

Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA)
Asia Regional Conference

Inaugural Ceremony

Address
by
Sheikh Hasina
Honourable Prime Minister,

Dhaka
Sunday
30 May 2010
16 Jaishtha 1417

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Colleagues,
H.E. European Union Commissioner of Climate Action,
H.E. European Union Head of Delegation,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamau Alaikum and a hearty welcome to you all.

I am very pleased to be present in the inaugural session of the Global Climate Change Alliance, Asia Regional Conference. It gives me great pleasure as this is being held in Bangladesh. I deeply appreciate the participation of member states in this auspicious conference. I believe that the conference will help participating countries strengthen the common platform which was created in 2007.

Mr. Chairman,

It is an undeniable fact that Climate Change has put an ever increasing challenge to our humanity. The survival of a large number of people in the south, who are most vulnerable to climate change impacts, will be at stake if the challenges are not confronted timely and effectively. If we take the example of Bangladesh, Cyclone Sidr and Cyclone Aila have ravaged the coastal belts of Bangladesh in the recent past. Still people in the Aila affected areas are stranded in stagnant water, which entered from the sea breaching the coastal embankments. The government is trying to ease their sufferings and trying to resolve the problem by constructing embankments. I believe, member states too have similar kinds of vulnerabilities, which need to be addressed immediately.

Mr. Chairman,

If we take into consideration the progress of climate change negotiation, we will observe a lengthy negotiation process with very little outcome. The only achievement in this negotiation track is the Copenhagen Accord. Still this was unfortunately happened outside the usual track of negotiation. But Copenhagen nevertheless showed the world our intention to come to a successful deal. More than 120 heads of state and government met in Copenhagen to take the climate change negotiation forward. The momentum created in Copenhagen must be strengthened to come to a successful deal in the COP-16 in Cancun, Mexico.

Distinguished Ministers,

Keeping in view the slow progress of negotiation and desired outcome, my government has established our own Climate Change Trust Fund and we allocated US\$ 100 million in the current fiscal budget to the fund. The government has prepared Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) to address our future short, medium and long-term adaptation activities. We had to divert this huge amount of money, which otherwise we could have utilized in health, education, agriculture or in other priority sectors. The contributions of Annex I Parties are insignificant compared to our needs. So, we would urge all Annex I Parties to implement what they have pledged in the Accord, especially the fast track disbursement of pledged US\$ 30 billion for 2010-2012.

Distinguished Delegates,

We have to act fast. The atmospheric changes are going on while we are negotiating. We have to take actions, which are based on science. Accordingly, Annex I parties have to take the lead in reducing their emission. But time has come when all of us have to take some burden whether that is mandatory in the Convention or in the Protocol or not. Developing countries, especially the most advanced ones, should not shy away from their own responsibilities to save the

humanity; as unilateral actions only by Annex I parties are not enough anymore to reduce the emission to the desired level.

Mr. Chairman,

Adaptation never got prominence in the negotiation process, until, recently. Parties are well aware that a successful mitigation effort reduces the burden of adaptation in the long run. But in the pretext of mitigation actions, adaptation should not be sidelined, because, successful adaptation is the key to our survival. The developed as well as advanced developing countries must not forget that. Unfortunately, the provisions and mechanisms in the existing framework have failed to secure resources required to finance the adaptation actions on the ground.

Distinguished Guests,

As the Most Vulnerable Countries (MVCs) we most of the time play a dormant role in the international negotiation. As smaller countries, for the sake of united stand, we usually accept what the bigger or larger developing countries suggest. But that may not be conducive to our national interests. Now time has come to speak up loudly. If we don't stand unitedly and raise our voice, outcomes might not be favourable for us and we would be the worst victim of climate change. So, I urge you all to forge a common position and make this Conference a success and continue working unitedly to achieve a successful deal in Cancun.

With these few words, I declare the Global Climate Change Alliance, Asia Regional Conference open.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.
Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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