actions while making decisions. To move from vision to action calls for sincerity and efforts of all countries. The Chinese government has been making its best effort to support other developing countries in pursuing sustainable development. We have arranged for RMB200 million to support small island states, the least developed countries and African countries in tackling climate change, and taken the lead in donating US\$500,000 to the third International Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States to be held in 2014.

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 has depicted for us "the future we want". China actively supports and pursues sustainable development. We will strive to build a beautiful China and make greater contribution to making our planet Earth a lovely home for mankind.

Thank you.