

**Statement by Mr. Farukh Amil, Deputy Permanent Representative of
Pakistan, Agenda Item 53: Sustainable Development
(October 25, 2006)**

Madam Chair,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to associate with the statement made by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of Group of 77 and China.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the agenda item on ‘Sustainable Development’.

The danger to the planet’s environment is far greater today than it was in 1992, when Agenda 21 was adopted. There has been steady depletion of world’s natural resources, increase in unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, rise in the magnitude of natural disasters and a dangerous level of hazardous emissions, which are threatening the global climate.

Today the process of globalization has accentuated economic asymmetries sharpening relationships between trade and finance, technology and sustainable development. The polarization of wealth has led to a world in which an increasing number of people live precariously balanced on the edge of survival and subsistence.

We would like to recall Member States’ reaffirmation that ‘development is a central goal by itself and that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects constitutes a key element of the overarching framework of the United Nations’ activities’. Therefore, we would reiterate that all the three pillars of sustainable development should be addressed in a balanced and integrated manner.

Last year, our leaders committed themselves at the 2005 Summit, to collectively fight poverty and under-development. Unfortunately, the development consensus was not sufficiently ambitious. And there has been little progress in implementation of the agreed commitments reflected in the MDGs and the IADGs.

Madam Chair,

Pakistan is committed to the promotion of rapid and equitable development for the welfare of our people. We have integrated the goals of Sustainable Development in our policies. Our National Environment Policy, implemented through National Conservation Strategy and National Environmental Action Plan, seeks to address, **firstly**, conservation, restoration and efficient management of environmental resources; **secondly**, integration of environmental considerations in policy making and planning process; and **thirdly**, creation of mass awareness and community mobilization for environment protection and sustainability. We are also elaborating a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), which would aim at simultaneous growth and protecting the environment.

Madam Chair,

My delegation would like to make brief comments on some of the reports of Secretary General on the sub-items of agenda item on Sustainable Development.

We support the recommendation of Secretary General's report on Agenda 21 (A/61/258), calling upon donor governments and IFIs to support developing countries in their efforts to overcome the barriers and constraints identified during the CSD-14 in the context of 'energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and climate change'.

We attach importance to the work of CSD, as a forum to devise ways to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development. We believe that monitoring and review in the CSD are necessary to assess the progress achieved on the recommendations embedded in Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This will also enhance the effectiveness of CSD.

Pakistan has been a consistent promoter of CNG as fuel for transport and we are the third largest user of CNG in the world. In line with the recommendation of CSD-14, we will continue our efforts and plan to increase the number of petrol and diesel vehicles using CNG fuel from the current number of 280,000 to at least 800,000 by 2015.

UN-Energy, which works through High Level Committee on Programme of CEB, has proved, it is doing useful work; this model can also be replicated in other fields. UNEP can take lead in this area.

Madam Chair,

We are witnessing a significant increase in the magnitude and intensity of natural disasters. Last year's earthquake in Pakistan and Indian Ocean Tsunami are just two recent examples which killed more than 353,000 people. According to Secretary General's report on "Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction", during 2005, a total of 93,000 people were killed in 115 countries, in natural disasters.

Important steps were taken last year in the area of disaster preparedness and risk reduction including: the establishment of a Consortium of ISDR system partners, at the Third International Conference of Early Warning in Bonn. Pakistan has put in place a National Disaster Management Agency. We believe, it is essential to integrate disaster risk reduction and preparedness into recovery and reconstruction efforts as well as in the development policies.

In this regard, we would have liked to see the full reflection of concerns related to 'natural disasters' in the Secretary General's report on "Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction" (A/61/229), as requested by General Assembly in its resolutions 60/195 and 60/196. We hope that this will be addressed in future.

Madam Chair,

The challenge of climate change is becoming serious in the form of deglaciation, floods, mudslides and rising sea levels. Increased technological and financial international cooperation is imperative for the protection of environment. We stand for strengthening UNEP as the lead UN agency responsible for spearheading efforts for the protection of the environment.

We have noted that UNEP Secretariat, under new management, is being reorganized and revamped. It is our hope that the principles of transparency and equitable geographic representation will be followed in making fresh appointments at all locations and at all levels in UNEP.

We are disappointed that little progress has been made in implementation of Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer. Its immediate and full implementation is essential for efforts aimed at sustained economic growth and poverty eradication. We would also stress the importance of timely and sustainable 4th replenishment of GEF.

While taking note of Secretary General's report on 'Implementation of UN Environmental Conventions' (A/61/225), we would emphasize the need to streamlining the procedures of Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM).

We have also been informed of the conclusions reached on Climate Change and environmental issues at the Gleneagles G-8 Summit last year and the meeting of 20 countries recently in Monterrey, Mexico. In promoting the goals of Sustainable Development, it must be recognized that:

One, the highest priority for developing countries is the elimination of poverty. They cannot divert resources from this goal. Poverty also contributes to pollution e.g. through deforestation.

Two, there is need for adequate resources to be devoted to environmental protection in accordance with the Rio principles, and Agenda 21. These resources must be additional to those committed to promoting development goals.

Three, developing countries must be assisted to build the capacity for sustainable development. To this end, steps are essential to facilitate the transfer and acquisition of technology by the developing countries.

Four, the main responsibility for environmental degradation rests on those who consume most and pollute most. We must adhere to the principle of "the polluter pays".

Madam Chair,

Pakistan remains committed to implement our international commitments as contained in Agenda 21, the decisions of the Johannesburg Programme of Implementation, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in order to attain sustained economic growth and sustainable development of our people.

I thank you all.