

CORRIGENDUM TO THE VERBATIM RECORD 2014

VII. VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRD GENERAL MEETING OF THE DELEGATIONS OF AALCO MEMBER STATES HELD ON TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2014.

His Excellency Dr. Danesh Yazdi, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the President of the Fifty Third Annual Session of AALCO in the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM: ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

President: I invite the Secretary General of AALCO to introduce the agenda item. You have the floor, Sir.

Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary General of AALCO: His Excellency Mr. President; Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen;

The law relating to the “Environment and Sustainable Development” constitutes an important item on the work programme of AALCO and has been followed by AALCO for nearly four decades now. The present Secretariat report provides an overview of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 19) and the Ninth Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9), held from 11-22 November 2013 at Warsaw, Poland. The Report also briefly refers to the subsequent negotiations on Climate Change held in Bonn, Germany in March and June 2014.

In addition, the International Regime on Combating Desertification shall have a brief report of the Eleventh Session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (COP 11) held from 16 – 27 September 2013 at Windhoek, Namibia. The last section of the Report deals with the Final Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and the Inaugural Session of High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development held on 20 September 2013 at the UN Headquarters.

Your Excellencies,

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Heads of State and Government recognized the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements¹ and requested that the future sustainable development goals build upon commitments already made.² There are many globally agreed goals contained in both binding and non-binding multilateral instruments, especially in the environmental sector.³ Since 2012, Governments, through their

¹ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 89.

² Ibid., para. 246.

³ See United Nations Technical Support Team (TST) (2014), “Compendium of existing goals and targets under the 19 focus areas being considered by the OWG SDG”. Available at: www.unep.org/post2015.

participation in the multilateral environmental agreements, have encouraged all partners to consider existing goals as the basis for future goals⁴.

The future goals and targets should be at least as, and preferably more, ambitious than what already exists. The inclusion of selected existing targets would underscore the urgency of existing commitments. Sustainable development goal targets on renewable energy, energy efficiency and low-carbon development trajectories would reinforce the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change without duplicating its processes. Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem values into indices of poverty, prosperity and wealth, would support the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as they address the drivers of unsustainability. The new goals and targets could highlight emerging issues, and they could set a vision for renewing commitments to agreements whose terms will expire in the coming decades⁵.

The 19th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 19) reiterated the need for finalizing the Climate Change agreement by 2015 for the period till 2020, which was set as a target during the Durban Conference (COP 17) in 2011. The main focus was to define a clearer path for the final two years of the Durban Platform negotiations leading to future climate agreements. The major discussions were on “intended nationally determined contributions” to the 2015 agreement, by the first quarter of 2014, for those countries which were ready to do so. There were few demands from developing countries, including the need for increased climate finance, and for a new mechanism to help especially vulnerable nations cope with unavoidable “loss and damage” resulting from Climate Change.

Thus, in short, the main outcomes from the COP 19 included:

- An agreement to table post-2020 emissions reduction contributions by the first quarter of 2015;
- Agreement on the Warsaw Framework for REDD+⁶ finance;
- Establishing the Warsaw International Mechanism for ‘Loss and Damage’;
- Finalizing the institutional arrangements between the Green Climate Fund and the COP.

The above concerns have also been clearly stated in a UNEP Report entitled “Environment Sustainability for Human Well Being in the post 2015 Development Agenda”, the post-2015 development agenda cannot be a zero-sum game; benefits or gains to one group or sector should not translate into losses for another.⁷ Goals should be complementary and consistent; no goal should be achieved at the expense of another goal. Universality can be defined in several ways:

⁴ UNEP/EA.1/INF.18 dated 21 May 2014.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ REDD+ means “Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries, including conservation.

⁷ P. Caballero, P. Hazelwood and K. Van der Heijden, 2013, “Setting a new course: universality as an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda” (discussion note).

- (a) Issues that are of common concern (e.g., the global commons, or the global financial system) that require common action;
- (b) Issues that do not affect countries and peoples in the same way or to the same degree, but require common action to address them in a globalized interdependent world (e.g., food security, the illicit trade in wildlife, managing chemical waste, unsustainable lifestyles or regional dust storms);
- (c) Issues that may not be significant everywhere, but are recognized as requiring widespread support (e.g., eradicating extreme poverty).

