

Following is the talking points of Hon'ble Minister of State (IC) Environment, Forest and Climate Change on 21st Conference of Parties at Paris

The 21st Conference of Parties under UNFCCC was held in Paris from 30th November to 12th December, 2015. The CoP adopted a new Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC, which would be open for signing by the Parties between April 22, 2016-April 21, 2017. It concluded the work of Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action set up in 2011. In order to implement the decisions adopted, a new Ad hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement has been set up.

I had the honour to lead an inter-ministerial delegation that participated in the Paris conference. India engaged in the negotiations with a positive outlook and constructive spirit. I am thankful to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for guiding our efforts and attending the leaders' summit held on the opening day of the conference on 30th November, 2015. His statement including the emphasis on climate justice, Common But Differentiated Responsibilities, renewable energy was referred to by many leaders, including the French President, Mr. Francois Hollande during the Conference.

The outcome of this conference represents a forward march for the global community in the fight against climate change involving all countries. It brought out the success of multilateralism, which involves a spirit of accommodation by all parties to ensure the best possible outcome for the entire planet and the human civilization. Our approach during the negotiations was guided by the Cabinet mandate, the national consensus and the long-term interests of India for development space and growth to provide basic services and energy access to all our citizens and eradication of poverty, balanced with the need for combating climate change. India advocated a strong and durable climate agreement based on the principles and provision of the Convention.

India has been a strong advocate of the principle of 'Differentiation' and operationalization of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) in the climate change regime to prevent any further dilution of the principle that had taken place hitherto.

I am pleased to inform the House that India has been able to secure its interest and that of the developing countries in this Agreement. The Paris Agreement meets our broad expectations.

Some of the main highlights of the Agreement are:-

(1) The Agreement explicitly recognizes in the Preamble, the imperatives of climate justice and sustainable lifestyles as manifested in patterns of consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead. These issues were raised by Hon'ble PM during his address at the COP 21 and other international fora.

The Preamble also recognizes the specific needs and special circumstances of the developing country parties, which are vulnerable to effects of climate change as provided under the Convention.

(2) The Purpose of the Agreement notes that the Agreement is to enhance the implementation of the Convention. This was a key demand of India so that the Agreement remains under the Convention and does not create a completely new regime.

(3) The Agreement also explicitly recognizes that the principles of equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances will be respected. This is mentioned both in the Preamble as well as in the Purpose of the Agreement.

(4) India has always highlighted the urgent need of Adaptation to deal with the impact of climate change. I am happy to state that the Agreement is not mitigation-centric and includes adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building as equal pillars.

(5) The Agreement seeks to contain the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre industrial levels and to further make efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

(6) In order to achieve the long term temperature goal, the Paris Agreement seeks to aim at the global peaking of emissions by the 2nd half of the century, while recognizing that the timeframe for peaking will be longer for developing countries. It also mandates that global peaking of emission shall be on the basis of equity and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty. This ensures policy and development and space for us.

(7) The country driven nature of the contribution has been preserved, as was strongly advocated by India. Parties' contributions are defined as 'Nationally Determined Contributions' and a top-down approach of apportioning mitigation ambition has been avoided.

(8) A 5 year communication-cycle for Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) has been agreed to. This will apply to us Post-2030 as we have submitted a 10 year INDC (2021-2030). We may only have to re-confirm our INDC for 2025-2030. There is no mandatory ratchet up mechanism for Parties to raise their mitigation ambition. This will continue to be nationally determined. However, Parties would be free to raise their ambition voluntarily any time.

(9) The Agreement maintains Differentiation in Mitigation actions of developed and developing countries. It mandates that developed countries should continue to take the lead and undertake absolute targets, while developing countries should continue to enhance their mitigation efforts and are encouraged to move over time towards absolute targets.

(10) A global stocktake will take place every 5 years to assess the progress in addressing climate change. This global stocktake will cover mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and will thus be comprehensive as demanded by us.

(11) A new market mechanism to provide opportunities for voluntary cooperation in the implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions using international transfer of mitigation outcomes has been adopted. Implementation of REDD+ mechanism has also been anchored in the Agreement.

