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**TOWARDS A RESILIENT PLANET:
ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE**

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Leadership in Developing Countries: Reconciling Opportunities and Challenges of Climate Resilient Development

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Ministerial Session

About the Session

In developing countries, livelihoods and socioeconomic activities depend on climate-sensitive sectors. Thus, developing countries are vulnerable to climate variability. Climate vulnerability coupled with poverty and increasing inequalities makes interventions important despite the challenges. Effects of climate change led to decelerating development and less developed regions tend to have a weaker adaptive capacity and are more prone to climate impacts, thus leading to a vicious cycle. To ensure a climate-resilient development, it is crucial to consider issues that are complex, interconnected, and require interventions at the temporal and spatial levels. International cooperation is an important link to provide critical support to partner countries in the form of finance, technical know-how, as well as capacity building. The public and private sectors, civil society organisations, communities and households all play important roles in addressing these challenges to achieve climate-resilient development that benefits the most vulnerable. Developing countries require urgent access to long-term, affordable finance to implement climate-resilient recovery measures. This session aimed to discuss major opportunities and challenges faced by developing countries in taking systemic and multi-stakeholder approaches to mainstream resilience into development planning.

Speakers

Moderator

- Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute

Ministerial Addresses

- Dr Yasmine Fouad, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Environment, Egypt
- Ms Khadeeja Naseem, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Maldives
- Ms Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, United Arab Emirates

Special Addresses

- Mr Seydou Bari Sidibe, Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Guinea
- Dr Junaid Kamal Ahmad, India Country Director, The World Bank
- Mr Kamal Kishore, Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority

Disclaimer

The text of the addresses is based on auto-generated transcript from YouTube. Minor edits were made on grammar and spelling. The address by Mr Seydou Bari Sidibe was translated from French to English. The exact wording of the discussions and all addresses can be accessed from YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/mlt0PSZ8GrA>.

Actionable Messages

Message 1: People need to be put at the centre of any discussion on climate resilience. To better understand how climate is going to impact societies and communities locally, there is a need to collect granular data and undertake more micro-level analyses. Climate science should be de-jargonised and made more relatable to people so that the science is better connected to society.

Message 2: Mind-set change and mainstreaming across the board is very important. A very important first step, in terms of national climate action, is to institutionalize the process at the highest political level. As highlighted in the Egyptian case, their National Climate Change Council, is led by the Prime Minister, which helps in mainstreaming climate change in the development processes and programmes. Egypt also factored the 'environmental sustainability criteria' in the national budget along with measures for greening the national budget. As a measure for mainstreaming sustainable development, the country aims to reach 50% of the government funded projects to be green projects by 2024 and 100% of the government national projects to be green projects by 2030.

Message 3: Even though all countries have set common objectives, the path towards sustainable development should not be a matter of literally copying and pasting, but emulating it based on each country's context and circumstances. Taking into account our cultures and diversity will enable decision-makers to take effective and sustainable development actions.

Message 4: Developing countries would like to access 'new additional finance' along with appropriate technology for both mitigation and adaptation to climate change so as to enhance the national capacities to fulfil the requirements of the UNFCCC and associated Paris Agreement. Climate finance should represent a progression beyond previous efforts and be scaled up with concrete steps to meet the new collective quantified goal on climate finance from the floor of the hundred billion per year, and taking into account which is very important the needs and the priorities of the developing countries.

Message 5: For long-term finance and the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, the momentum seen at Glasgow has to be maintained, including the establishment of the ad-hoc working group and the high-level ministerial dialogues from 2022 to 2024.

Message 6: Science-based adaptation and resilience action should be at the centre of our collective response to climate change particularly to protect those in vulnerable developing countries. The urgent call to ramp up adaptation action has been outlined by the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation on urging countries to establish robust systems for monitoring and evaluating adaptation actions specifically designed to address local challenges.

Message 7: It is going to be extremely important, that the COP dialogues change its narrative to investing in the development transitions of nations. The developing world is not looking at climate change from the perspectives of a projects, it is looking at development transitions along with ensuring social protection.