The post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals must address such universal concerns with a universal ambition which recognizes that each country starts with a different baseline of challenges, needs, priorities and response capabilities. It is also important to recognize that even countries that have achieved certain goals are vulnerable to reversal of such gains from future environmental, economic and social shocks. Responses can be differentiated through choice of development pathways and according to national circumstances and priorities. Some countries are able to leapfrog the usual development trajectory by adopting a more resource efficient and less polluting pathway, which avoids future costs. Countries' pathways will depend on their reconciliation of short-term versus long-term priorities.⁸

Your Excellencies,

The high-level segment of the 11th Session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (COP 11) was held during the meeting on 23 and 24 September 2013. The main focus was on the best options for the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan 2008-2018. These round table discussions focused on an integrated landscape approach that addressed the biophysical, socio-economic and cultural aspects of dry lands and sustainable land management practices.

The inaugural meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was held under the auspices of the UNGA on Tuesday, 24 September 2013 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The establishment of the HLPF was called for by the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCDS or Rio+20) in June 2012.

Your Excellencies,

The Warsaw Conference saw an affirmation towards having a draft text on “nationally determined contributions” to be finalized by the first quarter of 2015. The question on “loss and damage” and reinstating such damages were at the center of this Conference.

Combating desertification has been a continued concern of the international community. The recent COP 11 focused on guidance on a land-degradation neutral world (LGNW), including a target-setting approach, and the translation of the desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) commitments made at Rio+20 into concrete activities with the framework of the UNCCD. The vicious cycle of biophysical process driven by land users through persistent productivity losses lead to poverty and causing social,

⁸ UNEP/EA.1/INF.18 dated 21 May 2014

economic and political problems. The High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which replaced the UN Commission on Sustainable Development however, has, at its inaugural session, confirmed the move towards sustainable development governance.

Therefore, in conclusion it could be said that if we are to pass on a healthy environment to the future generations, all the Member States while framing their national policies pertaining to the environment, must bear in mind the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Secretary General. I now call upon Nepal.

The Delegate of Nepal: Thank you Mr. Chair.

Mr. President, Sustainable development emphasizes a holistic, equitable and far sighted approach to decision making at all levels. It emphasizes not just strong economic performance but also intra-generational and inter-generational equity. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives. The concept of green economy focuses primarily on the intersection between economy and environment.

Mr. President, Environment is vital not only for the present generation but also for the future of human race. Any adverse impact on it would be seriously detrimental to socio-economic development and human activities. Preservation of the environment not only for the present generations but also for the future generations should be the utmost priorities in the developmental activities for sustainable economic and social growth. The development of climate resilient infrastructure and promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development through the use of clean technologies could provide an opportunity for mitigating the impacts of Climate Change.

I would like to appreciate the amendment made to Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change thereby establishing a second 8-year commitment period with effect from 2013. This amendment would give the opportunity to developed countries who have not adopted emissions reduction targets and ratified the Kyoto Protocol to undertake to reduce emissions and not to shift the burden to developing countries and least developed countries.

Mr. President, we are aware that human-induced multiple impacts of Climate Change on ecosystems, goods and services in mountainous region as well as implications on livelihood, health and welfare of the people are very serious, sea level rise, rapid melting of snow of mountains, unusual weather pattern that adversely affects crops harvesting, flash flood, outburst of snowy lake and so on are the direct consequences of the Climate Change. These problems are results of the green house gas effect left by the rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. These problems are not the problems of one State nor can they be resolved without collective effort of the international community. We must, therefore, need to take urgent, collaborative and effective actions at all levels for addressing climate induced vulnerabilities and impacts in mountains, enhancing the well-

being of climate vulnerable communities and also strengthening the climate resilience of the people of mountainous countries.

Mr. President, I would like to recall the International Conference of Mountainous Countries on Climate Change held in Kathmandu from 5-6 April 2012 which agreed to enhance cooperation among the mountainous countries and countries with mountainous regions for addressing the common problems, recognising that the mountains provide solutions for sustainable development using ecosystem services, in particular, water, biodiversity, energy, and for enhancing food security. It was also agreed to consolidate the common efforts to effectively integrate mountain issues into the global climate change and development agenda including the Rio process and beyond.

