

## Leapfrog policies needed to meet the challenges of attaining energy, water and food security

**New Delhi, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014:** On the concluding day of the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of The 'Delhi Sustainable Development Summit' (DSDS), held in New Delhi today, world leaders and government representatives urged the global community to take urgent steps to reverse the effects of climate change and work towards sustainable and equitable development without further delay. They called on governments and businesses to come up with a comprehensive plan of action to achieve energy, water and food security to reduce poverty levels, especially in the developing world. The event is being organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and the theme of this year's Summit is "Attaining Food, Water, and Energy Security for All".

The Summit witnessed the coming together of the highest level of talent that an event of this nature can mobilize from across the globe on an annual basis. The Summit discussed strategies and challenges through the presence and involvement of world leaders, Nobel Prize winners, ministers from several countries and leaders from business, academia and civil society.

**Lord John Prescott, Former Deputy Prime Minister & Member of Parliament, House of Lords, UK,** said: "Legislators can play an effective role in global environmental negotiations. We must find a way to come up with a legally binding agreement that can be implemented locally to counter the ill-effects of climate change." He called on countries to enact climate change legislations, adding that the world needed a strong domestic framework to move towards a low carbon economy.

**Dr Thet Thet Zin, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment Conservation and Forestry, Myanmar,** said that the effects of climate change had become more pronounced today than two decades ago. "We are now receiving far less rainfall than before and this has impacted agricultural output in our country," Zin said, adding that climate change had become one of the most important issues of our times, and the biggest challenge to attaining sustainable development.

**Mr Lars Andreas Lunde, State Secretary of Climate and Environment, Norway,** said that energy contributes for 60 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. "We need to find leapfrog technologies in the field of climate science," he said, adding that energy efficiency can reduce the impacts of climate change. **Mr Jorge Moreira de Silva, Minister of Environment, Portugal,** said that climate mitigation will become

difficult in times to come, as pollution emanating from unplanned development will increase leading to environmental degradation and increased poverty levels. “Renewable energy can play an important role in environmental sustainability. We need to check the imbalances in the carbon market,” he said.

**Mr John Gummer, Former Secretary of State for Environment & Member of Parliament, House of Lords, UK,** said a fundamental change in the development paradigm was required to move towards a low carbon economy. “We need to find a bio-economic path towards sustainable development,” he said. He added that the responsibility of global warming must not just rest with the developed world, but emerging nations too must play their part to mitigate this global crisis.

The **Summit played host to two significant events**, which took place on the third day. One of them was the presentation of the **2<sup>nd</sup> Georgescu Roegen Awards**, and this year it was presented to **Professor Inge Røpke**, who won the award for ‘Unconventional Thinking’, and the **Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel chaired by Prof. Madhav Gadgil** for Bioeconomic Practice. The ‘unconventional thinking’ category rewards contributions in academia, and publication of research and literature that reflects unconventional thinking.

The other significant event was the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Jain Irrigations Systems Limited** to set up a ‘Resource Centre on Water Use Efficiency’. This is an effort to address the current and future challenges of water and food security. The MoU marks the beginning of a new chapter in carrying out comprehensive research on the themes of water use efficiency at the farm level, water conservation and regeneration practices along with more efficient farm system practices. Among the highlights of the conference was a **Session on Gender**, which is the core issue in sustainable development.

**Mr B K Chaturvedi, Member, Planning Commission, Government of India,** called for an abolition of oil subsidies and the policy of providing free power to farmers by various state governments in India. “Energy security will hold no meaning without addressing the needs of the ‘un-served’.” He added that the need of the hour was to improve our energy security with increased investments in renewable energy. **Mr Rajeev Kher, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry,** said that developed countries had used environmental sustainability for non-trade initiatives. “We will have to work together in a composite manner to attain food, water and energy security.”

**Mr Amitabh Kant, CEO and Managing Director, Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation,** said the biggest challenge today was arising from increasing urbanization. “We must use technology to leapfrog and develop smart and green cities. **Mr Surender Kumar, Secretary, Department of Science, Technology and Environment, Government of Tripura,** spoke about the problems of the people living in the North-east of India. “The water and hydro-electric potential of the North-east must be tapped because energy and water security is clearly linked to food security,” he said.

**Mr Arunendra Kumar, Chairman, Railway Board, Ministry of Railways, India**, said that steps would be needed to reduce our consumption and dependence of diesel, which is highly polluting and a major cause of our pollution load. **Mr Ajai Malhotra, former Ambassador of India to Russia**, said that eradicating poverty was the biggest challenge to attaining sustainable development. “Developed countries are continuing with food subsidies, while urging developing countries not to pursue with this policy. There must be one standard for all countries, as the world needs to move towards the Best Practices approach,” he said. **Mr S K Sarkar, Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training**, said that by 2020, India would become a highly water stressed country and urgent steps would be needed to augment water supply in times to come. “There is a need for re-thinking on our present paradigm of development. The challenge is to introduce an incentive method to move towards a clean road towards sustainable development,” he said.

The valedictory address of the Summit was delivered by **Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India**, who in his speech said: “DSDS has the power to change mindsets in a very noisy democracy. This in itself is a great achievement.” Energy and water security are major concerns, therefore they need to be tackled effectively, he said.

“From the Indian point of view, we should not be worried too much about food security, but be very worried about energy, and be frantic about water security. We need to change mindsets and come up with technological solutions to ensure a sustainable future,” Ahluwalia added.

### **DELHI SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT (DSDS):**

DSDS is a flagship event organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) every year since 2001 that seeks to facilitate enlightened debate and discussion on the discourse of global sustainable development. Over the past 13 years, it has emerged as one of the most leading forums on issues of global sustainability. Through DSDS, TERI aims to create enabling platforms for global leaders, heads of State and Central governments, scientists, academicians, policy makers, entrepreneurs, corporate entities and the youth to exchange new ideas to expand the dimensions and scope of the debate over global sustainability issues. In the past, the summit has witnessed the participation of 36 heads of states, ministerial representation from 50 countries, and has been inaugurated by Hon’ble Prime Minister of India since 2010.

### **ABOUT TERI:**

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is an independent, not-for-profit research organization deeply committed to every aspect of energy, environment, and sustainable development. From providing environment-friendly solutions to rural energy problems, to helping shape the development of the Indian oil and gas sector; from tackling global

climate change issues across many continents to enhancing forest conservation efforts among local communities; from advancing solutions to growing urban transportation and air pollution problems to promoting energy efficiency in Indian industries, the emphasis has always been on finding innovative solutions to make the world a better place to live in. All activities at TERI move from formulating local and national-level strategies to suggesting global solutions tackling critical energy and environment related issues.

Headed by Dr. R.K. Pachauri, also the chairperson of the Nobel Peace Prize winning climate change body, IPCC, TERI has emerged as an institution of excellence for its path-breaking research, and is a global brand widely respected by political leaders, policy makers, corporate entities as well as the civil society at large.

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