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“ The incremental investment costs globally of net zero have been estimated at more than 250 trillion US dollars, which is more than four times the current global GDP. This level of incremental investment will certainly impact economic growth in developing countries besides reducing both fiscal allocations and private investment in social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, public health, water supply and sanitation.

**Dr Prodipto Ghosh,
Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute**

“ We cannot say we want to mainstream climate change in the development processes actions and programmes at the national level, while we are not putting the head of the government at the heart of that part. We have put that in a National Climate Change Strategy up to 2050 with the pillars of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, but much more importantly, governance.

**Dr Yasmine Fouad,
Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Environment, Egypt**

“ Climate change cannot be limited to nations, its impacts extend beyond borders, beyond human exigencies that are minor in the face of what the planet asks us of today and therefore our response to this challenge must look beyond borders. We need to maintain the spirit of multilateral cooperation that characterize the price agreement especially as a lesson learned from the current pandemic.

**Ms Khadeeja Naseem,
Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Maldives**

“ As the host of COP28, the UAE is committed to working closely with COP Presidencies to ensure climate action is progressing at the right pace. In this critical decade for climate we believe there is an enormous potential to build a better world for all through multilateralism.

**Ms Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri,
Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, United Arab Emirates**

“ It is the responsibility of decision-makers at all levels to ensure that the future of future generations is not compromised or mortgaged by frivolous political decisions that do not take into account the fundamental dimensions of sustainable development. It is an opportunity for us to develop without harming the nature.

**Mr Seydou Bari Sidibe,
Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Guinea**

“ Social protection is the foundation which will help us brace for change that is yet to come. It will protect our poor, but it will also protect the human capital of our workers going forward. Because of the pandemic, India has made a tectonic shift in the way it is giving social protection.

**Dr Junaid Kamal Ahmad
India Country Director, The World Bank**

“ Let us put people at the centre. Our experience is that wherever resilience building efforts have succeeded they have not happened just because of government policies, or international frameworks. They have happened because there has been a mass movement and people's participation.

**Mr Kamal Kishore,
Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority**

Narrative

Moderator

Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, TERI

We have balanced gender representation from women in the ministerial among the ministerial speakers. The past year, the world has witnessed some apocalyptic events of climate disasters. We had the unprecedented wildfires in California; we had floods which were more extensive and created more damage than in any recorded history in Germany as well as in China and in India, and of course, there were several other extreme weather events all over the globe. However, in the past couple of months, several other events have drawn our attention to the nature of the challenges that have to be overcome as we move to a climate resilient planet. I would like to draw on three developments.

First, fossil fuel prices, i.e., coal, oil, natural gas, have skyrocketed impacting economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and causing distress to the poor. This is attributed to a mismatch between the scaling down of fossil fuel investments and the scaling up of clean energy investments leading an energy gap which the market has resolved to higher prices.

Second, in our immediate neighbourhood, in Sri Lanka, a planned rapid move to natural farming has resulted in major shortfalls in food output, depressed farmers' incomes and adversely impacted the fiscal situation as the government has sought to compensate the farmers.

Third, in a recently released study by a well-known consulting firm relying on a well-known global climate linked economic model, the incremental investment costs globally of net zero have been estimated at more than 250 trillion US dollars, which is more than four times the current global GDP. This level of incremental investment will certainly impact economic growth in developing countries besides reducing both fiscal allocations and private investment in social infrastructure, schools, hospitals, public health, water supply, sanitation and so on and thereby render the task of poverty eradication much more difficult.

Clearly, the reconciliation of development needs and climate resilience is a huge policy challenge for all developing countries and calls for enlightened leadership of a very high order. Ministers were closely concerned with such difficult policy challenges. Their countries represent the microcosm of all developing countries. From a small island developing state which faces the existential threat of sea level rise, the Maldives to a country whose millennia old civilization has been critically dependent on a single major freshwater resource which may be threatened by climate change, the Nile that is Egypt, to a country whose economy has been largely dependent on exports of oil which would be adversely impacted by GHG mitigation worldwide and must accordingly rapidly diversify its economy i.e. the UAE.