The Kathmandu Call for Action 2012 would be a good initiative to protect the high potentials of mountain ecosystem service to promote green growth strategies and strengthen linkages between mountain ecosystem and other ecosystems to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development which is a prime concern of the region of Asia and Africa.

Mr. President, I would like to recall the Bali Action Plan and Roadmap which laid out the four- fold action roadmap for climate change action mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance. In this context, the industrialised countries should take concrete steps through financing, technology development and transfer, capacity-building support to enable vulnerable countries to cope with unavoidable "loss and damage" and resulting from climate change. The future climate change negotiations should take into account the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" of climate change enshrined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In this context, this Organization needs to be proactive to contribute to making the climate negotiation a success. With these words I would like to conclude my brief remarks.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Nepal. I now give the floor to the Iran.

The Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President, Excellencies, Prof. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary-General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, at the outset, I would like to thank the AALCO for the continuous inclusion of the topic "Environment and Sustainable Development" in the agenda of the annual sessions of the Organization. This issue which has been closely followed by AALCO for over the last 40 years is of particular importance to all the Member States and to the international community at large.

Our common concern on environmental issues which is focused on four topics namely climate change, desertification, biological diversity and sustainable development is indicative of the special role accorded to the environment by AALCO Member States.

Mr. President, climate change is a global problem that requires collective action based on criteria such as equality in the use of the global atmospheric space, recognizing the historical responsibility of the developed countries for the emissions of greenhouse gases

(GHG), and respecting the rights to development of developing countries. The international community still witnesses lack of clear commitment to fight the impacts of climate change by those countries that created this situation. The progress made towards achieving technical, technological and financial commitments made in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and subsequently in the Kyoto Protocol by developed countries has been extremely disappointing. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that all the parties especially the developed countries must respect and be committed to the agreements in the framework of climate change negotiations.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen. Sustainable development is not an abstract concept. It is a well-defined and elaborated concept in various global agreements. Eradicating poverty, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development. The world leaders agreed in Johannesburg in 2002 that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects is a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities.

The 2012 Conference addressed the failure of implementing the Rio and Johannesburg outcomes and considered changes which have occurred since 1992. The outcome of Rio+20 identifies ways for the UN system to increase capacity-building support for national sustainable development plans and strategies in developing countries. It could be realized practically in the framework of goals and means of implementation of sustainable development. We affirm that the goals of sustainable development should address the failure of sustainable development especially in developing countries.

Mr. President, Drylands as the home for two billion people are highly susceptible to land degradation and desertification. It is estimated that by 2020, 135 million people will be at risk of being driven from their lands due to continuing desertification. Approximately 70 percent of the 5.2 billion hectares of drylands utilized for agriculture are degraded and are at risk of desertification.

Insufficient financial resources, lack of institutional capacity and lack of access to efficient clean technology are among the major problems that hinder the ability of developing countries to tackle these challenges.

Desertification is one of the major challenges that have clear negative effects on agricultural production. Population growth and increased food demand are expected to drive the expansion and intensification of land cultivation in drylands. If no countermeasures are taken, desertification in drylands will threaten future improvements in human well-being.

Distinguished Delegates, the Islamic Republic of Iran regards biological diversity as the basis for its sustainable development, and the country's biological resources are described in terms of aquatic resources, coastal areas, agricultural activities, forests, rangelands and the wetlands. This makes the biodiversity a direct source of food, fuel and medicines. The core benefits of agriculture and natural resources are attributed to the wide range of

ecosystem goods and services derived from biodiversity at different levels, including at genetic, species, and ecosystem levels.

Biodiversity is crucial to the alleviation of poverty, due to the basic goods and ecosystem services it provides. It is integral to key development sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, which more than 1.3 billion people depend on for their livelihoods.

