

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Positions for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

I. Increasing Economic Security and Development through Innovation and Production of Alternative Energy Sources

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan (hereafter Pakistan) is committed to the production of alternative energy sources and understands that these sources will have a positive impact not only on the environment, but also on the economy. In order to demonstrate our commitment to this issue, Pakistan has both signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and later created the Renewable Energy Policy of Pakistan. Through this policy, the country has instituted large hydroelectric projects and, since the 1980's, has virtually eliminated its usage of coal to produce energy. Also, in response to rising oil prices, Pakistan's usage of petroleum in the production of energy has been decreasing since 2007 as the country moves toward the employment of alternative sources such as natural gas. It is thanks to these projects and others within Pakistan that the demand-supply gap for energy decreased from 47 percent in 2000, to 18 percent by 2005.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, in agreement with the government policies of Pakistan, stated in 2005 that, "Energy is of critical significance to development." In light of this postulation, Pakistan acknowledges that its premier source of energy, natural gas, is a finite resource upon which an economy cannot be permanently based, and therefore is moving toward the acceptance of alternative energy sources, such as those put forth in the agreement between Pakistan and General Electric. Additionally, as a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (hereafter UNESCAP), Pakistan recognizes the importance of the objectives of the Energy Security Section of the committee, such as access to energy services and the creation of energy policy and planning within member nations. Due to our agreement with these objectives, Pakistan has begun working with the Aga Khan Foundation (a Pakistani NGO) in order to implement a project that will increase energy efficiency in areas of northern Pakistan through the use of building materials. However, due to the loss of up to 15 percent of Pakistan's electrical capacity caused by the recent catastrophic flooding, advancement in renewable energy sources within the nation must be delayed until our nation can rebuild.

Regardless of recent setbacks, General Electric (hereafter GE) has made an agreement, what is known as a Memorandum of Understanding, with the Government of Pakistan which addresses the necessity of modernizing certain aspects of the country's infrastructure, particularly the production of energy. Through this agreement, GE hopes to work with Pakistan in the development of new alternative and renewable sources of energy, as well as the improvement of existing structures. Pakistan has made tremendous strides already in the use of hydroelectric power, and is eager to discover what other renewable sources may be available to help the country increasingly meet the energy needs of Pakistani citizens. It is obvious that programs such as this have great potential to ensure Pakistan's move toward renewable energy, and we believe that similar partnerships between developing countries and private companies, more developed countries, or NGOs could be highly beneficial for any state in need of assistance in attaining this goal.

II. Promoting the Standard of Living Throughout Pacific Island Countries and Territories Through Sustainable Urban Development

As a populous developing country, Pakistan fully recognizes the necessity of sustainable development. Furthermore it understands that varying economic and geopolitical situations warrant specific, targeted development solutions. To this end, Pakistan has been actively involved in assisting the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), attending both its Rio and Global conferences. At the Global Conference for the Sustainable development of SIDS, Pakistan offered solutions to the current situation, while identifying challenges faced not only by SIDS, but by the Barbados Programme of Action as well. Outside its direct involvement with Pacific island countries, Pakistan's own history of sustainable development offers insight into the challenges facing UNESCAP's Pacific Island members. 1992 saw the founding of Pakistan's Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), a result of the Pakistan National Conservation Strategy. An independent non-profit created to work closely with the Pakistani government, the SDPI is mandated to promote sustainable development policies and encourage expanding research capacity and infrastructure.