We are also privileged to have with us three other distinguished speakers; one from the Republic of Guinea, which is a significant oil exporter and also faces the prospect of fallen exports on account of global decarbonisation. The World Bank which has embarked on major initiatives to assist developing countries with both decarbonisation and adaptation and from India's National Disaster Management Authority, which in less than two decades of existence has demonstrated great capabilities both in anticipating challenges of climate related disasters and organizing relief and rehabilitation.

Ministerial Address

Dr Yasmine Fouad, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Environment, Egypt

Thank you very much! Good morning everyone. It is really a pleasure to be participating in the panel today at the road to COP27 where the world is really facing the adverse impact of climate change, especially the price that should be paid by developing countries. Developing countries face various challenges due to the increase of the vulnerability to climate change impact. With reduced adaptive capacity to allow communities to be more resilient to such impacts, accessibility to the means of implementation, especially climate finance from public sources is a cornerstone in facing those challenges.

Developing countries would like to access 'new additional finance' along with appropriate technology for both mitigation and adaptation to climate change so as to enhance the national capacities to fulfil the requirements of the UNFCCC and associated Paris Agreement. As Egypt is the COP27 President, in the ongoing road to COP27, Egypt will build on what has been successfully achieved in Glasgow, continue the political momentum to achieve a balanced progress in all negotiation tracks, completing the remaining works and the mandate on different agenda as well as ensuring inclusivity and openness to all parties and observers. Egypt considers this phase as the implementation phase

since we have almost finished the Paris rulebook and we should now focus on how to implement it and accelerate accessing to the means of implementation.

We have the work programme of Glasgow Sharm el-Sheikh, the work programme on the global goal on adaptation (GGA). It is indeed a key step on the right track to support adaptation but also it will depend on the next steps for implementation. The work programme should enable the full and sustained implementation of the Paris Agreement towards achieving the global goal on adaptation with a view to enhance adaptation in terms of both action and support. The work programme will touch upon the methodologies, indicators, data and metrics along with the needs and support needed for assessing the progress towards the global goal on adaptation. The work programme is going to feed in the global stocktake in terms of reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation.

As for the long-term finance and the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, there was an encouraging movement in Glasgow. The momentum on the new collective quantified goal on climate finance has to be maintained, along the remaining work including the establishment of the ad hoc working group and the high-level ministerial dialogues from 2022 to 2024. Climate finance should represent a progression beyond previous efforts and be scaled up with concrete steps to meet the new collective quantified goal on climate finance from the floor of the hundred billion per year, and taking into account which is very important the needs and the priorities of the developing countries. It is very important that also the case studies that could be further replicated and up scaled should be brought up to the road to COP27 in order to identify how these needs and best practices. We need also to understand what are the lessons learned. For more actions towards resilient communities, there is no time for a trial and error.

In Egypt, as a case study, we have been progressing significantly over the last few years on the national climate action. The first thing that is very important is to institutionalize the process at the highest level and at the political level. So we moved our National Council from Climate Change being anchored only at the level of the Ministry of Environment, to be anchored at the level of the cabinet, so we have the Prime Minister heading the National Climate Change Council. This really had made a huge difference at the national level. We cannot say we want to mainstream climate change in the development processes, actions and programmes at the national level, while we are not putting the head of the government at the heart of that part. Once we have done that, things had been moving very rapidly and progressively; we were able to go ahead with identifying our needs and our priorities.

We have put that in a National Climate Change Strategy up to 2050, with the pillars of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, but much more importantly, 'governance'. And that is why, I am saying that climate governance is really very important to set the road at the national level. National actions are an essential start. We were very bold within the pandemic to identify what we called 'environmental sustainability criteria' in our national budget. We started by ourselves before preaching to the private sector or the banking sector.

We have put in very strict measures for greening our national budget. We will reach 50% of the government funded projects to be green projects by 2024 and 100% of the government national projects to be green projects by 2030 aligning to our national strategy for sustainable development. But we moved further into allowing more private sector investment when we announced the first green bonds in North Africa and the Middle East with 750 million US Dollars and when we focused on the projects we focused on the projects that would keep the balance between mitigation and adaptation, the transport projects and the treated wastewater.