Mr. President, While expressing its full commitment to comply with basic principles of international environmental law, the Islamic Republic of Iran would like to stress that to have our planet earth conserved, secured, and protected for all, it is to underscore the utmost importance of intra- and inter-generational equity; in other words, due regard to the special role of the developed countries and the necessity of considering next generations are inevitable.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Iran. I now give the floor to the Republic of Indonesia.

The Delegate of Republic of Indonesia: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates; I would like thank you for the opportunity to speak on the environment and sustainable development issue.

On the specific issue of climate change, Indonesia would like to note the progress made by the Parties under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This delegation would like to note the importance of the process to develop a protocol, another legal instrument which is applicable to all parties as mandated by the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action.

The legal instrument should have top-down global goals of climate actions, which is translated into nationally determined actions with a reference to clear international rules and guidelines. The instrument should also adhere to the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The mitigation action under the instrument shall be robust, ambitious, fair and fitted to diversity of national circumstances.

In the light of the upcoming 20th session of COP-UNFCCC, we would like to encourage the AALCO Member States to accelerate the process in the COP to have a draft negotiating text to be ready in order to conclude the negotiation by 2015.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates; on the issue of biological diversity, Indonesia attaches great importance to the issue of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. Indonesia would like to reiterate its position that genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge should be utilised in an appropriate manner by ensuring the fair and equitable benefit through mutually agreed terms in accordance with the objectives of the UN-CBD and Nagoya Protocol. Therefore, Indonesia call upon all AALCO member states to ratify the Nagoya Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Thank you.

President: Thank you Republic of Indonesia. I now give the floor to Japan.

The Delegate of Japan: Mr. President, on Climate Change, we are currently working on the negotiations to establish a fair and effective post-2020 framework applicable to all parties, which is to be agreed upon in 2015. Japan fully supports it and continues to contribute constructively for the realisation of 2015 agreement.

With regard to the question of principles of the UNFCCC, it is important to ensure participation of all parties. We should not take a fixed dichotomised way which does not reflect the current situation. From this point of view, we should interpret and reflect the concept of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capability and equity in a dynamic way.

Mr. President, we consider that UN climate summit serves as an important occasion outside of UNFCCC process to strengthen political momentum for success of COP 21. Japan would like to actively contribute to it by showing concrete action against Climate Change.

Japan fully recognises the importance of the Green Climate Fund as one of the major financial mechanism and welcomes the commencement of initial resource mobilisation process. More than 20 countries including Japan had participated in the first meeting for the initial contribution process held in Oslo on June 30th and July 1st this year and had fruitful discussions. We will continue to contribute for early operationalisation of GCF.

Mr. President, the Commission of Sustainable Development, which was established at the Rio Summit, has played significant role for over 20 years in disseminating the concept of “sustainable development” globally. The High Level Political Forum will play an important role in the review of the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, as a forum for sharing good practices and deepening deliberations on common challenges for sustainable development. We expect the HLPF will continue to gain broad participation from all stake holders and provide political guidance to the international community in achieving sustainable development.

Mr. President, with regard to the question of international regime on desertification, Japan has been consistently a substantial contributor all along to the international funding to combat desertification.

I would like to congratulate on the successful conclusion of the Eleventh Session of the Conference of Parties (COP11) on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). I would also like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the host, the government of Namibia for their hospitality and excellent arrangements. Japan takes due account of the close link between desertification and such issues of climate change and biodiversity conservation.

Combating desertification should not be regarded as a single issue, but should be dealt with in effective collaboration with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Thank you.

President: Thank you Japan. I now give the floor to Sultanate of Oman

The Delegate of Sultanate of Oman⁹: Thank you Mr. President.

I congratulate H.E. president for the effort he is making to direct these sessions and I express deep appreciation to H.E. Secretary General of AALCO for his constructive efforts he did and is doing and which we hope the continuation of those , and continue support of all member countries.

