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CANCUN, MEXICO
8 DECEMBER 2010

STATEMENT AT THE JOINT HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT BY

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GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

Statement by the Minister for Environment, Government of Pakistan

H.E. Hameedullah Jan Afridi

At the Joint High Level Segment of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of Parties and the Sixth Session of the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (Cop-16/ CMP-6),
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Madam President,

At the very outset, I would like to express my appreciation of the Statement made by His Excellency Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, the President of the United Mexican States, at the opening of the 16th Session of the Conference of the Parties. I would like to express our gratitude for the arrangements that the Government of Mexico has made in this beautiful city of Cancun and the warm hospitality of the people of Mexico.

2. It is a privilege and an honor to represent Pakistan at the 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and 6th Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

Madam President,

3. The effort your country has made in rebuilding trust in the negotiating process since the beginning of this year has been exceptional.

4. I would particularly like to commend your personal emphasis on the transparency, openness and inclusivity that has been the hallmark of your efforts throughout the year and during this session. The signs of success that have begun to appear could not have been possible without such an inclusive negotiating process.

Madam President,

5. Pakistan has come to Cancun with hope and determination to put the negotiations on an irreversible path leading to an agreed outcome as envisaged in the Bali Plan of Action.

6. Unfortunately, three years of negotiations have not been able to fill the enormous gap that exists between the developed and the developing countries in forging the way forward. We need to bridge this trust deficit. We can ill afford another failure like Copenhagen.

7. With only two days of negotiations left, we would strongly urge all parties to show flexibility in evolving agreements to make this conference a watershed in our quest to meet the challenge of climate change.

8. Pakistan strongly supports a fair, equitable and balanced set of decisions. Given our extreme vulnerability to climate change, finding a solution to these negotiations is not just important but an imperative for Pakistan.

9. With some voices questioning the viability of UN led process and its ability to chart an effective course, it is essential that we intensify our efforts in reaching necessary agreements. It is my assessment that success is within our reach. We must seize the moment and work towards a balanced, fair, equitable and ambitious outcome.

Madam President,

10. Pakistan strongly believes and supports the establishment of a more inclusive climate regime that integrates the voluntary mitigation actions of the developing countries into global efforts to reduce emissions subject to the provision of finance and technology and in accordance with the fundamental principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. This is the spirit of Bali and Pakistan remains committed to it.

11. The pledges and promises made since last year by parties to reduce climate change emissions fall well short of what is needed to hold the global temperature rise below 2^0C and avoid the worst consequences of global warming. The findings suggest that if countries do everything they have promised, there still will be a gap of 5bn tonne per year between their ambition and what the science considers essential.

12. Pakistan will remain engaged with other parties in finding an appropriate tool that can anchor the pledges made by the Annex-I parties thus far as an initial but limited step towards an internationally agreed global goal of emissions reduction to ensure less than 2 degrees Celsius rise in the global temperature.

Madam President,

13. An agreement on establishing an international fund to channel financial and technological support to the developing countries in meeting the challenge of climate change is well within our grasp. This has been a painstaking effort since the beginning of this year. Pakistan affirms its strong support to this decision. It is important that while we have agreed on the need for an international Fund for Climate Change and its basic structure and scope, our efforts would remain partial until we reach an agreement on the scale and sources that would replenish it. Pakistan supports the need for an assessed contribution of 1.5% of the developed countries GDP to replenish this Fund.

14. It is also critical that we work intensively in forging political understanding on strengthening the oversight and governance of the financial mechanism under the Convention. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China has already tabled a proposal to establish a Finance Committee which should be mandated to verify the flow of total financial resources/commitments to the developing countries through both public and private sources.

Madam President,

15. Some of the recent intense climatic events have added a new dimension to the vulnerability debate. Only three months ago, Pakistan suffered huge cost, in life and property, to the vagaries of climate.

16. The loss of property and infrastructure has been colossal. We are grateful to our friends, and many are present here, as well as the United Nations and its agencies and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) that assisted us in our hour of need. The Disaster Needs Assessment carried out by World Bank and ADB have estimated loss of more than US$ 10 billion to infrastructure, housing and agriculture. We shall be able to rebuild infrastructure over the next few years. But to recover from the impact on livelihoods and human lives may take longer.