It is also important within the package of discussing resilience and adaptation at the national and at the regional level, not only to identify and negotiate global goals, but it is important to move from having strategies on adaptation to action plans and how can we make more investment and bankable projects on adaptation. It is a key challenge for the developing countries, regardless of all the success stories that we have involving local communities, on how to have large-scale adaptation projects that can be investable and bankable.

Ministerial Address

Ms Khadeeja Naseem, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Maldives

Thank you and good afternoon, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Maldives is one of the lowest lying countries in the world. 80% of our islands are just a meter above sea level, making us extremely vulnerable to rising sea levels. Already, 90% of our islands report flooding, 97% reports shoreline erosion, and 64% reports severe erosion, and nearly 50% of all our housing infrastructures are just within 100 meters from the coastline. Only a few of these can withstand tidal floods, let alone a bigger event like the tsunami. As a result, some of these extreme events have caused relocation of entire populations in some of our islands, negatively impacting socio-economic well-being of our communities. Hence climate change is our biggest existential threat with far-reaching consequences.

Excellencies, the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has further underlined the urgency of taking global actions to address climate change and deal with its adverse impacts. It further elaborates that without urgent and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, it will be impossible to limit the global temperature goal at 1.5 degrees Celsius or even 2 degrees Celsius. By 2050, it is expected that up to 90% of our coral reefs will die due to climate change, and for survival, the global temperature has to be kept at 1.5 degrees Celsius. Our economy thrives on our environment and resources; fisheries and tourism are the backbone of our economy and our beautiful beaches, our coral reefs and our underwater ecosystems are key to tourism. Agriculture also plays a critical part in the livelihoods of our people. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated our economy's exposure to external shocks and these threats are further weakening our capacity and ability to build resilience and achieve sustainable development.

Maldives is notably one of the hardest hit countries in the world by this crisis in terms of its impact on the GDP. Therefore, this pandemic has been a stark reminder of our vulnerabilities and provided us with an immense opportunity to improve and reimagine our public policy and development planning to ensure that we build back better for both our planet and our people. Till date, Maldives has protected 13% of our coral reefs and we are committed to protecting 20% of our oceans by 2030. We are also phasing out single-use plastics by 2023 and currently we have 73 protected areas and we are home to three UNESCO biosphere reserves. We also have pledged to be net zero by 2030, provided we get the immense support required from our development partners. So the Maldives is taking very bold steps.

We also firmly believe that implementation of climate action can only be achieved by the provision of adequate, predictable and sustainable financing from developed countries to developing countries. For the large part it is recognized there has been a heavy focus of financing for mitigation aspects in developing countries. Mitigation is very important and a significant pillar in addressing climate change. However, Maldives and other states have constantly been calling for the fulfilment of obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and we seek a balance in both mitigation and adaptation financing. We are also actively advocating for grant-based finance for adaptation related measures. Addressing climate change also requires building and retention of human resources and institutional capacity. Hence, Maldives is advocating for building local capacity in those areas as well.

Climate change cannot be limited to nations, its impacts extend beyond borders, beyond human exigencies that are minor in the face of what the planet asks us of today, and therefore our response to this challenge must look beyond borders. We need to maintain the spirit of multilateral cooperation that characterize, especially as a lesson learned from the current pandemic. In this regard, I am indeed pleased to note our Minister's leadership role at COP26 last year for facilitating the ministerial consultations on the global goal and adaptation (GGA) which led to the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA. I think this is a significant step towards establishing the global goal and adaptation outlined in the Paris Agreement and for us it is extremely vital to ensure that the GGA reflects our realities on the ground and addresses our most pressing adaptation needs. We have a long way to go. But I think this is a great starting point and we really look forward to the COP27 in Egypt where by the time we would have already had technical discussions towards the GGA goal.