H.E. President, The topic of Environment and Sustainable Development is one of important topics which have great importance to the Sultanate Oman, because of its geographical location as an island of the Arabian Peninsula, which is characterized by dry climate and limited vegetation and the lack of available water resources. Therefore, my country is keen to develop strategies and national plans for the protection of the environment, pollution control and combating drought and desertification in order to achieve balanced and sustainable development, equal to the economic, social and environmental considerations. To provide better safeguards and rules to secure the safety of the Omani environment, the Sultanate of Oman has created special ministry for environment and climate affaires, which would give through merger between environment and climate affaires the opportunity of linking between the impact of global Climate Change on the environment. It has also set up a national center for field research in the field of environment. This center aims to organize and encourage field research in the field of preservation of environment and encourage the Omani workers, researchers, specialists and scholars in the field of environmental, and highlight the their abilities and scientific potentials and publish their researches locally and internationally.

The celebration of the Omani Environment Day which falls on the eighth of January each year is a national event which affirms the attention given to the environment in the Sultanate.

The award is allocated by the Organization UNESCO on behalf of Sultan Qaboos to protect the environment, is culmination of the efforts of the Sultanate of Oman to preserve the environment and achieve a balance between it and development, that is a clear contribution in encouragement of researchers and workers in this field and honor for their efforts to serve the humanity.

H.E. President, The preservation of biodiversity in Oman is an important issue where the ecosystems are consider sensitive, and natural renewable scarce resources which face different challenges like logging and soil erosion and depletion of fish stocks and desertification and the subsequent loss of biodiversity. To reach to the sustainable development with regard to biodiversity, environmental protection, my country has put a complete system of natural reserves which is in line with the objectives of the International Convention on Biodiversity ratified by the Sultanate of Oman in 1994, and also made a national strategy and action plan for biodiversity to determine the measures required of each side in accordance with the obligations of convention to find sustainable development.

⁹ This statement was delivered in Arabic. This is an unofficial translation made by the Secretariat.

H.E. President, The issue of Climate Change is one of the major environmental issues that Oman attaches special importance. It was one of the first countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change during the Earth Summit. So we hope that our organization is to draw attention to human behaviors that threaten the our planet, and highlight the importance of this change of these behavioral signs, and encourage the communities to take constructivism practical stances towards commitment of all human environment for protection of environment.

In this regards, my country reaffirms its commitment to basic principles adopted by the international community to achieve sustainable development, on the basis of its belief that these principles represent a general framework to ensure joint action and take collective responsibility to protect the environment. The Sultanate of Oman is looking with all optimism to what the 53rd session of Organization come out regarding this topic with resolutions.

Proposals in this regard, the pursuit of the Organization towards the creation of an effective mechanism between Member States that shall ensure the exchange of information on climate affairs and transfer of technology among member countries in the environmental field.

Thanks.

President: Thank you Oman. I now give the floor to the People's Republic of China.

The Delegate of People's Republic of China: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President, Sustainable development is the common pursuit of all countries, which concerns their fundamental interests and the wellbeing of mankind. The UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 have provided guidance and action plans on sustainable development for the international community and individual countries. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, known as the Rio Conventions, have played an important role in promoting the global environmental protection and sustainable development. Countries around the world and the public have come to realize and pay more attention to the issue of environment and sustainable development.

Mr. President, climate change is the common challenge confronting mankind and needs to be addressed through international cooperation. China has consistently and actively participated in the international cooperation in this area and played a constructive role in climate change negotiations. China welcomes the road map defined by the Warsaw Conference for reaching a new agreement in 2015, and expects that the United Nations Climate Change Summit in September this year could provide Political Momentum for the Climate Change negotiations. To conclude the negotiations on a new post-2020 arrangement on Climate Change on schedule at the Paris conference in 2015 is the common aspiration of the international community. China will work together with all other parties to push the negotiations to a conclusion as scheduled and reach a

comprehensive and balanced agreement in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and respective capacities.

Mr. President, Desertification constitutes a direct threat to ecological environment, food security and poverty eradication in rural areas and is of grave concern to developing countries, particularly the African Countries. The target of a land degradation neutral world set at Rio+20 Summit has provided a new opportunity for the international community to enhance cooperation and combat desertification together. China supports the decision on the establishment of an Intergovernmental Working Group on the follow-up of Rio+20 adopted by the Conference of Parties to the UNCCD held last year. China participated actively in the work of the working group, and expects that new and concrete results will be achieved by all the parties, on the basis of the work of the working group, in further realizing the goal of a land degradation neutral world under the framework of UNCCD. Over the years, China has made exploratory efforts in combating desertification and achieved good results. We are willing to share our experience and strengthen exchanges with other countries.

