

Science and Technology Major Group at CSD-15 (New York, 2007)

Statement in the Climate Change session on 1 May 2007 PM

Mr. Chair,

Significant harm from climate change is already occurring, and further damages are a certainty. The two IPCC Reports so far published in 2007 have presented a clear scientific consensus (1.) climate change is a fact and it is largely due to human activities and (2.) observational evidence from all continents and most oceans shows that many natural systems are already being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases.

There is a great urgency to adopt policies and to implement measures on two fronts now. We must make best use of the short remaining window of opportunity to keep climate change from becoming a catastrophe. These two fronts are mitigation measures through reduction of emissions in greenhouse gases, and adaptation measures to reduce the harm from climate change that proves unavoidable, measures such as finding solutions for low-lying coastal zones and adjusting agricultural practises.

Science, engineering and technology will be essential in the fight on both the mitigation and adaptation fronts, and there will be a need for significant strengthening of these domains, including of relevant parts of the social and economic sciences, as well as health sciences. In this regard, extensive North-South and South-South cooperation, including technology transfer, knowledge sharing and S&T capacity building, must be strongly supported. Otherwise, the widening North –South divide in science and technology will make most developing countries even more vulnerable to climate change.

More specifically, governmental support for research, including relevant international scientific cooperation programmes, aimed at improved projections of future climate and its long-term impacts, particularly at the regional level, as well as research on adaptation strategies, must be stepped up. Similarly, there is urgency for countries to enhance support for long-term observations of the earth and climate system, through the global observing systems now cooperating in the Global Earth Observing System of Systems.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, governments assembled at this CSD-15 should ensure that the policy recommendations resulting from this session take into account the areas of science, engineering and technology -- essential for addressing climate change in a context of sustainable development. The Scientific and Technological Community is fully committed to work with all stakeholders concerned, not the least the other Major Groups represented here.