Excellencies, on a concluding note, I would like to reiterate calls upon our development partners to take practical steps to support us in the creation of much needed fiscal and financial space to address climate change. I call upon the international community to step up in their efforts to raise ambition in climate finance. This is a matter of urgency for us. Let me once again convey my gratitude to the organizers for convening this dialogue and I look forward to the discussions that follow. Thank you!

Ministerial Address

Ms Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, United Arab Emirates

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to address you today and I thank The Energy and Resources Institute for organizing this important event that addresses key challenges on our path to a resilient equitable world. As extreme weather events are becoming more intense and frequent than ever, impacting the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across regions, climate change adaptation is the need of the hour. Science-based adaptation action should be at the centre of our collective response to climate change particularly to protect those in vulnerable developing countries.

The urgent call to ramp up adaptation action has been outlined by the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation on urging countries to establish robust systems for monitoring and evaluating adaptation actions specifically designed to address local challenges. As a climate vulnerable country, the UAE is taking concrete measures to climate-proof its key sectors as part of its national climate change adaptation programme. We are also

committed to helping other countries reduce their emissions and increase their climate resilience. We have allocated USD 1 billion in aid and concessional loans for renewable ventures in over 50 partner countries especially small island developing states and least developed countries. We are also supporting island countries and building hurricane-resistant power infrastructure as part of clean energy initiatives.

Ladies and gentlemen, to help vulnerable communities become climate resilient, increasing climate finance is instrumental with adaptation efforts taking up a bigger share than today. In 2020, 1.6 billion US dollars were spent on mitigation projects while only 586 million US dollars were spent on adaptation projects. These figures highlight the fact that we are far from balancing climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts¹.

Distinguished guests, the Paris Agreement calls for all countries to achieve climate neutrality by mid-century. To win the race to net zero, governments must come up with the policies and incentives to accelerate their national decarbonisation efforts and bring all sectors on board. Last year, we launched the UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative as a valuable opportunity to drive our economic diversification strategy to create new industries, technologies, skills and jobs while protecting the environment. We are working closely with all sectors to adopt innovative decarbonisation technologies, develop environmental goods and services and channel investments towards climate resilient and sustainable projects. We are also collaborating with our global partners to share experience and best practices because global challenges can only be addressed when we work together. The progress made so far, proves the strength of collective action. The world needs to continue to push past its limits and raise climate commitments to safeguard people and the planet.

Year after year, COPs have offered opportunities to build on achievements and register renewed commitments across regions. However, it is important that we continue to work throughout the year not just around the time of the conferences. Following on the success of COP26, COP27 will bring countries together to re-engage on important issues such as raising climate ambitions up to 2030 and beyond adaptation and finance which is critical for just an inclusive action.

As the host of COP28, the UAE is committed to working closely with COP Presidencies to ensure climate action is progressing at the right pace. We intend to deliver an inclusive, consultative and accessible event. In this critical decade for climate, we believe there is an enormous potential to build a better world for all through multilateralism. At COP28, we seek to rally all actors to address this defining challenge of our era and work together to boost investments and meaningful action for climate. We will focus on the global stocktake, measuring how far we have come and what still needs to be done to stay within the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit. We are following the enhanced transparency framework as a key mechanism to ensure countries are working to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions and moving towards climate neutrality. We look forward to collaborating with everyone and hope to see you at COP27 in November and to host you at COP28 next year in the UAE. There is no time to waste. Our future generations will hold us accountable for the actions we take today. Let us give them the future they deserve and demand. Thank you!

Special Address

Mr Seydou Bari Sidibe, Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Guinea

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, government representatives, distinguished participants, in your ranks, functions and status, I would like, on behalf of the Guinean people, the government and his Excellency the President of the Republic of Guinea, to thank you for this invitation which gives me the opportunity to express the commitment of my country in the fight against climate change and in the achievement of the objectives for sustainable development.