Mr. President, the United Nations relevant working group has reached an initial agreement on the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which has laid the foundation for the post-2015 development agenda. In June this year, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) held the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). China welcomes the above-mentioned developments and progress. In our opinion, the international community should, in the process of advancing sustainable development, respect the right of individual countries ownership on sustainable development; take full account of their national conditions and levels of development; handle the economic, social and environmental dimensions in a balanced way; insist on promoting sustainable development in the pursuit of development, and pay special attention to addressing the concerns of developing countries.

Mr. President, the Chinese Government attaches great importance to environmental protection and sustainable development. Promoting ecological progress derives from our reflection on development and is also a way to upgrade development. China has given high priority to ecological progress in its national modernization agenda, and insisted on seeking environmental protection in the process of development and development in the process of environmental protection. We have made great efforts to prevent and control smog, water and soil pollution, as well as land degradation, pushed forward the changes in the patterns of production and consumption of energy resources, promoted green, circular and low-carbon development, and strived to build a beautiful China. Protecting environment and promoting sustainable development are where the interests of all countries converge. China will continue to strengthen win-win cooperation with all other countries on the basis of equality, friendship and mutual benefit to further promote the implementation of international conventions, work together to address the issues of Climate Change and desertification, and jointly promote the cause of environment and development for mankind.

President: Thank you China. I now give the floor to Sudan.

The Delegate of Republic of the Sudan¹⁰: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would like to take the topic of this paper in points.

Environmental degradation in Africa, especially in West Africa, is creating a kind of war and that is because of the lack of resources and conflict around between humans and among State. Among the causes of environmental degradation, is the emergence of oil and some metals and agriculture, which resulted in the removal of the forestry sector in rich areas and tropical climate, which later led to the desertification of many African countries, making interference in the internal affairs is easy facilitator in order to obtain financial support from rich countries sometimes that does not take into account the principle of non-interference in the affairs of African countries and developing poor countries. But I say loud and clear that there are some countries despite continued support for poor countries, they do not interfere in their internal affairs, which make me commend the position of those countries.

As for the existing natural resources in Africa that need financial support and technical and scientific expertise in order to develop sustainable development without exploitation of the resources of these countries. Therefore, the contribution of rich countries that want to bring development in Africa and Asia must be in accordance with the principle of equality and justice and reciprocity without looking to exploit the wealth of these countries and educate the former colonial attitudes.

We in Sudan care about preserving the environment in terms of creating of the ministry concerned to preserve the environment and several countries contribute to us in this area and we commend their performance.

We also find that there is a lot of Asian and Arab countries contribute to the developmental construction in the Sudan, for example, the Republic of China that is interested in participating in the development in Sudan without interference in the internal affairs, and despite the different ideology and religions, but China remained standing with Sudan stance deserves praise. States which stand with Sudan are many like India, Japan, and Malaysia.

So to say that Sudan is committed to international conventions relating to the conservation of the environment as well as Sudan cares development for the Sudanese people through the rule of law and respect for human rights and reciprocity with friendly countries. We commend in this regard, the United Nations and its organizations and our brothers in the Arab countries, which have been providing aid to Sudan in the field of development and preservation of the environment.

Mr. President, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to express to you that Sudan is a country committed to the United Nations charters, rule of law, human rights and respect for countries.

Thanking Mr. President.

¹⁰ This statement was delivered in Arabic. This is an unofficial translation made by the Secretariat.

President: Thank you Sudan. I now give the floor to Thailand.

The Delegate of Thailand: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President, the issue of Environment and Sustainable Development has been on the agenda of AALCO for quite some time. We have been following the progress of this important issue with great interest. However, we are of the view that more needs to be done. Thailand is of the view that the development of laws relating to Environment and Sustainable Development is a crucial factor, which contributes greatly to the security and well-being of mankind.

