

Speech for the use of Leader of Delegation of the Indian Parliamentary Delegation for General Debate on the theme 'Getting to Zero: Mobilizing Parliaments to Act on Climate Change' during the 144th Assembly of Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) to be held from 20 to 24 March 2022 in Nusa Dua (Bali), Indonesia.

***Hon'ble Chairperson;
Distinguished Delegates; Ladies and Gentlemen:***

I am grateful to the Chair for according me an opportunity to express my views on the subject.

Distinguished Delegates, as we all are aware, humanity is facing the biggest existential threat today, in the form of climate change. The temperature of our planet Earth has been rising continuously and the warmest six years on record have been all the years since 2015. This makes it imperative for the global community to act fast on the challenge.

The latest Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has highlighted the urgency for us to reduce our emissions; otherwise the rise in the Earth's temperature by the end of this century would be up to 3-5 degree Celsius. That would be catastrophic. Even with the one degree

increase in the average temperature, we are continuously facing extreme climatic events like heat waves, forest fires, floods and sea level rise.

As we all know, the changes in the climatic phenomena adversely affect biodiversity, ecological systems, corals, wetlands and forests. Such changes also affect the quality of human development itself making concerted efforts imperative at both national and international levels.

Today, it is a welcome development that most of the countries are moving towards the goal of net zero emissions in order to cancel out the emitted greenhouse gases with the absorbed quantity. These efforts should be guided by Common But Differentiated Responsibilities- Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), whereby developed countries have the space to grow. Climate justice and equitable access to carbon space are the crucial factors in the path towards climate action.

To get to the net zero we need to reduce our emissions by replacing the energy intensive production processes with sustainable ones by moving towards a green economy powered by renewable energy sources. We need nature based solutions like intensive plantation of trees, wetlands, mangroves to act as natural sink for the carbon.

Distinguished Delegates, in the wake of the COVID-19 recovery process, we could think about increasing promotion of renewable energy investments, smart buildings, green transport and other interventions. Post-COVID stimulus package, like the *Atmanirbhar Bharat* (i.e. Self-reliant India) stimulus package of India has the potential to enhance the photovoltaic and electric vehicle supply chains of the country.

India has been at the forefront of global climate action. Despite having only 5 percent responsibility in emissions, India's non-fossil fuel energy has increased by more than 25 per cent in the last seven years and now it has reached 40 per cent of our energy mix. Our country is on track to reduce the emission intensity by 35 per cent much before the stipulated time, i.e. 2030.

This is remarkable in the backdrop of India's efforts to lift millions of people out of poverty; as India has around 17 per cent of the world's population today. India achieved the fifth global position in solar power deployment and fourth highest wind installed capacity in the world. India is reducing CO₂ emissions, CFC and HFC emissions in line with our international obligations through schemes like Ujjawala Scheme (an initiative to provide free LPG cylinders to poor women), Smart City Mission, etc.

In the 26th Session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-26) held in Glasgow India presented to the world five nectar elements (*Panchamrit*) of climate action by India. It contained the target to reach net zero emissions by the year 2070 along with other targets of increasing its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW and meeting 50 percent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030. This shows the collective will of the nation to contribute maximum towards the cause of our planet Earth.

India firmly believes that the issue of climate change and global warming is not country-specific but is inter-dependent in nature and requires cooperation among nations at the international, regional and bilateral levels. As a result, India has been central to the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

During COP 26, PM Modi along with PMs of UK and Australia launched a new initiative for technical assistance and capacity building in Island States called the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS). PM also launched the Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG) initiative with UK PM Boris Johnson. GGI-OSOWOG will bring technical, financial

and research cooperation to help facilitate cross-border renewable energy transfer projects, which will provide OSOWOG its global infrastructure. All these show India's leadership in the international climate cooperation and resilience. Our nation is working with a wider global vision to build a world order based on energy justice, climate justice and economic justice.

It is imperative today that all the stakeholders contribute to the climate cause. The role of parliaments and parliamentarians is at the heart of our climate change response. As parliamentarians, we can play a very crucial role towards environmental protection by sensitising decision makers, policy planners and those responsible for the implementation of various climate obligations. We must ensure that our government fulfills its responsibility in this direction.

Parliaments could help transform the international climatic obligations into national legislations with short term and long term goals and also hold the executive accountable in fulfilling those goals. As the vital link between the constituents and the governments, parliamentarians could use the debates and discussions in the House to highlight important issues for the attention of the executive.

Parliaments through the legislations could incentivize the use of green alternatives during the production processes for transitioning towards green economy. Parliaments could also consider imposing additional costs on the usage of polluting and emission intensive sources of energy. They could ensure that the climatic intervention of the country is inclusive and leaves no one behind.

India has passed many legislations related to protection and conservation of the environment. We also had a long discussion in our Parliament, regarding climate change where a large numbers of Members articulated their views and concerns. Members of Parliament have also used various procedural devices like Questions to hold the Executive accountable on matters relating to climate change.

Our Parliament's Departmentally Related Standing Committee on Science and Technology and Environment and Forests has also been constantly evaluating the functioning of the Ministries concerned.

We must establish a robust system of research and development to develop newer ways to reduce emissions and also to capture the emitted carbon sustainable. Parliamentarians must remain in touch with the latest developments in this field, in order

to demand action from the executive as well as sensitize the people.

Last but not the least, we must share the best practices and learn from each other's experiences, knowledge and expertise. Mutual co-operation amongst us will surely lead to solution to the problem of climate change.

On this positive note, I hereby conclude.

Thank you!