This session under the theme: “Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring a Sustainable and Equitable Future”, takes place in a context of major climatic, economic and social challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. While highly welcoming this virtual summit initiative that brings us together today to seek ways and means to build a resilient and harmonious world, please allow me not to give you a recital of environmental problems that are known to all. Instead, I choose to share with you the environmental policy of the Guinean State for a more inclusive, rational and equitable governance of natural capital. Indeed, Guinea is a West African country that enjoys immense natural resources that have earned it the nickname of ‘geological scandal’ and ‘water tower’ of West Africa. However, it is still concerned by environmental problems. This is why, the Republic of Guinea has made sustainable environmental management, a priority in its national economic and social development plan.

¹ The Climate Finance Question, <https://unfccc.int/blog/the-climate-finance-question>

We are convinced that the solution for the preservation of the environment requires adoption of new attitudes; Guinea advocates for a change in mind-sets and wants to be an actor in the resilience in front of climate changes. I still remember this quote of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who said, speaking of the abusive character humans: “There is enough of everything in the world to satisfy man’s needs, but not enough to satisfy his greed.” Ladies and gentlemen, let me remind you that the challenges of our being are demanding and require from our various governments wisdom, farsightedness in decision-making processes.

It is the responsibility of decision-makers at all levels to ensure that the future of future generations is not compromised or mortgaged by frivolous political decisions that do not take into account the fundamental dimensions of sustainable development. These dimensions are firstly environmental. We are talking about resilience supported by responsible and sustainable policies in the face of pollution, deforestation, soil degradation and loss of biodiversity; and secondly economical, which advocates environmentally friendly development built on a green economy. In other words, it is an opportunity for us to develop without harming the nature. Finally, the social dimension that calls for political responsibility and requires a more just and equitable governance.

It is necessary to understand that the development so desired must be defined, initiated and pursued under the sole direction of principles previously mentioned. Any development that would not obey these requirements would only be anarchy. Therefore, from now on, nothing will have to justify all these pressures that we put on our environment. It is important to insist on the fact that States, as well as all stakeholders, must consider and reconsider all the issues that our political decisions represent for future generations.

What kind of world do we want to leave to our children, to our grandchildren, our grandchildren's grandchildren, and to those after them? Do not feel bad because the answer to this question is not theoretical. It is rather an expression of conscious and responsible actions in our daily lives. We must remember that it is up to us, political decision-makers, in daily exercise of power, to responsibly set the course for a resilient planet and to ensure a sustainable and equitable future. Sustainable development, beyond political speeches, will be translated into concrete actions to build a resilient society. As if to say that it is through fair and ethical policies and through innovative and daring policies that states will be able to meet the challenges of the 21st century. As far as Guinea is concerned, the path towards sustainable development is now traced in the use of its culture, because even if we have set common objectives, we are convinced that in the research and implementation of development initiatives, it is not a matter of literally copying and pasting, but rather of defining our policy in the same direction as the objectives of sustainable development and translating it into the Guinean context. It is in this way that we will give meaning to our fight against climate change. Taking into account our cultures and our diverse values, will also enable us to take effective and sustainable development actions.

To conclude, let me remind the audience of the definition of resilience. According to the dictionary, the word ‘resilience’ is feminine, considered in physical science as a value characterizing the resistance of a metal to shock. In psychology, to be resilient is to be able to overcome traumatic shocks. As for us ecologists, we maintain that resilience is the capacity of a species to return to a state of equilibrium after an exceptional event. So together, yes all together, hand-in-hand and in a convergence, let us do our best to recover the state of equilibrium of our common home. Long live the international population. Thank you.

Special Address

Dr Junaid Kamal Ahmad, India Country Director, The World Bank

Thank you very much and Namaskar to everyone! What a pleasure to be with you. Let me take a moment to explain where I am coming from so you understand what I will say better. First, I am a ‘multilateralist’. I worry about the world, about the planet, everything I think about comes from the point of view of a multilateralist. Second, I am the Country Director for India, so I worry about India's economic development. But given India's size and its impact on the world, I also worry that India's economic development and its impact on the world. Third, I am a Bangladeshi, and as a Bangladeshi, I am very proud that in our 50th anniversary of our nation. We are close to becoming low middle income and I worry that our path to growth today is subject to many shocks due to climate change. So Bangladesh is a country that is low middle income with all the characteristics of a small island developing state. So protecting the small island development state and vulnerable countries like Bangladesh is important. So those are the three perspectives I come to this discussion with.

