

**China's Actions on Climate Change:
Briefing on China's National Climate Change Programme**

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It gives me great pleasure to share with you China's thoughts and actions on climate change. First of all, I'd like to express my sincere thanks to UNDP for organizing this important event "The United Nations and China" here in Bali.

Climate change is a global concern and has become the dominant issue on today's world agenda. Every meeting is about climate change. Everybody is talking about climate change. It is not something far away. IT IS happening NOW! The climate is changing and THAT changes our life and the life for the generations to come. The science is clear, as we are told by the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report that it is very likely that climate change is caused by human activities. The threat is imminent, and the damage is real. What should we do about climate change? I have two points to make.

The first point, how we see climate change? Climate change as a global issue calls for international cooperation. No single country or a group of countries could possibly solve the issue alone. All countries, developed and developing, must work together and make due contribution to tackling climate change in accordance with their respective share of responsibilities in causing the problem, their capabilities, their levels of development and their different stages of development. This is what is meant by the principle of *Common But Differentiated Responsibility*, as affirmed in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. On the one hand, the developed countries, whose longtime accumulative emissions of GHGs are the main cause of climate change, should have the primary responsibility to cut their high GHG emissions and to channel adequate financial resources and to transfer low-carbon technologies to

developing countries so as to enable the latter to effectively contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change. On the other hand, the developing countries, who are innocent in terms of responsibility for causing the problem, are by far the biggest victims. This is not to say that they would count on the developed countries acting alone. Even though confronted with enormous task of economic development and poverty eradication, the developing countries are acting on climate change by pursuing sustainable development and trying very hard to avoid the unsustainable way of production and life taken by the developed countries.

The second point, what to do about climate change? Addressing climate change should be action-oriented. We have the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol as the legitimate framework, where we all have clear and firm commitments. Such commitments would remain letters on a paper if not transformed into concrete results through national actions. So, it is of paramount importance to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol. In China, we have some experiences in national implementation and had achieved some tangible progress. Climate change is high on China's agenda. Our head of government, Premier Wen Jiabao, is heading the National Leading Group on Climate Change, with 17 ministers as members. China is making efforts to integrate climate change considerations into national socio-economic development programs. In June this year, after years of preparation and efforts, China published its National Program to address climate change, which falls squarely within the implementation of Article 4.1 of the UNFCCC. I am happy to highlight the following points:

Firstly, China's achievements in mitigating climate change. The greatest contribution is that China has **lower historical emissions and lower *per capita* emissions of greenhouse gases**. China's *per capita* CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion in 2004 are 3.65 tons, about 33% of that of OECD countries. The CO₂ emission intensity per unit GDP is generally on a declining trend, with a decrease of 49.5% in 2004 as compared to 1990, while only 16.1% for OECD countries. In the past 20 years or so, China has made **serious efforts and achieved outstanding results**:

- By restructuring economy and improving energy efficiency, **1,800 Mt**

CO₂ emissions avoided from 1990 to 2005;

- By developing low-carbon and renewable energy to optimize the energy mix, which increased the share of renewable energy in the total energy consumption to 7.5%, **380 Mt CO₂ emissions avoided**;
- By afforestation, forest management and deforestation avoidance, **5,110 Mt CO₂ emissions avoided** from 1980 to 2005;
- By controlling population growth, which avoided over 300 million births by 2005, **1,300 Mt CO₂ emissions avoided** in 2005 alone; and efforts and contributions in the past to deal with climate change

Secondly, China has set very ambitious domestic goals to combat climate change: to make achievements in controlling greenhouse gas(GHG) emissions, to enhance adaptation capacity, to make new progress in advancing science and technology R&D, to remarkably raise public awareness, and to further strengthen institutions and mechanisms. **We have very specifically the following endeavours to control GHG emissions by 2010:**

- To reduce energy consumption per unit GDP by 20%;
- To increase the share of renewable energy to 10%;
- To stabilize nitrous oxide emissions from industrial processes at 2005 level;
- To control the growth of methane emissions;
- To increase the forest coverage rate to 20%; and
- To increase carbon sink by 50 million tons over 2005 level.

To reach such ambitious objective, China is taking a series of practical and proactive actions including setting up regulatory, legal, financial and economic instruments. You may have learned from the media that China is closing down those backward energy intensive plants and replacing them with advanced ones. China is also implementing the 10 priority energy conservation programmes targeting at more than 1000 key energy intensive enterprises.

For adaptation, China is trying hard to enhance capacity for disaster prevention, warning and mitigation. Efforts are also being made to improve the adaption capacity in the agriculture, water resources, ecosystems, health, tourism, and other sectors. The formulation of national adaptation strategy is well underway.

Finally, on technology and capacity building. In the National Climate Change Programme, we also identify technological and capacity building needs for international cooperation. China's technology need covers both mitigation and adaptation technologies. China is a very diversified economy and is now in the process of industrialization. Due to the natural endowment of resources and the increasing demand of productivity for the world market, China has an enormous task of deploying clean and less-carbon technologies and know-how for energy efficiency, renewable and nuclear energy. We have a much higher expectation in technology development and transfer, and very much like to have an effective technology transfer mechanism under the UNFCCC. For capacity building, our needs mainly include development of human resources, adaptation, training and education, raising public awareness, database and information system development.

In conclusion, China, as a country that is ecologically most vulnerable, economically developing, politically and morally responsible, takes climate change very seriously. China is ACTING. We will do what we should do and will do what we can do. We don't care much for the recognition of what we've done. All we care for is the wellbeing and the future of mankind. China is committed to strengthening ability and capacity to fight climate change and to making new contribution to the protection of the global climate.