

Government of Nepal

STATEMENT

By

Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Honorable Member of the National Planning Commission of the Government of Nepal at the High-level segment of the fifteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) on the theme "Turning commitment into action, working together in partnership"

New York, 11 May 2007

Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Ministers
Distinguished Participants

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you for the effective stewardship of Commission on Sustainable Development and successful steering towards the negotiated outcome.

Nepal highly commends the role played by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in reviewing and assessing progress, devising policy options and ensuring effective implementation of sustainable development agenda. We hope this process of dialogue and partnership fosters not only national and international policy coherence but also does it create ownership among the participants.

Mr. Chairman, Nepal associates itself with the statement made by His Excellency the Minister of State for Environment of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Distinguished delegates,

The question of sustainable development, in essence, is about improving peoples lives, inter and intra-generation equity and justice, and ethics and moral values. As a custodian, it is the duty and responsibility of the present generation to bestow a better world to the ultimate owner, the posterity. But at the same time, we should not ignore the deprivation and destitution of the present generation.

The four cluster issues on the agenda, namely energy, industrial development, air pollution and climate change are closely interlinked, and bear significant importance on achieving Millennium Development Goals. These issues should not be compartmentalized but be addressed in the context of the overarching development priorities of the developing and least developed countries (LDCs), that is, sustained economic and social transformation, poverty reduction and environment protection.

Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to inform this august gathering about the recent political developments in Nepal. With the promulgation of the interim constitution and rebels joining the government, a decade-long violent conflict has ended. The new interim constitution provides that environmental soundness in physical development and human activities, conservation of bio-diversity and promotion of sustainable consumption of resources are the directive principles of the state. It also underlines that every person has the right to live in a clean and safe environment.

However, we experienced not only destruction of physical infrastructure, but also social capital and biological resources during the conflict, which jeopardized our efforts of implementing sustainable development agenda and put at risk our commitments towards sustainable development. Therefore, special attention should be given to the needs of countries emerging from the conflict in the areas of capacity building, technical cooperation and infrastructure development to help them realize sustainable development agenda.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to highlight the importance of energy cluster for Nepal. Increased access to and efficient use of modern energy is critical for meeting basic human needs and industrial development. It may also relieve majority of the rural women, sitting in the mud floor with a child in the lap and cooking food in traditional fire wood oven, of indoor air pollution and directly contribute to improving the health of both, the mother and the child. We have huge potentials of generating hydro energy, but the major barrier is financing and technical capacity. The partnership agenda of sustainable development will be incomplete if it does not address up-front the financing needs of LDCs for sustainable energy. It should recognize that infrastructure grants, soft loan and support for technology transfer are necessary for LDCs.

Let me also highlight a few other aspects of effective partnership.

An effective and practical way to build partnership could be through establishing people-to-people contacts, sharing views and stimulating local ideas and initiatives, involving women, youth and indigenous people at all levels and supporting adaptation strategies with a view to achieving pro-poor growth, enhancing capacities and strengthening climate change resilience. It could be supported by knowledge sharing or networking and extensive dissemination of, and access to, affordable and sustainable modern technology, including efficient and clean energy technology. These actions and initiatives at the local and national levels should be up scaled by the promotion of regional and international cooperation by identifying collective actions while building on existing frameworks. However, new arrangements should not allow us to abdicate from our prior commitments including commitments on Doha Development Round of trade negotiation, capacity development of developing countries, debt relief, technology transfer and enhanced flow of aid.

Finally, I would like to remind honorable ministers and distinguished delegates that we cannot chart practical course of action for partnership under the shadow of mistrust. Let us understand the sensitivity of each other. Let us refrain from blame game. A win-win outcome is conceivable. A better world is possible, and is achievable if we act jointly. Let us act and act immediately. Nepal stands ready to contribute in this direction.

Thank you for your kind attention.