First, I think we have to change the narrative of the COP, from NDCs asking countries to meet global achievements to presenting better the development transitions of nations. What is Maldives doing, what is Egypt doing, and what is Guinea doing? Today the development transitions of the developing countries towards higher income should also be consistent with addressing climate change, addressing climate vulnerabilities much factor more than the development path that industrialized nations have done on past. I think it is important that these development transitions be

presented at COP, so that the world can invest in the development transitions of the developing countries. There is no doubt that when India achieves its development transitions to higher middle income, it will also help the world achieve global climate transitions. This linkage between the development transitions of nations and the climate transitions of the world has to be established at the COP. We need to move the debate away from NDCs and focus on the need to support the development transitions of nations like India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Maldives and Guinea. And that is a different than the simple narrative of NDC.

Second, if adaptation is going to be an important area of concern, then there are two topics that need to be put on the table very strongly- one is 'social protection' and second is 'water'. Social protection is the foundation which will help us brace for change that is yet to come. It will protect our poor, but it will also protect the human capital of our workers going forward. In India, today because of the pandemic, India has made a tectonic shift in the way it is giving social protection. India has the world's largest direct cash transfers to the bank accounts of women-headed households. 300 million women-headed households get direct cash transfers. India today, has a programme which guarantees in the rural areas a job of 100 days per year. These are the type of social protections that will help communities brace for change and I think the COP discussions must say how we invest in the social protection of nations. This is very important in the adaptation story.

The other part of the adaptation story is water. India today, for example has the world's largest water reservoir protection system. It is investing in protecting water. It is the biggest dam protection programme in the world. It also has the biggest groundwater protection in the world, because after all, what is the biggest reservoir of water in the world? It is not the dam above ground, it is the dams underground which is the groundwater. How do you protect the groundwater is essential in the world of resilience. This is another area that I think we need to really focus on. Egypt has an incredible sanitation programme which needs to be put high on the table because that is the way we are going to protect communities today because climate change impacts, sanitation affects diseases and the way we protect sanitation related services, is very important. So resilience with social protection of water is a second theme that I would put on the table.

The third theme I would put on the table is no matter how much we agree on the amount of public finance that we will put on the table, ultimately leveraging capital markets is going to help nations propel their development transitions forward and hence propel their ability to deal with climate change. Let me give you a couple of examples and I draw them from India. In India, five years ago India barely had 500 megawatts of solar rooftop. The World Bank in partnership with the State Bank of India introduced a programme on solar rooftop, i.e., industrial solar rooftop, putting in 500 million US dollars. Today, five years later, the programme has capitalized the market, and has grown by over 900 percent where the 500 million in investment has drawn in five billion dollars of capital markets into rooftop solar industrial programmes. It has saved 17.7 million tons of CO₂ over the lifetime of these programmes. This ability to leverage market is extremely important, and referring to the point that the Hon'ble Minister from Egypt mentioned about the need to learn from international experience.

The programme experience of India is being shared with the Maldives, Ukraine, Turkey along with African countries. It is the learning between the developing countries that is the future. So leveraging capital markets, using very carefully targeted public finance, I think, becomes very important. I will give you another example; 70 million dollars of multilateral finance has leveraged 2.5 gigawatts of solar parks in India, which has leveraged 1.5 billion dollars of commercial investments. Again, use of public finance to draw in the capital markets. This is how to better position the world to do it is something. This is where COP discussions must focus in a major way. Today, the state of Madhya Pradesh provides 60 percent of the energy needs of the underground Metro of New Delhi and that 60 percent is pure renewable from solar power. This is the type of change that I think we need to introduce.

