

Statements of the

**Honourable State Minister,
Ministry of Environment and Forests,
Bangladesh**

Mr. Jafrul Islam Chowdhury,

at the

**High-level Segment of the
10th Conference of Parties (COP 10)**

to the

**United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

**Buenos Aires, Argentina
(15-17 December 2004)**

“UNFCCC after 10 years - accomplishments and future challenges”

Madam Chair
Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

It is with great satisfaction that I note Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and its entry into force in February 2005. This is certainly one of the greatest achievements of the UNFCCC. The Kyoto Protocol will boost the establishment and use of a global emission trading scheme and activities under Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism. This will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development activities in developed and developing countries.

I am sorry to say that some industrialised countries have not yet joined the Kyoto Protocol. We wish they would recognise this historic opportunity and join into our effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the well being of our future generation.

~~Mr. Chairman,~~ *Madam Chair*

The Kyoto Protocol can only be a first step. It will not be enough to offset the effects of climate change.

We all know that the predicted temperature rise and subsequent sea level rise will adversely affect coastal countries – such as Bangladesh - and island nations. Large-scale inundation of coastal areas could create unbearable suffering for developing countries such as Bangladesh. We need to take action now to reduce emissions even more and at the same time support those people living in highly vulnerable situations to adapt to climate change.

Madam Chair
~~Mr. Chairman,~~

As a developing country we are making strong efforts to find a de-carbonised development path, a development path that is less polluting and more sustainable. We hope other developing countries will follow us.

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Honourable State Minister,
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Mr. Jafrul Islam Chowdhury

“Impacts of climate change, adaptation measures and sustainable development”

(Hon'ble Minister as a Panellist for this topic)

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

“In July 2004, just six months back, my country, Bangladesh, experienced one of its worst floods ever. One third of our country was flooded. More than 1000 people died in the waters, around a million people lost their houses. About 30 million people were directly affected by the floods lasted several weeks and destroyed large parts of our harvest.

All the climate change models that have been applied to Bangladesh show that climate change will bring even more frequent and larger floods to our country. Climate change will also threaten our agriculture, through increased inundation, salinity and through hotter winters that will lead to droughts.”

On the issue of impacts, vulnerability and especially adaptation, Mr. Chair, I would like therefore to reiterate Bangladesh's stand that it is high time that we move from **studies** and assessments to **action**.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

We welcome the development of the LDC Fund for the LDCs and support the NAPAs and I am pleased to inform you that Bangladesh NAPA is proceeding quickly and would be completed soon.

We, therefore, need to achieve agreement very soon on how to fund the priority projects that are to be identified through the NAPA process in the LDCs. Bangladesh feels that such priority activities will be country driven in a participatory manner, and therefore should be **funded on a full-cost basis**.

Distinguished Delegates,

In order to enable LDCs including my country to develop in a sustainable manner, I strongly urge the industrialized countries to immediately further reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The targets under the Kyoto Protocol are a good start,

and we welcome that the Kyoto Protocol will soon come into force. Bangladesh hopes that those industrialized countries, which are yet to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, will do so in the near future. However, much more will be required to reverse the impacts of climate change.

In addition to curbing greenhouse gases, we will require more assistance to adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change. In so far as global warming and the rise in sea levels is concerned, I would like to point out that Bangladesh is one of the lowest emitters of green house gases in the world. In major cities and towns almost all-domestic fuel in Bangladesh is gas based. Almost all public and private transport in the main cities is now converted into gas. And yet, without using substantial amount of coal or wood for our needs, we stand to suffer the most and are one of the most vulnerable countries and victims of global warming.

Mr. Chairman,

It is not us who created this situation; it should not be us who pays the price for the industrialized countries' wealth. I believe that it would be appropriate for the industrialized countries to further progress on technology transfer and to make generous contributions to the adaptation funds set up under the UNFCCC and to further bilateral funding of adaptation.

Distinguished Delegates,

We consider, afforestation and reforestation offers simultaneous opportunities for meeting mitigation and adaptation requirements. Bangladesh has demonstrated these across the country, particularly in coastal areas. I think, necessary assistance for afforestation and reforestation programme need to be provided to the developing countries in particular to LDCs according to the provision of the Convention and the Protocol.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning to the issue of Adaptation in general I would like to make a few points.

Bangladesh welcomes the strong commitment we have observed from all parties at COP10 to move the adaptation issue forward. We would like to commend, in particular, the Elected President of the COP **His Excellency Mr. Gineés Gonzalez Garciá and Ambassador Estrada of Argentina** for their untiring efforts in this regard.

Bangladesh also feels that there is a great deal of goodwill from all parties to make the adaptation action forward.

Distinguished Delegates,

Finally Bangladesh would like to propose some practical steps to take appropriate actions to reduce the vulnerability of the poorest people in the poorest countries.

