

Intervention by

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Mr. Chairman, distinguished participants

I wish to start by expressing my deep thanks to the organizers of this summit for inviting me to address this important conference.

I also wish to express my deep regrets for being deprived of the honor to deliver this statement in person. I misunderstood the information on the schedule of the Summit. I gladly accepted to participate on the understanding that the session on Climate Change and Environment is on the ~~18th~~^{19th}. I am chairing a meeting that I set its date several months ago in Cairo on the 18th morning. I have requested a dear friend and colleague Prof. Salah Soliman to deliver it on my behalf. Once again, I am so sorry.

Mr. Chairman

I have read with great interest and care the very well written information report on the subject of the climate change, environment and energy . It's obvious that the balanced composition of the working group between the Industrialized North and the Developing South and East Mediterranean Countries led it to Endeavour to come up with a balanced report which they did to their very best.

I have some comments that may be of relevance to the discussion:

- 1- This excellent document addresses at rest every negative impact of Climate Change except that of sea level rise on the low land of the coastal zones. This is a problem of paramount significance for a country like Egypt. Egypt, Banagladish, and a few other small countries are classified as highly vulnerable to Climate Change. Costal zones in these countries are at very high risk. In Egypt, we face the dual problem of Sea Level-Rise and Land Subsidence. Alexandria subsides by some 1.5 mm/year and Port Said by around 3 mm. These cities and the Nile Delta below them. House more than one third of the people of Egypt, around 50% of its industrial production and have the most fertile land. Inundation and salt water intrusion are very serious problems that we have to start now planning actions to adapt to them.....The issue of adaptation in my view, needs to have more prominence in the report and in the final deceleration. I note that the report is putting so much emphasis on mitigation and cutting down Green House Gases, [GHGs], emissions at the expense of discussing options for adaptation.

2- There is reference in the report to that imply that countries like India, China and Brazil should make commitments on cutting down Green House Gases emission. I do not think that such position would help much the process of negation at Copenhagen. The report speaks of preparing collectively for Copenhagen. I thought that the EURO-MED is an opportune example of putting some concrete proposals by the civil society in this area. pressing the governments of the EURO-MED countries to sit down around the table and agree, or try to agree, on:

- What sort of share should the North Mediterranean carry in cutting down GHGs in view of past development and what share should the South and East bear in view of current and future development.
- What percentage of the cuts in the North are going to take place locally and what percentage do they plan to buy from the South and East through various mechanisms?.
- What sort of grace period would the South and East have before implementing committeemen's in a future treaty on Climate Change?.

- What is the level of Adaptation Fund that can be set by the EURO-MED countries, on what bases, what should it cover and how it should be managed?.

I do not mean by these proposals to turn this civil society Summit into a Negotiating Forum. I strongly feel that the civil society is not glued to government positions and is more amenable to dialogue. So, I sincerely hope that the Working Group which prepared this fine report can devote a couple of hours to discuss this issues and come up with some options that can be presented at Copenhagen as an example of possible cooperation between Developed and Developing Countries as the case of the EURO-MED.

- 3- A point that needs to be reconsidered is point 2.2 of the information report which talks of the Southern and Eastern MED Emissions growing by 58% in 15 years compared to 18% by the North. Such presentation is rather misleading. It does not say from which base and whether the total amount in metric tons [presumably of CO2 equivalent] of the increase in Emissions in the South and East are more or are less than the 18% of the North. What we are talking about is the total of emissions of each group and percapita emission not percentage growth.

- 4- The civil society is the only viable vehicle for public awareness of the serious impacts of climate change to create a public opinion strong enough to push governments to more .

- 5- Finally, I believe that the issue of controlling the flow of water from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean is one of the potentially feasible options to deal with the problem of Sea Level Rise. When muted, almost a century ago, it was meant to clear some additional land for development on both sides of the Mediterranean. The principal behind this, as you are all aware, is that the loss of water by evaporation from the surface of the Mediterranean exceeds the replenishment coming from the rivers flowing into it. This topic should be revisited, as indicated in the report. We need a multidisciplinary team from the EURO-MED countries to see if establishing a barrage at the Strait of Gibraltar can allow a control of the amount of water from the Atlantic to keep the Mediterranean water Level constant in spite of Global Warming. If technically feasible, then the subject needs to be seriously considered from the political, economic and ecological points of view. This, I feel is the type of EURO-MED cooperation that the civil society can initiate and push through.

Mr. Chairman

These are some comments that as I stated earlier, hope can be of some use to the debate on the subject. I also hope that some of the very important points raised in the information report will find their way in the Summit Declaration.

Thank You