



MR. MIJARUL QUAYES, FOREIGN
SECRETARY

Intervention by HE ~~Dr Dipu Moni, Hon'ble Foreign Minister~~ of
Bangladesh at the Summit Level Meeting of five-year review of the
Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados
Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island
Developing States (SIDS), Mauritius Strategy + 5 Review (SIDS
Summit)

New York 24 September 2010 9:00–11:30 am

3-6pm

[The Summit Level Meeting of five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) will take place on 24 September, 2010 from 0900-1130 hrs. Panel Discussion would be held in two slots, one from 1130-1300 and the other from 1500-1800 hrs]

Mr. Chair,
Distinguished SIDs Colleagues

I have come here today to reaffirm the unwavering solidarity of the people and the government of Bangladesh with the challenges of millions of people living in the Small Island Developing States. We also endorse our fullest support to the Barbados Program of Action and its effective and speedy implementation.

Bangladesh is fully aware about the seriousness and enormity of the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by the SIDs. We recognize that since the adoption of the Barbados Programme of Action and its Agenda 21, the vulnerability of SIDs have further deepened due to global climate change, the global financial meltdown, the food and fuel crises, and the large-scale natural disasters that occurred during the past two years. We see major constraints standing in the implementation of the POA including reduced levels of ODA in some small island developing States, lack of technical expertise, and financial, technical and institutional challenges.

The SIDs are also coping with unique threats related to global climate change and environmental issues, including sea-level rise, destruction of coral reefs critical to food security, loss of biodiversity and tourism, scarcity of freshwater and much more. The food crisis has had a severe impact on the poor in the SIDS, most of which are net food importers like Bangladesh.

It is no coincidence therefore, that the commonality of Bangladesh, a low lying coastal state and an LDC, with the SIDS, is best revealed in our geographical and climate vulnerability similarity leading to our existential question. While the very existence of many SIDS is

threatened by the sea level rise, its calculated impact is graver and more devastating in Bangladesh considering its huge human factor.

According to IPCC estimates, a one meter sea level rise will inundate 30% of the country's low lying landmass resulting in the loss of land and livelihood of 40 million people. As a result by 2050 Bangladesh will have to relocate some 25 to 30 million climate induced refugees. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) also ranked Bangladesh as the most vulnerable country to floods, third most to tsunami and sixth most to cyclones in terms of human exposure.

And all those vulnerabilities included in the agenda 21 of the Barbados POA such as depleting freshwater and increasing salinity intrusion or depleting land, energy, tourism and biodiversity resources, are haunting Bangladesh's development efforts too.

Such a situation is unacceptable and untenable when the party suffering is not responsible for this climate mess. We must not therefore, fail in our duty to remind the international community just how they have failed to appreciate the dangers of unabated climate change on SIDs and low lying LDCs despite several scientific and circumstantial evidences. There is no more scope to be ignoring the overwhelming truth of rising sea-levels or increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, floods, droughts, earthquakes, Tsunamis which are endangering human well-being and the ecosystems, affecting livelihoods and MDGs progress, contributing to food insecurity, water scarcity, malnutrition and spread of climate-sensitive diseases.

There is no more scope to be ignoring millions of potential climate refugees and their impact on peace and security. The international community therefore, has an urgent, clear and binding obligation to meet our adaptation-to-climate-change costs as well as to transfer green technology without any precondition in order for us to move to green MDGs regime. The Cancun Summit must also agree on an adaptation fund with adequate resources at its disposal. Adaptation and technology transfer must come in the form of grants, distinct from and in addition to the already committed ODA which must be fulfilled as per commitment made at the Monterey Consensus.

Mr. Chairman,

I sincerely hope that the SIDS leadership from this forum along with LDCs such as Bangladesh would take from this Summit a common and stronger position of the most vulnerable countries. We can and should use that common position to speak out louder for implementation of the Barbados POA or for influencing the broader climate change debate particularly on financing and technology transfer issues. Bangladesh stands ready to join that effort.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.