

Initiative By China on Enhancement of Developing Countries' Adaptation Capacity

I. Background

Global climate change is a lasting and severe challenge faced by human beings in their effort for sustainable development. Adaptation to climate change is a long-term and arduous as well as realistic and urgent task facing all countries. It is an essential component in the framework of sustainable development to address climate change, for which the international community must act together.

From ecological, industrial and socio-economic perspectives, developing countries are more vulnerable to climate change than their developed counterparts. At the same time, due to their weakness in adaptation in general, without timely and effective measures, developing countries would suffer much heavier losses from climate change than the developed ones.

The developed country Parties and other developed Parties included in Annex II shall also assist the developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in meeting costs of adaptation to those effects, as clearly stated in Article 4, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For a long time, however, the international community has always given its attention to mitigation rather than adaptation in its efforts to address climate change. The efforts made and actions taken at the international level for the adaptation sake fail to meet the actual needs of developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island countries.

Therefore, developed countries should work effectively and concretely to help developing countries improve their adaptation capacity and develop an adaptation strategy and policy featuring sustainability on the basis of a scientifically assessed climate change impact and vulnerability. Moreover, they should provide developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing countries with necessary technological and financial resources in support of their capacity-building and adaptation actions. As a result, developing countries will be in a better position to adapt to climate change and mitigate its negative impact, hence being sustainable.

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(I) International Institution for Climate Change Adaptation. China proposes to

establish a committee on climate change adaptation under UNFCCC, under which a number of expert panels may be set up to assist the proposed committee in doing its duty. Under the guidance of the Conference of Parties (COP), the committee will be charged with the planning, organization, coordination, review and evaluation of international actions for climate change adaptation. Its terms of reference may include (1) Guiding developing countries on capacity-building and actions on climate change adaptation and on assessment of relevant technological and financial needs; (2) Developing proposals on promoting international actions for climate change adaptation; (3) Reviewing and reporting to COP the progress with international actions for climate change adaptation; (4) Reviewing the proposed adaptation fund; (5) Reviewing the progress with climate change adaptation projects supported by the Convention and the Protocol.

(II) Climate Change Adaptation Capacity-Building for Developing Countries. Positive and effective measures should be taken by the international community to help developing countries deepen their scientific knowledge of climate change impact, improve their scientific assessment, introduce a disaster warning and emergency response program, and prepare and implement policies and measures on climate change adaptation at national level in order to enhance the developing countries' climate change adaptation capacity in an all-round manner. As a concrete measure and a priority, and with the adaptation funding support, regional centres may be hosted by developing countries to facilitate capacity-building and information sharing.

(III) Development and Transfer of Climate Change Adaptation Technologies. Technologies are essential to climate change adaptation. The international community should foster cooperation in the development, extension and application of adaptation technologies. Developed countries should remove the obstacles that block the transfer of adaptation technologies and at the same time help developing countries improve the capacity and efficiency of applying such technologies.

(IV) Financial Support to Developing Countries' Climate Change Adaptation. In accordance with actual needs of developing countries for climate change adaptation, the international community should establish an "Adaptation Fund" under UNFCCC, the financial resources of which are contributed from developed countries; At the same time, the financial sources to the existing Adaptation Fund of the Kyoto Protocol should be increased. For example, part of the earnings from emission trading (ET) and joint implementation (JI) could be collected to increase financial input substantially and provide developing countries with a reliable and adequate funding in support of their capacity-building and implementation in this connection.