

UK - BANGLADESH COMMUNIQUÉ ON CLIMATE CHANGE

10TH SEPTEMBER 2008

LONDON

1. The Governments of the UK and Bangladesh agree to work together and build an effective partnership to lead global action on climate change. Climate change is real and already affecting many regions of the world. We need to act decisively and urgently to address the challenges and threats that change poses and exploit the opportunities it offers for international cooperation.
2. We recognise that the people of Bangladesh are already living with climate change. Recurrence of floods in greater intensity, droughts, intrusion of salinity, cyclone and extreme weather events are affecting all sectors of the economy and the livelihoods of millions of Bangladeshis. It is the poorest who are the most vulnerable and the worst affected. The UK will continue to support Bangladesh to implement a comprehensive action plan for dealing with these challenges. We will use the lessons learnt from our joint experiences to inform and influence future international actions to tackle climate change.
3. Unless we act now, the situation could get much worse, putting development and the sustainability of achievements from the Millennium Development Goals at great risk. In the absence of actions to prevent climatic shifts, flood prone areas in Bangladesh will increase substantially by 2050, with millions of people affected annually. Salinity intrusion along the coastal belt, drought and changes in the rainfall pattern across the country will affect agriculture and jeopardise food security particularly for the poorest. Melting of the Himalayan glaciers will affect water security in the wider region. Such impacts could potentially deprive millions of the gains from development and have severe geo-political and security implications. For countries such as Bangladesh, it will be vital to address effectively the impacts of climate change if the MDGs and other internationally agreed goals are to be sustained.
4. The UK and Bangladesh recognise that the temperature rise must remain within 2 degrees Celsius to prevent the dangerous impacts of climate change. To this end, Bangladesh and the UK will push for an ambitious and equitable global agreement at the Conference of Parties (COP) 15 meeting in Copenhagen in accordance with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" to ensure necessary cuts in global emissions, facilitate transition to low carbon development, and support the adaptation needs-both financial and technological - of developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
5. It is an imperative that we reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. The future scale of adverse impacts - to which Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States

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5. It is an imperative that we reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. The future scale of adverse impacts - to which Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States

will be most vulnerable - depends on the scale and speed of this global reduction. We believe that in order to minimise the future vulnerability of LDCs, and other developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, global greenhouse gas emissions should peak within the next 10 to 15 years, and be reduced to at least 50% below 1990 levels by 2050. If we are to achieve this scale of emission reduction, developed countries will need to take the lead. To put us on track to achieve this target, developed countries, as a group, should commit to reduce their emissions by at least 25%-40% by 2020 compared to 1990, as suggested by the IPCC.

6. We, however, recognise that ambitious actions by developed countries alone will not be enough. As recognised in the Bali Action Plan, developing countries will also need to do their bit, taking into account the vast differences that exist within that group, for example between those countries with large economies and strong institutional capacity, and the LDCs and SIDS. The UK and Bangladesh welcome the agreement reached by the major economies in Hokkaido that major developing economies will pursue, in the context of sustainable development, nationally appropriate mitigation actions, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, with a view to achieving a lower emission path. We support Bangladesh in implementing its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan with £75 million in the form of a grant, over the next 5 years. The UK support will comply with the UK's Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and will be a government-owned asset.
7. Bangladesh is committed to contributing to the global mitigation effort in accordance with the Bali Action Plan and in consistency with its LDC status, development priorities, capacity and national circumstances. The UK is committed to supporting Bangladesh to switch to a low carbon development path and reduce its dependence on ever more expensive fossil fuel. We will help Bangladesh tackle climate change, including through the provision of short, medium-term and long term financing as well as align and harmonize the UK's policies to help Bangladesh tackle climate change.
8. The international agreement will also need to address the adaptation needs of the most vulnerable developing countries, especially those with the least capacity to adapt. The UK and Bangladesh are committed to leading the way and call for a 'compact' between developed and developing countries based on the following principles:
 - Developed countries will enhance availability of new, additional and predictable financial flows to the developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States, and further taking into account the needs of countries in Africa affected by drought, desertification and floods; help them build their capacity for climate resilient development; support the availability of climate information, models, methods and tools; planning and practices; and knowledge so that developing countries can properly evaluate risks and vulnerabilities and integrate adaptation into national development plans and programmes.
 - Developing countries will integrate climate resilience into their development plans and budgets, taking a systematic and holistic approach across all sectors, recognising the need to prioritise cost effective adaptation measures; consult with civil society and the private sector in such decision making; ensure an enabling environment to promote climate resilient investment; ensure that assistance is available to the poorest and most vulnerable within their society; cooperate on regional adaptation challenge and share knowledge, experiences and data within and between regions to help other countries adapt.

9. The UK and Bangladesh are committed to promoting this approach in Bangladesh. We recognise that climate change will impact all economic sectors. We are both committed to integrating climate resilience into policy-making and planning at all levels. Such systematic integration will require significant capacity building and strong co-ordination between Government and all stakeholders. We will share lessons learned from our domestic experience to enhance our collective understanding and facilitate cooperation.

10. We acknowledge that Bangladesh is at the forefront of integrating adaptation into policy-making. All relevant ministries have been involved in developing Bangladesh's National Adaptation Plan of Action and longer term National Climate Change Action Plan taking into consideration the potential impacts of climate change on livelihoods, housing, infrastructure, agriculture, planning, health, migration and the future of the economy.

11. Bangladesh cannot finance the required scale of adaptation with its own resources. Taking into account Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change and its resource constraints, the UK will support Bangladesh in implementing its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan with £75 million, in the form of a grant, over the next 5 years. The UK support will comply with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, aligning it to a government-owned plan through a Bangladesh Multi-Donor Trust Fund and harmonising this support with other development partners. The UK will continue to work closely with the Government of Bangladesh and other development partners to make the proposed Multi-Donor Trust Fund operational in the immediate future. We call upon other development partners to provide predictable and long term financing as well as align and harmonize their contributions to help Bangladesh tackle climate change.

12. In announcing this partnership, the UK and Bangladesh call on other countries to strengthen their own strategic climate change plans and steer their economies toward a low carbon development path and achieve climate resilient development.

Signed on behalf of the

UK Government

Government of the People's
Republic of Bangladesh

Douglas Alexander MP

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Secretary of State
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The Honourable Finance Adviser
Government of the People's
Republic of Bangladesh