

Draft statement by H.E. Ambassador Dr. A K Abdul Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs at the session on “Strengthening clean and environmentally sound technology development, transfer and dissemination: Options for a facilitation mechanism” at Workshop 4 on “The way forward: Strengthening the international architecture for clean and environmentally sound technology development, transfer and dissemination”

on 31st May 2013 at 1500 hrs at UNHQ

Thank you Mr. Nikhil Seth of UN-DESA, the Moderator for steering this session into an excellent platform for discussing the issue of strengthening clean and environmentally sound technology development, transfer and dissemination - a topic very important for all developing countries, more so for us, the LDCs.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Rio+20 outcome document "The Future We Want" repeatedly highlights the need of science and technology for achieving sustainable development. For the countries that are lacking in these fields, Rio+20 calls upon for transfer of technology, capacity building and emphasise on creating sound scientific, technological and innovative base in those economies, with support by the countries historically advanced in these areas as well as relevant international agencies.

LDCs have been struggling to get themselves on the global highway of science and technology, in order to have fast track growth. One key reason for LDCs' lagging behind is the primitive technological base. Unlike many developing countries, they cannot take the path of leapfrogging, because they simply do not have access to the updated technological know-how, neither have resources; money or skills to achieve it. No wonder, LDCs have been campaigning for years for effective and sustainable technology transfer from the developed countries. In TRIPS Agreement, which became effective in 1996, 17 years ago, we see in Article 66.2 clearly mentioning and I quote, "Developed country Members shall provide incentives to enterprises and institutions in their territories for the purpose of promoting and encouraging technology transfer to least-developed country Members in order to enable them to create a sound and viable technological base" unquote. If we look for more recent pledges, in the Istanbul

Programme of Action, on the issue of building technological base for the LDCs, all quarters agreed to assist LDCs. The IPoA outcome document emphasized with more concrete views for the way forward: as a course of joint action, it was adopted with consensus that a joint gap and capacity analysis would be undertaken by 2013, i. e, this year, for establishing a Technology Bank. In addition, Rio+20 also stressed on the importance of transfer of ecologically sound technologies to the developing countries for attaining sustainable development globally.

This is indeed a tangible target to achieve. While we wait for the Secretary General's report, we welcome the proposal by Turkey of hosting the Technology Bank. While we thank the Turkish government, we are hopeful that other development partners and UN organizations will also come forward and provide assistance to establish UN Regional Science & Technology Centers for easy dissemination of appropriate technology in LDCs.

Unfortunately, the progress is still very slow mostly because of lack of capacity. Therefore, without capacity building, neither sustainable growth nor use of technology in a sustainable way is possible. That is why TRIPS also stressed on the importance of capacity building.

Another point of serious concern for the LDCs is the issue of transition period for LDCs provided in the TRIPS Agreement. Participants may be aware that the transition period expires on 1st July of this year, and there is debate going on in Geneva at this moment about the span of further extension of this transition period. It is obvious that many, if not most, of the LDCs are not likely to be graduated within the next five or seven years. Therefore, it is imperative that the flexibility that the LDCs enjoy at this moment regarding TRIPS Agreement be continued till individual LDCs are in position to implement the TRIPS obligations.

As mentioned in the Secretary General's report 67/348 on facilitation mechanism for development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, the capacity building mechanisms remain "increasingly fragmented" and "largely **un-coordinated** and ad-hoc in terms of objective, content and country coverage". That, indeed, is one of the reasons why the issue of establishing the Technology Bank was proposed in the first place.

We are given an impression that the regional UN commissions are working to overcome this gap, and we appreciate their efforts. Development partners have also come forward to help the developing countries overcome the gap. Here I would like to point out that LDCs, being the most vulnerable group of the UN membership where nearly 900 million people live of which 73% live below the poverty level, my dear colleagues, need a big push, strong support. Business-as-usual is not going to help them much, neither can help to graduate half of them by 2020 as postulated in IPoA. It's a fact that without being the polluters, we are most likely to suffer the adverse effects of the climate change. Therefore, the facilitation mechanism is a key element of development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies. The advance version of the Secretary General's report on implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action also acknowledges this fact and it states that establishment of a special technology transfer and capacity building mechanism is crucial for the LDCs to facilitate their onward movement down the path of sustainable development.

We have to bear in mind that for sustainable development, LDCs not only need effective and efficient transfer of environmentally clean and sound technology complimented by capacity building, they also need strong base in the area of science and technology that will be reflected in the R&D activities. Now, for creating a useful research institution of international standard requires longer term investment in multiple fronts, which include top-quality human resources, building cutting edge facilities, procuring essential equipment, developing relationships with universities, firms, and markets globally, and securing on-line connectivity to ensure that researchers can readily interact with their peers globally and access on-line publications. This developmental model, of course, requires adequate financial and technical support. Here, again, the issue of global partnership is critical. Without creating the sound base of R&D, transfer of technology to LDCs and their effective use may not bear any fruit even in the medium term, let alone in the long run.

Finally, south-south cooperation, indeed can play an important role in strengthening the technological base of LDCs as a complimentary path of North-South cooperation mechanisms. Many developing countries have successfully handled several challenges that are now being faced by the LDCs, and therefore, the developing and emerging countries should come forward to assist the LDCs in areas of their expertise

through dissemination of technologies and the know-how. This should of course not be considered as an alternative of North-South cooperation.

For the last two days, we have followed the discussion in this room with keen interest. LDCs are of the view that the facilitation mechanism for developing, transferring and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technology will have to be appropriate and amenable to be customized to the needs of individual LDCs, so that everyone can benefit from the advancement in technology. I personally believe, it is innovation, creativity, competition, competitiveness, motivation and technology that are the engine of growth for sustainable development.

I thank you.