(12) A global goal has been established to increase the adaptive capacity. Adaptation has been accorded equal importance to Mitigation as demanded by developing countries. International support is to be provided by the developed countries for adaptation actions.

(13) Agreement clearly recognizes the need for support to developing country parties for effective implementation of their Mitigation and Adaptation actions. Agreement mandates an obligation for developed countries to provide financial resources to developing countries. Other parties may also contribute, but on a voluntary basis, which will not dilute the obligation of developed countries.

(14) The accompanying decision also lays down that US dollar 100 billion mobilization of funds per year by developed countries will be scaled up after 2020 and before 2025 taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries.

(15) An enhanced system for transparency has been provided in the Agreement. This will cover not only Mitigation and Adaptation actions, but also the support provided by developed countries. The enhanced transparency system will build on the existing system under the Convention and provide flexibility to developing countries. In addition, a separate Capacity Building Initiative for transparency to help developing countries has been agreed to in order to build institutional and technical capacity.

(16) A new technology framework has been established. Collaborative approaches to Research and Development and facilitating access to technology and financial support for the technology mechanism have been provided for.

(17) A new Paris Committee will work out the modalities for enhancing capacity building activities in developing countries under the Agreement. Developed countries are to provide financial support for capacity building to developing countries.

(18) Loss and damage has also been accorded a prime place in the agreement. This will help our coastal areas and vulnerable islands.

(19) Pre-2020 actions are also part of the decisions. The developed country parties were urged to scale up their level of financial support with a complete roadmap to achieve the goal of jointly providing US \$ 100 billion by 2020 for Mitigation and Adaptation by significantly increasing Adaptation finance from current levels and to further provide appropriate technology and capacity building support. It was also decided to identify ways to enhance the ambition of Mitigation efforts by all parties, including identifying opportunities to enhance the provision and mobilization of support and enabling environments.

The Conference also witnessed the launch of the historic International Solar Alliance conceived by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. He launched this Alliance on 30 November, 2015 along with Hon'ble President of France, Mr. Hollande. Representatives of more than 70 countries and around 500 high-level representatives from industry, governments and international organization attended the launch ceremony.

This path-breaking alliance will provide an unprecedented boost to solar energy development and deployment for meeting the energy needs in a clean, affordable and sustainable manner. Many countries have expressed their interest in joining the alliance. The French President co-authored a book of quotes with our Prime Minister, which was also released at the high-level event.

A 'Mission Innovation' was also launched to promote collaborative Research & Development and double the investments in research in clean energy technologies, which was attended by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi along with President of USA, President of France and leaders from many other countries.

I am happy to report that an India Pavilion was also set up in the venue by the Government, which highlighted the initiatives taken by various Ministries, State Government, Mission under National Action Plan on Climate Change, industries, civil societies, NGOs etc. The multi-faceted activities on climate change in India were successfully depicted in our Pavilion in over 25 events and drew more than 6000 visitors. The Prime Minister inaugurated the Indian Pavilion and released "PARAMPARA", a book on India's culture of climate- friendly sustainable practices.

Throughout the course of the negotiations, India engaged constructively and in good faith. India was also a part of several groupings of developing countries, including BASIC, Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs) and of course G-77 and China, which fought for the cause of developing countries. 19 bilateral meetings were held with a number of countries including Mozambique, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Vanuatu, Singapore, Sudan, Japan, USA, UK, France and Germany.

India wanted an ambitious and durable agreement based on the principles of Equity and CBDR that recognizes the need for greater action by developed countries based on their historical responsibility and economic status. We did not want any constraints on our development and provision of support in terms of finance, technology transfers and capacity building.

The Paris Agreement and acknowledges and recognizes the development imperatives of India and other developing countries. The Agreement supports their right to development and their efforts to harmonize development with environment, while also protecting the interests of the most vulnerable.

We are happy that the Agreement has unequivocally acknowledged the imperative of climate justice and has based itself on the principles of Equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities.

India has consistently said that the path to climate ambition must be paved with equity. I am happy that the Agreement has recognized this.

We feel vindicated that all our major requirements have been accepted and have become a part of the Agreement."
