



Statement on behalf of Group of 77 and China by Mr. Farukh Amil, Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, during the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) of Fifteenth Session of Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15)
New York, February 26, 2007

Mr. Chairman:

Excellencies:

Distinguished delegates:

Ladies and gentlemen:

Let me at the outset congratulate you, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, on your election as the Chairman of Fifteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) and to convey our profound gratitude for your devotion and very able stewardship of this important session.

Let me thank the Secretary General for presenting informative reports on the thematic clusters of CSD-15.

The Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) is an important first step in our preparations for the Fifteenth Session of CSD. The Session is expected to take important policy decisions in the areas of: Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air Pollution/Atmosphere; and Climate Change, which have close inter-linkages.

The Fifteenth Session is particularly significant in view of the topicality of the issues on its agenda and their relevance to our endeavors to eradicate poverty and achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The fact that poverty is still rampant globally and on the rise in some countries and regions only lends greater urgency for seeking sustainable and development oriented solutions to the challenges we face.

Natural resources are depleting while natural disasters and pressures on environment are on the rise. Increasing energy demand is further putting strains on the existing resources. The costs of this shift are exorbitant and unpredictable and to be largely borne, unfortunately, by some of the most underdeveloped countries of the world. Clearly, the situation demands renewed and enhanced commitment for concerted actions based on concrete and equitable plans.

Mr. Chairman,

The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development recognized that the three overarching objectives of sustainable development are: protecting natural resources, eradicating poverty, changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns. In this context, while reaffirming the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development, we call for policies and actions that will enable the developing countries to bridge the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor.

The G-77 and China remain convinced that concerted efforts are needed to integrate the three pillars of sustainable development, as agreed in Agenda 21, the Millennium Summit, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the 2005 World Summit, in a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive manner with regard to the policy options addressing the four themes of CSD-15.

The need for a fully supportive and enabling international environment to facilitate and promote the implementation of national development strategies by developing countries cannot be overemphasized. Our demonstrable political will has proven insufficient to overcome the challenges we face. These challenges transcend the issues of commitment and will, but relate more closely to our lack of capacity, inadequate resources including financial, human and technical; crippling impact of external debt; unfair trade, agricultural, and other economic policies, which impede our development efforts. Due to all these impediments, it is not entirely within the capacity of developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs particularly in the areas of energy, industrial development, air pollution and climate change despite our best intentions.

Mr. Chairman,

The world showed tremendous stewardship in outlining a comprehensive global development agenda through the agreements reached and commitments made at major UN Summits and Conferences. Unfortunately, this collective stewardship has not translated into local action on the ground. Implementation remains the Achilles Heel of the global development agenda and the biggest challenge for sustainability.

We would like to see that the implementation of agreed commitments be based on the Rio principles particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

We must seek ways to build capacities, enhance coordination and strengthen scientific knowledge and assessment and cooperation, foster the transfer of knowledge and technology to developing countries. The Group of 77 and China believes that the urgent implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer is one of the essential elements towards achieving this.

The innovation of partnerships agreed to in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, requires a more coherent approach on the corporate, environmental and social responsibility and accountability, which would allow developing countries to benefit from lessons learnt and best practices in different parts of the world.

Mr. Chairman,

As CSD-15 aims at finding ways and actions to address the challenges identified in the review year with regard to the four issues under the thematic clusters, we cannot forget that approximately 1.6 billion people in developing countries still have no access to energy and 2.4 billion people have high exposure to indoor air-pollution because they still rely on biomass for their energy needs. The G77 and China believes that recognizing heterogeneity among developed and developing countries is a very important step in designing policies to tackle the four themes in an equitable manner. Adequate policies must take into consideration the special needs of developing countries, particularly those in Africa, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

The seriousness of our endeavors to contribute to the Commission on Sustainable Development in a meaningful manner, is a result of the importance that we all attach to the role of Commission on Sustainable Development, which has a mandate to review progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building and Mauritius Strategy. We would like to see CSD playing more active role and to serve as an effective forum to ensure implementation of development commitments. It should continue to provide guidance and coordination on issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and more importantly the means of their implementation.

It is our hope that the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the CSD-15 will allow for thorough and fruitful discussion on policy options on the four themes that will be reflected in the outcome of the meeting. We expect that CSD-15 will agree to a set of action-based and development oriented policy options with an in-built mechanism allowing for their follow up and implementation. We would like to approach the forthcoming CSD with a view to find sustainable solutions to the development challenges that we continue to face.

I thank you.