

MR. HASAN MAHMUD (Bangladesh): Madam Under-Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

Bangladesh is the most densely populated country on the globe, having a population of 150 million within 15,000 square miles. But Bangladesh is a low carbon-emitting country due to a low level of industrialization.

But, being a densely populated country, Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change is very high, as sea level rise of one meter could inundate 20 per cent of the country. And that would displace at least 20 million people of the coastal people of Bangladesh.

The per capita level of carbon dioxide emission is estimated to be as low as .2 tonnes per year in Bangladesh, while the per capita emission in the developing countries is about 1.6 tonnes, and in developed countries 15 to 20 tonnes per year.

However, the consumption of fossil fuels in the country is growing by more than five per cent per year, and motor traffic in big cities, such as Dhaka and Chittagong, is increasingly causing environmental pollution. Natural resources, including forests, are getting severely degraded, mainly due to (large amounts of biomass) (?) fuels brought by a huge population concentration in a comparatively small geographical area.

That forests can sequester and store carbon dioxide is a well established fact, but avoiding the release of carbon dioxide, resulting through deforestation, is even more important, as nearly one third of the total carbon is released due to deforestation activities that currently occur in mainly developing countries. In addition to afforestation and deforestation, arborative deforestation is, therefore, being included as a third category of forest-based activity qualified for conservation financing under CDF.

The forests of Bangladesh, including protected areas, have traditionally been in close proximity to human habitation, and the population is heavily dependent on the forest. That poses a threat to the forest. Therefore, the Bangladesh Government has taken the initiative of afforestation since 1981. And now in Bangladesh we have taken a new strategy to keep 75 per cent of the ownership of the participatory forests for the people of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has made significant strides in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and is on track to becoming a mid-level developed country by 2020, but climate change could undermine Bangladesh's advancement and aspirations.

Bangladesh has prepared through a participatory process the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy

and Action Plan. About \$500 million will be needed immediately, and about five billion US dollars will be needed within five years or so to implement this strategy. While international assistance is crucial, the Government of Bangladesh has allocated more than \$100 million in the present financial year for mitigation and adaptation of forests.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Out of the Bali Action Plan, if REDD is to be included in a post-2012 framework, a decision about what a REDD mechanism will look like and what it will include needs to be agreed by COP-15 in Copenhagen in December 2009.

To reach a consensus on this issue, Bangladesh proposes the following: Conservation of forests should be compensated to encourage the countries to conserve and increase the forest cover. This compensation package should include enrichment planting in degraded forests and emissions reduction through conservation and through combating illegal logging. As proposed by other countries, Bangladesh will support a common methodology that assesses changes in carbon stock and greenhouse gas emissions in the conservation and sustainable management of forests and reduction in emissions from deforestation and degradation.

Bangladesh proposes the creation of financial and institutional mechanisms for reducing deforestation fund, a forest preservation fund. Bangladesh, like other parties, also considers an enabling fund to support capacity-building, monitoring and pilot activities related to REDD activities for developing and developed countries. Communities around the forests should be engaged in income-generating activities to reduce the pressure on natural resources.

Forest fires should be monitored to register changes.

Thanks to you all.