17. While the massive floods and torrential rains did get significant attention from the world, several other events such as the landslide resulting from melting of permafrost in Northern Areas of Pakistan; glacial lake outburst in Hunza valley; unprecedented depletion of Himalayas and Karakorum glaciers; record rise in the temperature of 28 cities; slow down in agricultural growth; droughts in Sindh, Baluchistan and Central Punjab provinces; and sea level rise threatening the city of Karachi are other worrisome developments brought about by the changing climate in Pakistan. I would also like to recall that the International Panel on Climate Change has predicted an almost 50% decline in the wheat and rice yields in South Asia. Such a development could seriously undermine food security for nearly $1/5^{th}$ of humanity living in the South Asia region.

18. Pakistan is, therefore, of the view that we need to have a review of our vision of vulnerability to climate change, and develop a holistic approach on this issue covering physical, economic and climate related aspects. Such an approach, would help in evolving more effective strategies to address adverse impact of Climate Change besides ensuring a more equitable allocation of resources.

19. Notwithstanding our own vulnerability, Pakistan is particularly concerned at the existential threat that climate change poses to many Small Island Developing states (SIDs) in addition to the enhanced risks it poses to the Least Developing Countries.

Madam President,

20. Despite resource constraints amid a difficult security environment, Pakistan is undertaking considerable actions at the national level in evolving a national framework on climate change.

21. The recent floods have highlighted the need for integrating climate change – particularly adaptation - in our national economic policy and planning. Following the release of the report of National Task Force on Climate Change last year, we have now initiated the process of developing a National Climate Change Policy in close partnership with the United Nations in Pakistan. This proposed national framework will not only aim at adapting various economic sectors such as energy, water resources, agriculture and forestry but would also lay down a long term strategy on emission reduction. In addition, this policy framework will also aim at strengthening disaster management which has been strongly tested during the recent floods and the glacial lake outburst in the Northern Pakistan.

22. In addition, the national framework would outline the needs for capacity building, gaps in institutional arrangements and the nature of technical and other assistance needed to plug the gaps.

Madam President,

23. Pakistan supports the establishment of a Reduced Emission from Forest Degradation and Deforestation (REDD+) Mechanism. Despite being a low forest cover country, Pakistan is meaningfully engaged in REDD + process. REDD provides a promising opportunity to curb deforestation and provide employment to the rural communities. We have already begun developing long term projects with the assistance of the Global Environmental Facility. We look forward to positive outcome through REDD+ partnership to help facilitate the implementation of REDD+ projects in Pakistan. We are open to the establishment of a REDD+ Window in any new Climate Change Fund/Mechanism. Pakistan believes that there is a need to strongly reflect the recognition of the special needs of the low forest cover countries in the evolving REDD+ architecture.

24. With support from the UNFCCC, Pakistan is in the process of estimating its future financial NEEDS for both adapting to unavoidable climate change as well as moving towards a low carbon development pathway. These are not just future costs but costs which are very real and which are already upon us as the country no longer has an exit strategy for climate change and has no other option but to face the issue head on and bear the associated costs. Pakistan has, already, borne almost $4 billion in the past few years in dealing with climate related disasters. This money has been spent out of our resource constrained national development budget. As stated earlier, the

unprecedented floods have forced a huge financial burden on our economy – more than 5% of our annual GDP, a "climate cost" on our development which mortgages the future generations of our children. Pakistan looks forward to continued solidarity from our friends and partners in this endeavor.

Madam President,

25. According to latest outlook report by the United Nations Environmental Programme, South Asian countries have started to face the effects of climate change and are particularly at risk. Early this year at Thimpu, Bhutan the leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) adopted a Thimpu Declaration on Climate Change. Pakistan, along side its SAARC partners looks forward the deepening its engagement in addressing the risk and challenges associated with climate change. We also look forward to the support and solidarity of the international community is assisting SAARC to further strengthen this agenda.

Madam President

26. In conclusion, I would like to once again assure you of Pakistan's strong commitment to working closely with the Presidency and the Mexican Government during the remaining days of this Conference to ensure a successful and balanced outcome which would command consensus and support of all.

I thank You Madam President.