

**The High Level Segment of the 10th Session of the Conference of
Parties to the UNFCC**

15– 17 December 2004 - Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Proposed Interventions by

**Hon. A.H.M. Fowzie,
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources,
Government of Sri Lanka.**

1. Panel discussion on:

**THE CONVENTION AFTER 10 YEARS: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND
FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Shadow Chair / Hon. Fowzie
Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, first of all, let me thank the Government of Argentina for hosting this important meeting and for their warm hospitality. I will also take this opportunity to congratulate the organizers, particularly, UNFCC secretariat for the excellent arrangements of the meeting.

During the ten years of the Convention, we have accomplished a great deal in the areas of scientific, technological and policy advances to address the issue of climate change. All the parties have made enormous efforts to address this while maintaining the solidarity and working towards ensuring the Kyoto Protocol a reality. At this juncture we strongly believe that we should focus now more on

the implementation related issues such as capacity building, technology transfer etc.

With decades of experience, now we are convinced that climate change is no longer an uncertain issue. Our analysis indicates that the mean surface air temperature in my country, Sri Lanka, has been increasing by about 0.16 degrees Celsius per decade over the last 3 to 4 decades. Being an island, Sri Lanka is one of the nations which is more vulnerable to climate change. We have been experiencing frequent extreme weather conditions affecting coastal ecosystems including corals, coastal lands and also agricultural crop yields.

One of the constraints that we have experienced in the past is the lack of country specific data and information with regard to climate change. Still the awareness among the general public on climate change is low. Education, training and public awareness should be given high priority. Therefore, we should strengthen the implementation of Article 6 of the convention. We believe that through continuous engagement in education, training and awareness most of implementation problems could be solved.

Country specific technology needs assessment and technology transfer strategies should be developed. There are many things to do in the field of forestry. The role of forestry in addressing climate change should be studied further. Developing countries need both technical and financial support for these specific

areas. Most countries have problems in preparation and regular updating of national greenhouse gas inventories. This is an important activity which we neglect.

All human beings are vulnerable to climate change impacts, but the poorer sections of society are more vulnerable than others. Hence our attention should be directed towards these poorer sections. In this context, the global community, especially the more affluent countries have an important and active role to play. We have to help these poorer communities to adapt to any climate change impact.

In conclusion, we must congratulate ourselves for the achievements during last ten years in terms of policies and measures adopted. However, we have an insurmountable task in the implementation of these measures. By adopting a scientific and technological approach rather than a political and economic approach we will be able to solve these implementation issues.

I thank you.

NEW

15.12.04 A.m

2. Panel discussion on:

IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ADAPTATION MEASURES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Eradication of poverty is the foremost challenge faced by us today, as a large population of developing nations lives below the poverty line. The climate change effects further aggravates the poverty. The poorest are the ones who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We should consider meeting the peoples' basic needs such as provision of water, electricity, sanitation facilities, transport, housing and employment are equally important as environment conservation. In Sri Lanka, about 40% of households do not have electricity and the problem of providing safe drinking water and sanitation facilities is also in a similar magnitude.

Being an island, Sri Lanka is one of the nations which is more vulnerable to climate change. We have been experiencing frequent extreme weather conditions affecting coastal ecosystems including corals, coastal lands and also agricultural crop yields. Sri Lanka believes that the Convention can make a significant contribution to address adaptation measures for climate change and sustainable development. We believe that the COP should give priority for the following:

- I. Address the adverse effects of climate change on water resources, agriculture and food security, rural economic activities and health, as well as on coastal zones;
- II. Develop methodologies for adaptation, sensitivity and vulnerability assessment, including research and studies.
- III. Capacity building in conducting integrated assessment of vulnerability.
- IV. Monitor and systematic observation of climate change impacts in developing countries in order to facilitate timely adaptation;
- V. Identify adaptation measures and facilitate timely adaptation where near-term climate change impacts are well understood, and adaptation measures are feasible
- VI. Moving towards implementing integrated approaches, such as integrated coastal zone management, and further developing integrated assessment models, as well as identifying effective adaptation strategies and assessing how these could be integrated into national development programmes.
- VII. Develop pilot projects to demonstrate how to design and implement projects to address the adverse effects of Climate Change such as El Nino and related drought and flood situations by developing countries.

We believe the Special Climate Change Fund should assist following activities:

- I. Vulnerability Assessment and adaptation related activities of Agriculture,

Water Resources, food Security and coastal zones.

- II. The development of country specific adaptation technologies for developing countries
- III. Capacity building activities on project development and preparation through implementing pilot adaptation and mitigation projects

We also believe that findings under Special Climate Change Funds should be equitably distributed among major regions in the world.

Finally, I propose that the COP should guide the GEF to provide financial assistance for all developing countries to prepare and implement National Adaptation Plan of Actions or Strategies. The COP should also request the parties to integrate the adaptation measures into their poverty alleviation and sustainable development strategies.

I thank you.