Climate Change is an issue which affects us all. Many of us will continue to suffer the adverse effects of Climate Change, if we do not promptly and effectively deal with this problem of Climate Change. In December 2012, the State Parties to the Kyoto protocol adopted an amendment to the protocol, establishing a second commitment for Annex I countries for the Platform 2013-2020. In Thailand's view this development is an important step towards a truly global emissions reduction regime, which will stabilise green house gas emissions, and provide architecture for future international agreements on Climate Change. Thailand would therefore like to see this amendment Kyoto protocol to enter into force at the earliest opportunity by acceptance from the parties especially Annex I countries.

Agencies are under a process of reviewing, assessing loss and regulation on Climate Change, carbon emissions and issues of biodiversity. Some national legislation will be amended or enacted, in order that we full comply with international law in this matter. As for Thailand's policy, implementation over Climate Change must plan 2012-2015, it is a framework of interpreted policies and action plan relation to Climate Change. The master plan takes hold of the negative effects of Climate Change, reduce green house gas emissions and promote community capacity building.

Mr. President, Thailand welcomes the collective efforts to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we expect SDGs to address and incorporate all three dimensions of Sustainable Development, namely economic, social and environmental, in a balanced and comprehensive manner. They should also be coherent with the UN development agenda beyond 2015. Thailand should not off the meetings of high level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (SPLF), held under the auspices of UNGA last year and ECOSOC in July this year. The high level political forum has replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), will provide political leadership and guidance to the implementation of the Sustainable Development commitments and as well as address new and emerging challenges.

Mr. President, we are honoured to share with the sufficiency economic philosophy of His Majesty the King of Thailand, which has played a significant role in Thailand's sustainable development. This enlightened philosophy introduced three interlocking principles of moderation of economic behaviour. This openness in the use of limitation upon resources and self-immunity of the people of community. His Majesty's vision therefore, contributes immensely to the Thailand's people consensual development. As a medium science and medium in come country, Thailand would like to share our concern

in Universal Health Coverage (UHC), starting more than two decades ago. UHC was setup as a national agenda with the keen perception that UHC is a key instrument in enhancing health, reducing poverty and promoting sustainable, social and economic development.

The government has greatly expanded the rural health services by shifting resources and budgets from urban health care to rural areas. Compulsory public health care services and incentives were established, over comprehensive mechanism were also put in place to develop effective system of health personal and sustainable financing. Today, according to the WHO, Thailand features as one of the countries to achieve good health at low cost. Moreover, 99 percent of the population is now covered under the UHC scheme. Thailand has demonstrated that UHC is not only a written country agenda but an achievable goal at all levels.

Mr. President, last but not the least my delegation envisages to highlight the principle of rule of law as a means to promote Sustainable Development. It is a principle that serves as a guardian of international legal framework. Access to justice, not only provide opportunities for social fairness but can help address distinct sources of economic disparities. Thailand has taken great pride in hosting the Bangkok dialogue on rule of law, on 15th of November, 2013 which brought together world leaders and experts to discuss how the role of fair and equitable justice system, good governance, transparency and accountability can contribute towards Sustainable Development. It is our belief that the outcome of the Bangkok Dialogue can lay ideological foundation for the development of an international consensus on this issue.

Mr. President, we have already mentioned efforts of the royal Thai government. I would like to take this opportunity, to reaffirm our commitment and to work in consultation and cooperation with our practice concerned in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Thailand. I now give the floor to Pakistan.

The Delegate of Pakistan: Thank you Mr. President.

My delegation does not intend to make a statement. It has an observation, through you Mr. President; I am addressing the worthy Secretary General. My delegation highly appreciates the determined intentions, laudable intentions of the Secretary General to upgrade and expand the work of the Secretariat, we appreciate that and we will support to that to the extent possible. However, my delegation urges the Secretary General that whenever, he introduces an item and submits the report on that item, he should identify the legal issues in that item, which are common to all of us sitting here, so that our ensuing deliberations are enlivened by thoughtful and thought provoking comments by the participants present here.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Pakistan. I now give the floor to Malaysia.

The Delegate of Malaysia: Thank you Mr. President.

