

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY
CSD15 THEME: ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
New York 30 April to 11 May 2007

Chairperson

South Africa fully aligns itself with the statement by Pakistan on behalf of the G77 and China.

Access to energy services is key to meeting basic human needs. It contributes to social development. It drives economic growth, industrial development and job creation. And it has environmental impacts. In the context of the three dimensions of sustainable development, the manner in which we produce and consume energy is therefore of fundamental importance.

Developing countries are committed to the promotion of access to affordable and sustainable energy and transport, with special emphasis on the needs, health, safety and capacity of women and the youth. Appropriate energy should be accessible to all citizens at an affordable cost. We must also establish regional energy policies which will ensure that energy resources are adequately developed to cater for region-wide needs.

To meet these national and regional objectives, efforts by African countries to develop, implement and monitor aggressive energy efficiency strategies and plans, to deploy renewable and other advanced energy technologies, and to upgrade existing technologies and energy production and distribution infrastructure, need to be supported.

At an international level, more empowering multilateral investment and technology frameworks are required to improve energy access and efficiency in pursuit of a pro-growth path of climate friendly sustainable development. Developed countries have a responsibility to find the means and resources to meet both the energy needs of developing countries and realize global sustainable development. In other words, to incentivise those developing countries that implement and accelerate national sustainable energy policies and plans with demonstrated climate, economic growth, development and poverty alleviation co-benefits.

The innovative development and full implementation of the existing paradigm for international cooperation on climate change under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol will contribute significantly towards such an endeavor. Carbon markets can provide incentives for commercial energy technologies that are in the market. But it needs to be supplemented by financing mechanisms for new technologies and existing technologies that may not be commercially viable in carbon market terms. This would require a combination of incentives from climate and non-climate sources.

Against this background, South Africa has previously proposed a new strategic approach that would recognize and incentivise the implementation of sustainable development policies and measures by developing countries, for example voluntary energy policies and measures with sustainable development and climate co-benefits. This approach should be implemented under the UNFCCC, which is the appropriate UN body for such an initiative.

There is also an urgent need to jointly explore the current practices and realities of intellectual property rights (IPRs) in energy technologies. Though we acknowledge the importance of the appropriate and balanced protection of IPRs to stimulate technology research, development and diffusion in the energy sector, the reality is that IPRs also constitute a cost barrier.

Preferential access for developing countries to facilitate wider deployment of climate-friendly energy technologies is a key priority that could be addressed through a Multilateral Technology

Acquisition and Deployment Fund. A Venture Capital Fund, located in a multilateral financial institution, could also co-fund R&D for emerging energy technologies, with the resulting IPRs accruing to such a Fund. These IPRs could then be deployed at concessional rates in developing countries and on a commercial basis in developed countries.

Another way for developed countries to scale up investment in technology development, transfer and deployment, would be to support collaborative R&D between developing and developed country institutions focused on particular sectors, eg. clean coal technology, biomass fuels, and solar thermal electricity, which all hold much promise for developing countries.