The final point I would like to make is introducing into the global dialogue how developing nations can leverage the multilateral institutions more. Today in India and in Egypt both countries are going to face single borrower's limit from drawing on multilateral finance because you have reached a level of growth in which you have drawn from multilaterals that prevents you from borrowing more because multilaterals begin to face single borrower's limit. There should not be any single borrower's limit if Egypt, India, Bangladesh and Maldives want to draw money for 15-20 years to invest in their development transitions which are green transitions in the world. How do you actually increase the ability of multilaterals to invest in nations? Supporting middle income and low income countries will require a rethink of equity of the multilaterals. We will need a rethink of how to use SDRs (special drawing rights) to provide guarantees for multilateral lending. This is an immediate instrument that is available. At the COP26, UK committed a billion dollar guarantee for World Bank lending for additional lending to India for green transitions. Just a simple billion dollar, can translate into multiple investments through green finance. So I think, going forward, it is going to be extremely important, that the COP dialogues change its narrative to investing in the development transitions of nations.

There is a need to look at adaptation and resilience from the lens of social protection and water. There is a need to look at how to leverage capital markets with the limited public finance that we have. And finally, I would like to say that, what I hear from Maldives, what I hear from Egypt, what I hear from Guinea, is that governments have to be behind the change in development transitions. This message must be central in the message at COP, when development transitions are put in the centre-stage. The developing world is not looking at climate change from a bunch of projects, it is looking at changing the nature of its development path, and that is a historic moment of change that I think Egypt's COP27 should use to tell the world. Thank you very much for this opportunity to share with you my perspective.

Special Address

Mr Kamal Kishore, Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority

We had encouraging outcomes from Glasgow and I am really excited to see how we take the agenda forward in Egypt and later in UAE. So that is very encouraging, very inspiring. So there are three things I want to say. The first thing I want to say is that you know somehow in this resilience agenda within the context of climate change, there is a lot of focus on adaptation frameworks, NDCs, net zero...a lot of climate jargon.

If I were to make one request to Hon'ble Minister from Egypt, I would say let us put 'people' at the centre. Our experience is that wherever our resilience building efforts have succeeded they have not happened just because of government policies, international frameworks, they have happened because there has been a mass movement, there has been people's participation. If you look at Bangladesh, the country has reduced mortality from cyclones by 99%.

It is not because of government policies only, it is because thousands of people, it is thousands of volunteers, it is about the work that has been done at the community level. So how do you actually translate the notion of putting people at the centre of this discussion?

I suggest three things- number one is that we really have to do a lot more local level analysis as to how climate is going to impact societies and communities. We are talking still too much at an aggregate level, at a macro level. So we need to put in place systems, so that we have a better understanding of climate at the local levels.

The second is that a lot of the climate science right now is really far away from people. We really need to connect science to society. If you tell somebody who is living in the coastal areas of Odisha, they can expect wind speeds of 150 kilometres an hour that is a very good in scientific information but it is not very useful. But if you tell them that it is 150 kilometres per hour means that all the coconut palms will get uprooted, this means that you know houses of a certain kind will have a certain level of damage, then science becomes more relatable. I think we have to do a lot more in connecting science to society.

The other point of putting people at the centre is that we have to do a lot of tedious work of organizing data at the local level and get the granularity we need. There is a lot of discussion in terms of NDCs and adaptation frameworks, but I think we need to have much greater ambition in terms of resilience outcomes that people can relate to. Can we commit in Egypt or in UAE, that by a certain year, for example- all the coastal areas of the world that are exposed to strong winds, will have a certain level of resilience, that you know whatever cyclone comes mortality will be close to zero? Whatever happens in terms of strong wind activities, can the power infrastructure will be resilient enough to be able to withstand that? We really need to have ambitious resilience outcome targets.

My final point is there is need for more imagination from governments in the developing countries. While we are making a case for international finance, grant-based mechanisms, capital markets to invest into resilience building efforts, we also need to exercise much greater imagination in aligning the ongoing development programmes in a manner that the collective impact is higher. So how these things can come together at the household level, so that you know the collective impact of these programmes is higher, and it leads to building resilience? Countries like India are investing a huge amount of resources in building infrastructure. This is an opportunity to get it right. We have an initiative on Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) working with others. It is an opportunity, there are resources already allocated for building infrastructure can be used as an opportunity to get it right, for not just now, but for decades to come. Thank you very much!