

SOUTH AFRICA
CSD15 THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
NEW YORK, 30 APRIL 2007

Chairperson, South Africa associates itself with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China.

Over the next few decades climate change will intensify the worst effects of poverty through its impacts on biodiversity, water resources, agriculture, health, and almost every sector of society. Sustainable development goals and targets will not be achieved if we do not decisively address the challenges associated with climate change.

The UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol establishes the fundamental principles of “equity” and “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” to direct our efforts.

Given their historical and current contribution to climate change, developed countries should take the lead in reducing GHG emissions, in providing new and additional financing, and in accelerating the transfer of climate-friendly, appropriate and cost-effective technologies to developing countries.

The CSD process can contribute to our efforts by identifying and formulating concrete, high-leverage actions that enhance our response to climate change in all its dimensions. In particular, the CSD has a key role to play in supporting broader sustainable development policies and actions with co-benefits for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In this context, South Africa believes that our deliberations and decisions at CSD should strike a balance between five key areas of work: (i) adaptation; (ii) mitigation; (iii) managing the unintended consequences of adaptation and mitigation policies and measures for the economies of other countries; (iv) the cross-cutting area of technology, with an emphasis on research, development and diffusion in support of adaptation and mitigation; and (v) the means of implementation, which includes capacity-building, awareness and finance.

Whilst underscoring the particular vulnerabilities, needs and capacity constraints of Africa, South Africa would like to highlight the following priorities in relation to the text:

- Developed countries should commit to significantly up-scale financial and technical support for adaptation to the impacts of climate change in developing countries. South Africa would support a learning-by-doing approach to implementing practical adaptation activities.
- Support the establishment of regional disaster management centres with the objective of strengthening capacity to identify and assess disaster risks; enhancing disaster related knowledge management systems; and integrating disaster management programmes with ongoing sustainable development plans.
- Enhance developing country capacity to mobilize resources for the implementation of “climate proof” and low carbon sustainable development paths.
- Strengthen developing country sustainable development research and institutional capacity.
- Create more empowering multilateral investment and technology frameworks in support of the wider deployment of climate-friendly technologies. The key challenge is the issue of incremental costs, which in turn links to the area of intellectual property right barriers and trade.