In this respect we take note of the results of the **Workshop on Insurance** held by the UNFCCC secretariat. The workshop had some excellent recommendations, which could be followed up in the COP. In particular, we would suggest that the possibility of developing **Micro-insurance** for the poor using institutions involved in micro lending such as the **Grameen Bank** in Bangladesh. We believe that this approach has the benefits of involving private sector institutions with valuable knowledge and expertise in providing insurance as well as institutional support that have excellent track record at reaching the poorest people through micro-credit.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh would like to propose that the issue of using and developing Micro-insurance be explored further quickly. One proposal may be for the UNFCCC Secretariat to convene a **Workshop on "Risk Assessment and Micro-Insurance"** with experts from relevant fields to develop the actions further. **Bangladesh would be happy to host such workshop.**

I thank you Mr. Chairman.

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“Technology and Climate Change”

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

The problem of climate change has been created through the use of old and inefficient technology – especially for transport and the generation of energy from fossil fuels – in those countries that constitute today's industrialised world.

We have a right to development. However, we are aware of the problems that the old way of using technology has created and we are striving towards finding a better development path - a de-carbonised development path.

In Bangladesh we are working with a two-pronged approach. On the one hand we are introducing climate friendly technologies for mitigation of greenhouse gases. On the other, we are developing and introducing new technologies to help us adapt to climate change. My country is highly vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change and adaptation to climate change is our highest priorities.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to present some examples of mitigation as well as adaptation technologies we are developing or already using in Bangladesh.

In our capital Dhaka, we have undertaken a conversion of all 2-stroke motor rickshaws to four-stroke natural gas power. This was a great success, which has not only reduced greenhouse gas emissions from motor rickshaws; it also had a beneficial impact on urban air quality and health. In a next step, we are now working on the conversion of buses to natural gas.

In another effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions we are investigating options for improving the efficiency of brick kilns, of which there are many in Bangladesh. We are hopeful that this will result in a win-win situation for the local environment and economy, as well as the global environment.

We are working on several projects to introduce renewable energy technologies in Bangladesh. This includes solar energy projects and a biogas project, which aims to use methane from waste dumps.

Several of these projects are being considered under the Clean Development Mechanism.

Mr. Chairman,

I want to emphasise that we have a right for being provided with the best and most up-to-date technology. This is a prerequisite for us for developing a de-carbonised development path. When multinationals invest in developing countries they need to use the best standard of technology. There have been many attempts of companies to deploy old and outdated technology in the developing world.

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to adaptation technologies, I would like to mention that the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute is undertaking research on stagnant deep-water rice varieties that would be suitable for waterlogged areas. We have identified other technologies that help our people in adapting to the effects of climate change, for example floating gardens made from water hyacinth to grow vegetables in waterlogged areas. As a third example, we are developing saline-resistant crops. Increased salinity is one of the consequences of climate change in our country and it has already detrimental effects in our agricultural sector, especially in the coastal areas. We have undertaken a massive afforestation programme in our coastal areas but a lot remains to be done which requires international support.

Mr. Chairman,

Many technologies have been developed for mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and in many cases it is a matter of finding ways to introduce them in the market, promote their use and replace outdated technologies. The CDM is of great help in this regard.

Less has been done to support the development of adaptation technologies. However, in the case of my country, Bangladesh mitigation and adaptation are of equal importance. Therefore I call on my ministerial colleagues and delegates from all countries to put more emphasis on the development of mitigation and adaptation technologies.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.

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Mr. Jafrul Islam Chowdhury

"Mitigation of climate change – policies and their impacts"

Madam Chair, Honourable Ministers, Distinguish Delegates,

Let me start by saying that

I refer to my earlier comments about the devastating impact of climate change for the people of Bangladesh. My Prime Minister has noted that while for some countries, the impact of climate change might be **life-style** threatening, for others such as Bangladesh, it is **life** threatening.

I therefore use this occasion to renew our appeal to all nations to affirm their commitment to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions:

- Demonstrable progress and leadership is required from industrialised countries, which have contributed most to the legacy of increased atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.
- The Kyoto Protocol provides a starting point and we welcome the efforts of countries that have signed up.
- We also call on other industrialised countries who have not ratified the Protocol to reconsider their decision in light of the dramatic impact that global greenhouse gas emissions are likely to have on the efforts to reduce poverty in countries such as Bangladesh.

Madam Chair,

COP-8 in Delhi reaffirmed that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing country parties. Large numbers of people remain without adequate energy provision to meet their development needs. Nevertheless, I must stress that **all** countries have a role to play in achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention: preventing dangerous human interference with the climate system.

We are doing our part to promote more sustainable modes of development:

- We are proud to have established our Designated National Authority for the Clean Development Mechanism, which has already cleared some promising project proposals.

- We are investigating technologies that can help reduce our emissions growth, and we have already undertaken a conversion of 2-stroke three wheel vehicles to four-stroke natural gas based vehicles in our capital, which also had a beneficial impact on urban air quality and health.
- We are now working on further conversions of buses and improving the efficiency of our brick kilns to promote further win-win scenarios.

We are facing a serious threat to our ongoing efforts to reduce poverty in Bangladesh as well as in many other Least Developed Countries. I hope that fellow heads of delegation will convey to their governments the urgency and seriousness of the challenge of tackling global climate change.

I thank you Madam Chair.