Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for the detailed reports on the agenda item “Sustainable Development”. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the Chair of the Group of 77.
Mr. Chairman,

The need for sustainable development has perhaps never been felt as strongly as it is being felt today. The multiple inter-linked crises that we face today necessarily need an integrated approach to sustainable development, with emphasis on all its three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental protection. This is key to achieving our development goals, particularly that of eradication of poverty and hunger.

We agree with the views expressed in the report of the Secretary-General that Agenda 21 was truly an attempt to bring diverse agendas together. It is important that we continue to strive for full implementation of this important consensus, as well as its Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

In this regard, we also support the holding of a “Rio+20” event in Brazil in 2012 to comprehensively review the progress made in implementing the sustainable development agenda.

Small Island Developing States [SIDS] have been particularly affected by the ongoing financial and economic crisis as well as climate change. Many of them have also been devastated by natural disasters this year.

The enormous national efforts these countries are making must be complemented by greater international attention and action to address their special challenges.

We hope the five year review of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation next year will lead to further concrete actions in this regard.

India has been privileged to have been able to contribute to the development efforts of SIDS in the spirit of South-South solidarity.

We will continue with our efforts in areas like capacity building, natural disaster preparedness, adapting to climate change and enhancing resilience. However, efforts by fellow developing countries cannot replace the fulfillment of commitments by the developed world.

Mr. Chairman,

Our meeting today takes place at a critical time in the context of the ongoing climate change negotiations in the UNFCCC. We must reach an ambitious outcome at the forthcoming Copenhagen meeting, which also recognizes the centrality of the principle of equity.
This outcome must be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as the historical responsibility of developed countries, which must commit and deliver on truly significant reductions in their emissions.

The outcome must acknowledge that developing countries have to pursue accelerated development, and that they need hugely scaled up resources to address the challenge of climate change.

As a country that is significantly affected by climate change, India, we have a major interest in ensuring a substantive and constructive outcome in Copenhagen. India will be part of the solution, even though we have not caused the problem in any way.

It is also important to note that India’s per capita emissions of around 1 ton of carbon dioxide equivalent per annum is only a quarter of the global average and half that of even the developing countries as a whole. Moreover, our contribution to the stock of carbon dioxide is negligible. We have also repeatedly reaffirmed that our per-capita emissions would never exceed the average per capita emissions of the developed countries, even as we pursue our development objectives.

Nevertheless, India has domestically been taking voluntary mitigation and adaptation measures. Many of these will have specific time-bound goals.

We have drawn up an ambitious National Action Plan on Climate Change. We are focusing on actions in a variety of areas like solar and other renewable energies, use of clean coal technologies, energy efficiency, green building codes, large scale reforestation efforts and green agriculture, among others.

Ensuring affordable access to energy for millions of our citizens is a key element in achieving our overriding priority of poverty eradication.

Promoting renewable energy is an important element in this effort. However, we are conscious that we will also have to continue to take recourse to fossil fuels in the foreseeable future. Affordable access to clean technologies is fundamental to both these strategies.

It is imperative that we revisit the Intellectual Property Rights regime to ensure that for critical green technologies, rewards for innovators are balanced with the needs of humankind. We must actively promote collaborative R&D activities and technology transfer, particularly through public funding.
In this context, I am happy to recall that India jointly organized with UN-DESA the "Delhi high-level conference on climate change: technology development and technology transfer" on 22-23 October 2009.

We will also organize the 4th International Renewable Energy Conference in New Delhi next year on the theme "Upscaling and Mainstreaming Renewables for Energy Security and Climate Change".

We welcome the setting up of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and designating Abu Dhabi as its interim headquarters.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches significant importance to the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly the ongoing negotiations on an international regime on access and benefit-sharing.

We hosted the meeting of the Group of Experts on Traditional Knowledge of the Ad hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing earlier this year.

We believe that a regime on access and benefit sharing should include provisions for mandatory disclosure of country of origin of genetic resources, prior informed consent in Intellectual Property Rights applications, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits, as required under the Convention.

Next year will also provide an opportunity to take a holistic look at the level of achievement of the 2010 bio-diversity targets, and decide on future action.

Thank you.

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