Mr President, Malaysia thanks the secretariat of AALCO for the report on environment and sustainable development. Malaysia takes note of the decision of the UNFCCC, COP19 in Warsaw, inter alia which reiterates the need for finalising a new agreement on Climate Change, by the first quarter of 2015. Malaysia gives its assurance, to continue active participation and contribution in the negotiation of this draft text. Further Malaysia underscores the importance of the discussion of the fundamental concept of intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) within the context of Article 4.7 of the convention. This concept is clear, that the extent to which developing country parties will effectively implement their commitment under the convention will depend on the effective implementation of the developed country parties, of their commitments under the convention related to financial resources and transfer of technologies and will take fully into account economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priority of the developing countries parties.

Mr President, Malaysia views this with great concern the lack of good faith demonstrated by many developed country parties to the Kyoto Protocol to adopt emissions regulation targets for the second commitment period. As well parties have left or never ratified the Kyoto Protocol; Malaysia believes that these parties should in true spirit of the convention undertake to reduce Green House Gases in comparable manner to the Kyoto Protocol for the second commitment period. Although Malaysia is not legally bound to any commitments towards reducing its GHG emissions under the Kyoto Protocol through the clean development mechanism, Malaysia voluntarily participates in globally reducing emissions of GHG.

Mr President, Malaysia welcomes the creation of High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). It looks forward to this Forum to open a new chapter in Sustainable Development governance. It is Malaysia's hope that the Forum will follow upon implementation of Sustainable Development and will avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost effective manner. This is an important development, Malaysia is of the view that this annual session, we give mandate to AALCO Secretariat to carry out appropriate study on the issues as mandated to the high level forum, particularly, the issues related to implementation of Sustainable Development commitments and consideration of new and emerging Sustainable Development challenges. The study collated will guide AALCO member states in their deliberations at the high level forum.

Last but not least, Malaysia would like to support AALCO in urging the Member States to consider transforming its economy towards green economy that would provide new investments and business opportunities.

Thank you.

President: Thank you Malaysia. I now give the floor to South Africa.

The Delegate of South Africa: Thank you Mr. President.

This is an important topic, the issue of Environment and Sustainable Development. Climate Change threatens to reverse the development gains which we have already made and to help our efforts to develop our economies and eradicate poverty among our citizens. Urgency of Climate Change Challenge is highlighted by the fact that the United Nations Secretary General is hosting a climate summit in next few days on the eve of the opening of General Assembly. AALCO Member States should take full advantage of this opportunity, to call on the international community to work together in multilateral system of the UN framework convention on Climate Change to agree on legally binding commitments for all parties to address Climate Change based on the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. This means that the developing countries must take a lead by ambitiously reducing their Green House Gases emissions, providing the necessary means of implementation to developing countries, to enable us to adapt to Climate Change and transition to low carbon economies. These are necessary conditions for Sustainable Development, to grow our economies, lift up people from poverty and to become competitive participant in global economy.

Mr President, South Africa believes that it is only through a multilateral system that international community can successfully address the issue of Climate Change. A single country or a small group of country, acting on their own would not be able to keep us within safe limits of warning nor would be possible to mobilise efforts into adaptation of sufficiently large scale, if our system is merely the sum total of voluntary initiatives. We should therefore remain focussed on our global goal of reaching a conclusive multilateral agreement and which all members of international community will contribute according to the principle of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Only a legally binding agreement that is ruled by some faith can succeed in building sufficient trust to unlock the level of ambition. The 2015 agreement must also accord adaptation the same priority as mitigation. In this regard, South Africa believes it has championed the goal of adaptation as part of the new agreement in order to give legal recognition to the fact that adaptation is a global responsibility and adaptation action, the support that it would require very much depends on the level of mitigation ambition.

On the road to Paris, we should also be mindful of the crucial importance of Lima Conference later this year. We need to agree on the scope of “intended nationally determined contributions” and as well as the elements for the draft negotiating text. Furthermore, we should give priority to the work of the pre 2020 ambitions under the *ad hoc* working group of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action.

Mr President, we will urge all AALCO Member States to come out strongly at the upcoming meeting of Climate Change including the Secretary General Climate Summit in support of strengthening the Multilateral rule based system, legally binding ambitions and equitable agreement at the Paris Conference next year.