

CPA UK Branch Seminar on “Climate Change- Tackling The Causes; Managing The Impacts” to be held in London From 26 To 30 November, 2007

I must thank you for raising this issue, of such significance for our future generations and us.

We all have a vested interest in making our planet secure for our children and grand children.

India's GHG emissions are among the lowest in per capita terms. Moreover, being only around 4% of the world's emissions, action by us will have a marginal effect on overall emissions.

Here, we must remember that India's per capita emissions of green house gases (GHG) is only 1.2 tonnes of CO₂, as against the USA's 20 tonnes. We emit 1/20th of the US, 1/12th of Japan and 1/15th of EU-15. With a population of 17% of the world, our emission does not exceed even 4%.

Nonetheless, we recognize wholeheartedly our responsibility as a developing country. We wish to engage constructively and productively with the international community and to add our weight to global efforts to preserve and protect the environment.

We are determined that India's per-capita GHG emissions are not going to exceed those of developed countries even while pursuing policies of development and economic growth.

This position has also been reiterated by the Hon'ble P.M in his intervention at the summit meeting of the G-8 with leaders held on June 8, 2007.

At this juncture of our history, our economy must grow at a fast pace to address the critical issues of health, education, poverty and unemployment, as indeed the developed nations did in their time. India presently stands at a juncture where the economy is growing on the one hand, while on the other the country has to address several persistent challenges — poverty eradication, providing basic amenities of life to its citizens, etc. The country has thus to maintain a balance between its developmental goals and environmental challenges. It is, in fact, in India's interests to actively push for a deal that would force the first world to create mechanisms that ensure the transfer of appropriate technologies and resources to facilitate a shift to clean technologies.

It is important that India and other developing economies push for a climate change regime that has convergence of green house gas emission on equal per capita basis world-wide. Our Prime Minister has spoken frequently on these lines and any deviation from this principle would defy equity and should therefore be rejected.

The process of burden sharing must be fair. It should take into account where the primary responsibility for the present levels of GHG concentration rests and not perpetuate poverty among the developing countries. No strategy should foreclose for them the possibilities of accelerated social and economic development.

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has stated in no uncertain terms that global emissions must start declining by 2015 and be reduced by at least 50% by 2050 (from 1990 levels) to prevent the world's temperature from rising more than two degrees Celsius over pre-industrialized temperatures. The determination of any particular stabilization goal and the time frame in which it should be achieved needs to be made at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The developed countries should also honour the UNFCCC call for a leadership role by them in addressing climate change by taking deeper emission reduction targets.

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