Following the catastrophic floods of summer 2010, Pakistan's sustainability goals have been adjusted to account not only for the need to develop sustainably, but to *rebuild* sustainably. UN General Secretary Ban-Ki Moon stated of the disaster: "The magnitude of the problem; the world has never seen such a disaster. It's much beyond anybody's imagination." Pakistan is still coming to terms with this unprecedented disaster. Yet much can be learned from successful initiatives in place prior to the flooding. Pakistan believes the success of effective urban

planning seen in the Orangi Township, the world's largest slum that is just outside of Karachi, is an appropriate starting point. Since 1986, slum dwellers have received the titles of their homes in a process called Notification. This enables residents to eventually profit off the purchase of their home, to make way for further urban development. To date, partnerships with NGO's and the local government have constructed 700 schools, 600 health clinics, and over 40,000 microenterprise units. Despite our recent successes, Pakistan has a long road ahead to return to normalcy. The UN estimates it will take Pakistan more than two years to return to pre-flooding conditions. Yet Pakistan's development will continue, and sustainability will remain a chief consideration.

Although UNESCAP's Pacific island countries and territories house populations far smaller than the Orangi Township's 1.5 million, much can still be learned from its success. Similar instances of government-NGO cooperation produce the most efficient allocation of financial, human, and technological resources. Moreover, tourism represents a potential economic boon to many of these nations, but unsustainable tourism continues to threaten those industries. When meeting with the SIDS to review the Barbados Programme of Action, Pakistan offered the following suggestion to all island countries or territories emphasizing the importance of comprehensive sustainability policies: "(there is) strong nexus between health, poverty and environment. Policies and strategies prepared in isolation are not conducive to sustainability." Pakistan believes that close partnerships with developed nations and prudent development policies hold the key to the future developmental success of pacific island countries and territories.

III. Expanding the Objectives of the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund

Pakistan is fully aware of the devastating nature of tsunamis in Southeast Asian and Pacific nations, and has participated often in projects sponsored by the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund (hereafter The Fund.) In regards to the objectives of The Fund, Pakistan fully supports ensuring the creation and mobilization of early warning systems in vulnerable areas, and the aid of those affected by these natural disasters. However, although Pakistan acknowledges how catastrophic tsunamis are, we also note the fact that tsunamis are neither the only nor the most devastating natural disaster to affect our nation and those nearby. Referencing natural hazards, Pakistan is in complete agreement with Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, who argues that, "Asia Pacific is the most disaster prone region and most seriously affected by natural disasters of many types: floods, droughts and meteorological, seismic, and ecological disasters, as well as forest and grassland fires."

The fact that a portion of Pakistan's border is lined by the Indian Ocean makes it vulnerable to tsunamis, and our country has recently begun to work with Iran on the 'Assessment and awareness of Makran tsunami hazards' project in order to be better prepared should our coasts be in danger from such a natural disaster in the future. However, this is not a main concern for Pakistan at the moment. Instead, Pakistan emphasizes the disastrous state that the recent flooding has caused in our nation. Reports indicate that the floods in Pakistan have affected 13 million people, which exceeds the number of those affected by the 2004 tsunami. In fact, the United Nations general secretary, Ban Ki-moon, recently explained that, "Pakistan is facing a slow-motion tsunami." Due to the devastating nature of these floods, Pakistan is currently unable to focus its resources on any issue other than the reconstruction and rehabilitation of our nation.

A positive aspect that can be drawn from our current situation is that at-risk nations can benefit from Pakistan's now extensive natural disaster experience, particularly in streamlining the process already in place for detecting and reacting to potential tsunamis and other natural disasters that threaten the region. Pakistan believes including regular drills as part of the already established Standard Operating Procedure (hereafter SOP) for evacuation and rescue will ensure that all parties are ready and able to act, should the need arise. All organs would be responsible for participating in these regular drills simulating an actual natural disaster. Furthermore, Pakistan maintains that every second available to disaster-response personnel should be fully utilized. As such, Pakistan calls for a clear protocol to be established between the window in which an underwater earthquake is detected (either in Tokyo or Honolulu) and when it is reported. Before receiving the all clear about 15-20 minutes later, all SOP personnel will be in a position to act on the potential crisis. The most recent floods have taught the world that cataclysmic disaster can occur in many forms, not simply in the mold of a tsunami. Pakistan therefore moves for this body to expand the objectives of the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund to better reflect all natural disaster risks threatening the region.